

# A research text dump on the Unabomber for President campaign

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The Unabomber for President campaign was peak '90s anarchist weirdness. This was the point, of course — it was Situationist-inspired critique of the electoral spectacle. But it reflected a real magnetic draw he had in the anarchist scene as someone who had “taken real action.”

—Spencer Beswick.

<<https://x.com/spencerbeswick/status/1667650756516741127>>

## Inside Front special late night (eleventh hour!) feature: The Unabomber

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**Date:** August, 1997

**Cover**

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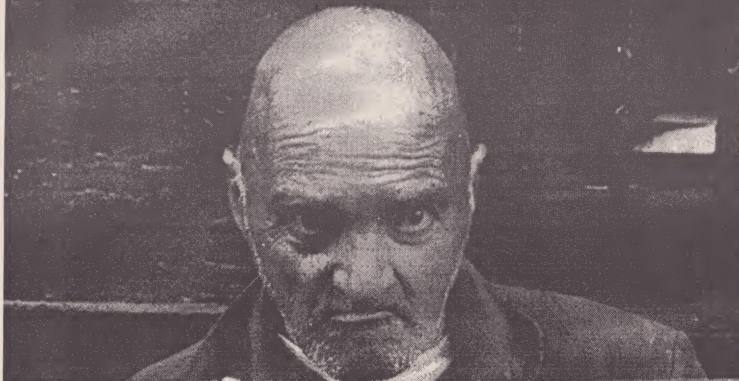
As participants in the hardcore punk community, our connection to the Unabomber should be obvious. We share the same basic dissatisfaction with our society, with the way things are, and we share a willingness to do *something* about this dissatisfaction (whether it be playing in punk bands or sending bombs to lobbyists for industries that would clearcut our forests) rather than merely wallow in it..

Whether or not we agree with the Unabomber's *means* should be secondary. The media has focused all attention on the acts of violence he\* had to use to *get* their attention, and has done everything in their power to not only dismiss or belittle the ideas he had to offer once he could not be ignored, but to demonize him personally by presenting him as a mere serial killer rather than a political activist with goals. This should come as no surprise, since the ideas in the manifesto attack the same system that the media itself is dependent upon for existence. And despite that, even the New York Times was forced to refer to him as a “genius” (on page one of the Sunday paper in late May '96).

In the punk community, and the counterculture in general, we have permitted the media to keep our focus on his means rather than on the subjects his actions brought up. Rather than saying “We may not agree with sending bombs, but his actions show that people really *are* dissatisfied, and that it will only get worse if we do not start to think about these issues,” we all moved as fast as we could to disavow any connection to the Unabomber at all. Nearly every anarchist or other left wing publication published articles distancing themselves from him, angry perhaps that his actions might make their cause seem less soft and cuddly to the American public. Even \_Maximum Rock and Roll\_'s book reviewer criticized the Manifesto in the same way that the mainstream media had (it looked to me like he copied his review right out of Newsweek)

*Inside Front special late night (eleventh hour!) feature:*

## THE UNABOMBER



America  
is voting for the

**UNABOMBER**

THE 10

"Why are we so angry? You would do better to ask why there is so much anger and hostility in modern society generally."

-F.C., in the "Unabomber Manifesto":

\*The masculine pronoun is used for only convenience throughout, since Kaczynski has not been found guilty or innocent yet.

and suggested that instead of using it as an impetus to get out and act against the status quo, we should stay home and just read more books.

The fact is, the American public didn't even know about these issues that we are so concerned about until the Unabomber brought publicity to them by any means necessary. We don't have anything to lose if the Unabomber's actions demonize us and other anti-establishment groups in the eyes of the public, because we simply weren't in the eyes of the public before. [I'll grant that some superficial media attention has been given to hardcore as a superficial youth trend, but the fundamental question of whether our society should be overhauled has *NOT* been on the tip of everyone's tongue.] Rather than trying to distance ourselves from his means, we should use the immense publicity that his campaign against our modern society has generated to bring more questions forward, to get people to really think about their lives and whether they can imagine a world better than this one. Each of us in the counterculture should use this chance to come forward and discuss the topics that the Unabomber has brought up with others, to try to increase awareness all around. We should see the Unabomber as a human being who dared to go to any lengths to get his message across, in these times of complete media blackout on *any* individual voice, let alone the individual voice of dissent.

This is particularly relevant now because the trial of Ted Kaczynski, a man accused of being the Unabomber, is approaching. This trial will focus public attention on the question of whether our modern, technological, consumer society really promotes human happiness. We should each us this opportunity to address these issues and get people thinking about them, and not be frightened into silence and submission by the media's attempts to portray all who are dissatisfied as failures or madmen. The more people come forward to say that this situation is unbearable, the less we who feel this way we seem crazy, and the more possible it will be for others to admit their own discomfort and join our struggle. Let's use this chance to make the flaws of our society visible, and to start to do something to change them!

## **The Unabomber A Hero For Our Time**

*by Nadia C. — originally published in Icarus Was Right #3*

Pop quiz: what is it called when one of the finest minds of a generation picks a few individuals who are personally involved in the destruction of the environment (a timber-industry lobbyist) or of the attention span and reasoning ability of tens of thousands of Americans (an advertising executive), and kills or maims them in the pursuit of finding a voice for his concerns about social issues... concerns that otherwise would be heard by very few? Clearly, it is murder.

And what is it called when a nation of overweight barbers and underpaid clerks, of lazy unemployed middle class intellectuals and talk-show-educated housewives, of cowardly fast-food-chin managers and racist sorority girls, conspires to execute this

murderer in the name of protecting the glorious status quo from his obviously deranged “mad bombings”?

The death penalty. And rightly applied, too, in defense of the right of forest clear-cutters and professional liars to continue bending our world to their vision without the danger of being molested by those who prefer redwood forests to Quik-Marts and sonnets to detergent slogans.

Seriously, and rhetoric aside, what is the difference between the two situations? In one case, a single person evaluates his situation and decides upon a course of action he feels is right. In the other case, millions of people, who are not very used to making up their minds by themselves, feel strong enough all together to strike out blindly against an individual who does not remain within their boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Now, our gentle and moderate reader would no doubt like to object that it is not fear of the free-standing individual that prompts the outcry against this terrorist, but moral indignation—for he has taken “innocent” life in his quest to have his ideas heard, and that is wrong in every situation.

But this nation of petty imbeciles is not regularly outraged about the taking of innocent life: as long as it fits within the parameters of the status quo, they don’t care at all.

How many more people than the Unabomber have tobacco companies maimed and killed, by using advertising to addict them at a very young and uninformed age to an extremely harmful drug? How about the companies that advertise and sell cheap liquor in impoverished neighborhoods filled with alcoholics? How many citizens of third world nations have suffered and died at the hands of governments supported by such corporations as Pepsi Co., or even by the U.S. government itself? And how much animal life is destroyed thoughtlessly every year, every day in death camp factory farms... or in ecological destruction brought about by such companies as Exxon (our reader will remember the Valdez) or McDonalds (one of the better known destroyers of the rainforest)? No one is particularly concerned about these abuses of “innocent” life.

And indeed, it is harder to be, for they are institutionalized within the social and economic system... “normal.” Besides, it is hard to figure out who exactly is responsible for them, for they are the results of the workings of complicated bureaucracies.

On the other hand, when one individual attempts to make his criticism of these destructive systems heard by the only really effective means, it is easy to pick him out and string him up. And our hypocritical outrage about his wrongdoings compared those of our own social institutions shows that it is his ability to act upon his own conclusions that truly shocks and frightens us most of all.

Our fear of the Unabomber as a freely acting individual shows in the attempts our media has made to demonize him. Details of his life, such as his academic achievements and his ability to live a Thoreauan self-sufficient existence, that would normally occasion praise, are now used to demonstrate that he is a maladjusted freak. Random and unimportant details of his life, similar to details of any of our lives, such as failed love

affairs and childhood illnesses, are used to explain his “insane behavior.” In speaking thus, the press suggests that there is no question at all that his actions were the result of insanity, pulling away in terror from the very thought that he might be just as rational as they. Newspapers print the most arbitrary and disconnected excerpts of his manifesto that they can combine, and they describe the manifesto as being random and disconnected—they even describe it as “ramblings” with a straight face, despite the well-known short attention span of today’s media.

But it is not necessary that we accept the media’s typical over-simplification of the case. The Unabomber’s manifesto has, as a result of his efforts, been published and widely distributed. We can all read it for ourselves, not just in disconnected excerpts, but in its entirety, and decide for ourselves what we think of his ideas.

Do not be frightened by the Unabomber’s willingness to stand out from the crowds and take whatever actions he believes are necessary to achieve his goals. In a civilization so stricken with mindless submission to social norms and irrational rules his example should be refreshing rather than horrifying; for his worst crimes are no worse than ours, in being citizens of this nation... and his greatest deeds as a dedicated and intelligent individual far outshine those of most of our heroes, who are for the most part basketball players and cookie-cutter pop musicians anyway.

At least, given the chance as we are, we should read his manifesto and come to our own conclusions, rather than allowing the press and popular opinion/paranoia to decide for us.

## [Untitled]

*One group that has attracted my interest because of their light-hearted and creative presentation of serious issues is the Unapack. Their “Unabomber for President” campaign attained a great deal of attention in a number of different circles. I’ve included some of their material here, along with some perspectives on the Unabomber issue from other sources.*

*Of course if we work together we can accomplish more than we can separately. One group that is organizing right now to achieve the goals proposed by this feature is a new version of the Unapack which will focus on using the trial to challenge the myth that everyone is content in today’s world. If you are willing to share your perspectives or volunteer your creative efforts and energy, or you are just interested in more information, feel free to contact them at: Unapack, P.O. Box 12094, Boston, MA 02112 Some of the staff of Inside Front might be involved in this and other projects, so you can contact us about this too. You can also obtain copies of the Unabomber Manifesto from our address (no cost, just send a donation for postage), in order to read about his particular take on modern life and its shortcomings.*



## Take a chance with us

This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

—The Unabomber

Come on, baby, take a chance with us...

—The Doors, “The End”

The publishing of the Unabomber’s manifesto in the Washington Post was an extraordinary event, and any honest examination of the subsequent press coverage reveals a simple but important truth: the Unabomber hit a nerve. Even Time Magazine, surely a symbol of corporate control, was seen quoting the Unabomber at length, and supporting many of his observations. Industrial society HAS been a disaster for the human race, and people ARE humiliated and degraded by the technologies they’ve created.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign is about revealing the resignation that people feel, the deep conviction that they are utterly helpless, that they have no choice but to join the parade, that their fates are determined by forces far beyond their control. Isn’t Dilbert really just an expression of resignation, of passive aggression? How many people secretly hate their jobs, and subvert their bosses in countless subtle ways? Reveal that resignation, and it will turn to resentment and rightful anger.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-In Campaign is a serious election effort that aims to totally undermine the election process itself, by exposing the media’s exclusion of all meaningful debate about the nature and direction of our daily lives. The useless charade of choosing between identical wings of the pro-business party, the Demicans and Republicrats, is the pale ghost of democracy in a mass society so vast and powerful and ruthless that it can only be controlled by machines. When people are angry enough to vote for the Unabomber, the media will have no choice but to deliver the message, even if it means death for the messenger. Votes for the Unabomber can’t be rationalized or mediated or explained away. They are an expression of rage, not apathy, of utter “contempt for the brutality and indifference of our supposedly ‘civilized’ society.

Four hundred years ago, our suburbs and office parks were wilderness, forest and plains, mountains and rivers, teeming with an unimaginable diversity of life. Industrial society crushed out that diversity, and replaced it with monoculture: mile after mile of corn fields, each plant a genetically perfect copy, identical houses and cars in endless rows, one size fits all, even people standardized and stacked on top of one another like cans of beer. What native society ever built factory farms, or robotic slaughterhouses? What makes us so different from our veal cows, force-fed and chained to their pens, unable to take a single step? Who were the real savages? A vote for the Unabomber is a vote for the The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign wants to channel people’s anger constructively, by directing it against the most obvious symbol of mass

society and corporate control: the MEDIA, whose primary function is to maintain NORMALCY at all costs. Nothing, not rain or snow, not floods or drought, not terrorist bombings or even full-scale war can be allowed to disrupt the well- organized hive of worker bees, driving to work, slurping down their coffee and donuts, clean, smiling, happy, well- dressed bees, buzzing in conference rooms and cubicles, lining up in shopping malls to spend the money they've sacrificed so much for on fashionable trinkets and food neatly wrapped in plastic. The media are the band that keep the troops marching forward, no matter how many comrades fall, crossing off the Hallmark holidays, on chaos of freedom, a vote for Wild Nature dare to join die barbarians at the gates.

**We are the veal  
UNABOMBER  
FOR  
PRESIDENT  
UNAPACK**

PO BOX 120494  
BOSTON, MA 02112  
unapack@paranoia.com  
www.paranoia.com/unapack/  
Chris Korda — UNAPACK

## **Top Ten Reasons To Write-In Unabomber For President In 1996**

All you have to lose in the Political Illusion  
Lydia Eccles

1. **THE ALTERNATIVES.** Clinton, Dole, Buchanan. Moderate republican, right-wing republican, or Fascist? You have the right to vote right. And the right to silence. But isn't it incriminating?
2. **HE'S HOT.** His favorability ratings may be low, but his name recognition is close to 100%. We don't need to hype him — he's already hyped. A Unabomber write-in campaign surfs the media wave. (And the trial may be The Big One.) He's the perfect imposter to undermine the presidential election process as it unfolds, and turn the fraudulent election process against itself.
3. **THE VISION THING.** "The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race." Regardless of what you think of the Unabomber and his analysis, the right issues are finally raised. Can you even conceive of any legitimate candidacy, election, or debate which will allow the real questions to be put on the table? We need to dish them out before they cool

off... They're giving an election, but we're crashing it and having our own referendum on corpo-technocracy. If the Unabomber put a hairline crack in the myth of progress, we are applying a wedge, and we'll pound on it right up to election day. An anti-technological rallying point was born of a criminal chase with high entertainment value. Is there going to be another opportunity to declare your independence from Western Civilization?

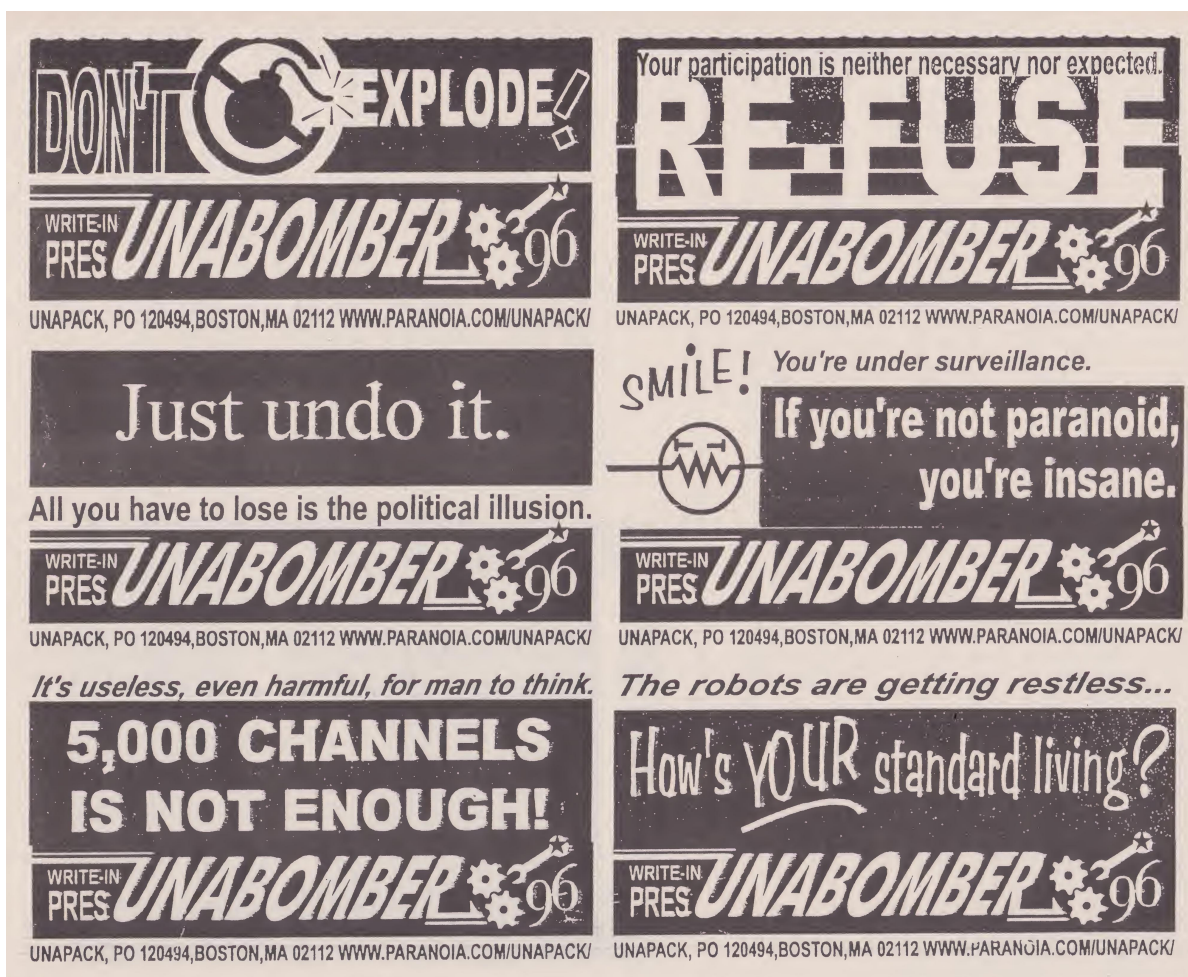
4. **WATTING FOR PEROT?** The election offers a "choice" once all the real decisions have been made. On top of being an anti-republican vote, the Unabomber campaign is a counterfoil to faux "populist" outsider-insiders like business magnate Ross Perot and Gulf warrior Colin Powell (a.k a. the military-industrial complex). The third party "alternative" is designed to safely channel voter alienation into a centrist, media-sanctioned agenda and immunize the system against real change.
5. **IF ELECTED HE WILL NOT SERVE.** So it's a nobody for president vote. He's not running, so it's a bottom-up free-for-all campaign. Campaign literature, posters, sound bytes, platforms, pranks, the rest: have it your way.
6. **DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE** The media's like a psychiatrist — and you can't NOT communicate in an election. If you boycott the polls, you'll be counted as apathetic, complacent, or still worse, contented. If you vote for the mainstream lesser of evils, who don't actually represent your views, you've affirmed the political system and buried your voice. Either way you've wasted your vote. To vote Unabomber is to vote and boycott at the same time. If nothing else, it s a vote against the election charade. It can be only seen as absolute protest, ridicule, or a "none-of-the-above" spuming of the political menu. You can cast an anarchist vote you feel good about, and send the message that the presidential elections are a fraud. And you can still vote in local races and referendums where your vote counts for something.
7. **VOTE AGAINST THE PROPAGANDA MACHINE.** The Unabomber did an end run around the media monopoly, and published without editorial clearance. The Unabomber has, by the magnitude of his plan, exposed the media as a closed communications system, making it clear — in case anyone hadn't noticed — that it's a communications war. Mass media are launched from a heavily-secured fortress. Other terrorists seek publicity as a means to other ends. The Unabomber waged a guerrilla campaign to communicate as an end in itself. Notice how the press seeks to channel interpretation of the Unabomber story, covering it as a serial-killer story of crime and insanity, while excluding consideration of the ideas themselves; They would have us believe that it would be disastrous if media weren't controlled from the top. Op-ed pages resounded with journalists lamenting, "Why didn't he have to get editorial approval? What if copy cats are

aroused, crazies who actually want access to the media, rather than simply being passive target markets for political and commercial propaganda?” Imagine mass communications not subject to corporate control. People might say anything... even things not “fit to print.” Exactly. When ABC Nightly News gets renamed Disney World, you’ll cherish the memory of your Unabomber vote.

8. **HE’S GOT THE CREDENTIALS.** The Unabomber’s use of violence should not disqualify him from consideration. His willingness and ability to effectively use violence to achieve strategic political goals merely demonstrate the essential qualifications to be president. After all, Colin Powell’s ONLY qualification is his performance as an effective killer. No one’s called him a serial killer, or said he craved attention. No running candidate has condemned the Gulf War genocide. This is a country that played war like a video game in a high-tech funhouse. We aren’t even allowed information as to how many Iraqis, civilian or military, our tax dollars blew away. That Bill Clinton dodged the draft almost disqualified him. Luckily he picked up points for presiding over executions in his home state of Arkansas, including the execution of a retarded man. Dole’s war experience gave him the right stuff... Violence? Cancer deaths caused by toxins in the air, in food, and workplaces... Violence? A minimum wage that is half the poverty level, with the hunger, stress, disease and early death that ensue... Violence? The media just finished re-elaborating the rationale for bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki... Violence? Tenor? Anyone bringing up violence should put it all on the table, not just select attacks on the power structure. Anyone who can truly take a stand against violence in any form—and that would include the American Revolution — can say the Unabomber shouldn’t be president on that basis. But he’s not running anyway, and even a landslide wouldn’t actually put him in office. The beauty of voting for an ineligible candidate is that personality issues are moot. We’re voting Un- abomber, not Kaczinski, although Ted may turn out to be Thoreau with a bomb, engaging in military disobedience. And give a little credit to an ex-teacher who may have recruited the FBI to Anarchy 101 and assigned a required reading list of subculture rants.
9. **ENTERTAINMENT VALUE.** Watch your favorite TV pundits try to swallow, digest and regurgitate a Unabomber constituency. It’s a message that can only be censored — not neutralized, coopted or explained away. The most minimal Unabomber returns will disrupt the usual discussion of false problems and false solutions (usually known as “reform”).
10. **DON’T BLAME ME — I VOTED FOR THE UNABOMBER.** You can sport your bumper sticker after the election.(but not on a car). But only if we don’t win.

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[www.paranoia.com/unapack/](http://www.paranoia.com/unapack/)



*"I see in the eyes of Ted Kaczynski a sorrow reflecting what we have lost. A profound magnitude of loss, consisting of growing personal desolation, the disappearance of community, the destruction of the natural world. It really is this devastating, and getting worse every day.*

*Kaczynski's betrayal (and of course his "guilt" is unproved) at the hands of his own brother reminds Us that pacifism, in its smug cowardice, is always, at base, the defender of what is.*

*But the machine has not yet eradicated all resistance, all capacity to think against the grain. In the Unabomber we can see the courage and honor of one who would not buy into this fraudulent society, who would not buy into the 'dominion of technology. One who fought the brave new world order with pen and sword."*

*—Helena Sandovar, National Park Service, Denali Park, Alaska*

## The 'Unabomber for President' campaign

**Author:** Scott Winokur

**Date:** Sep. 17, 1996

**Source:** San Francisco Examiner. Page A 15. <[sfgate.com/news/article/the-unabomber-for-president-campaign-3123958.php](http://sfgate.com/news/article/the-unabomber-for-president-campaign-3123958.php)> & <[web.archive.org/.../www.paranoia.com/~unapack/press/sfchron/winokur.html](http://web.archive.org/.../www.paranoia.com/~unapack/press/sfchron/winokur.html)>

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A write-in vote for the Unabomber in the presidential election would be a waste of time, unquestionably, if you really cared about the outcome in November.

But I must say I'm intrigued by the extreme political pitch of the group proposing such protest votes—Unapack, a Boston-based organization touting the idea since the publication of the mad bomber's alleged manifesto last year.

Unapack wants no part of Ted Kaczynski, whom federal authorities are holding in a Sacramento jail on charges in seven of the 16 bombings linked to the Unabomber. The bombings took three lives and injured 23 others. Kaczynski's mother and brother pleaded for his life Sunday on the CBS News program "60 Minutes," but Attorney General Janet Reno has not decided whether to seek the death penalty in the case.

Unapack, however, completely endorses the ideas in the 35,000-word screed against society the government may try to prove Kaczynski wrote.

"Write in 'Unabomber'...not Kaczynski," the group said in flyers passed out at Chicago's Grant Park during the Democratic Convention. "He hasn't been proven the author...and besides, it's the ideas that matter, not the man."

And what are those ideas, as redacted by Unapack in its flyer and on its 500-visit-a-day web site ([www.paranoia.com/unapack/](http://www.paranoia.com/unapack/))? Here are a few:

"Industrial society has been a disaster...people are humiliated and degraded by the technologies they've created."

"People...are utterly helpless...they have no choice but to join the parade...their fates determined by forces far beyond their control."

“Just undo it.”

Thank heaven for radicals. They’re often sort of right. Just be careful not to take them too seriously—or you could end up hopelessly marginalized (or worse, forever tainted by a police record).

Unapack stalwart Chris Korda of Somerville, Mass., 24, told me the group hopes to tally 1 to 3 percent of the ballots and possibly determine the outcome in California, where protest votes on the left could hurt President Clinton. Contributing to a Bob Dole victory didn’t bother him.

“It doesn’t make a difference. Dole and Clinton simply represent different wings of the pro-business party,” Korda said.

He added: “We have a lot of support in Northern California. Up in pot-growing country, there’s very strong antigovernment feeling. In the Bay Area, our support is the same as it is in Boston. If we get 3 out of 100 people, that’s good.”

“Our supporters are everyone who reads the Dilbert comic strip and feels the same apathy and alienation. People resigned to humiliating jobs and suffering. People who don’t vote. It’s a wide cross-section. Our goal is to create a rupture in the electoral system.”

Korda said Unapack has raised more than \$25,000 through contributions and the sale of sarcastic bumper stickers (“Bigger cubicles! Longer weekends!”)

In New York City, Unapack distributed 5,000 flyers last month and hung a 60-foot banner on an abandoned building in Brooklyn. Efforts to stir interest are also underway at Columbia and New York universities, according to the group’s Big Apple point man, Bill Brown, 37.

I asked Korda how—despite the group’s attempt to distance itself from Kaczynski—he, personally, could identify with terrorism.

“I haven’t committed any acts of violence,” Korda protested. “I’m a pacifist. The Unabomber used violence to gain access to the media. It’s not something I’d do, but he has presented us with an opportunity we must exploit.”

Brown, who comes from McGovernite Democrat stock, took a softer stand: “this is a throwback to the guerilla theater of the ‘60s. It’s educational.”

I thought I’d heard such talk before, nearly 30 years ago, when little Leninists on campus ran around tossing off categorical imperatives and condemning anyone who disagreed.

“Of course we know all about them,” Korda said, coolly.

“But we’ve learned from their mistakes. We’ve recognized that in a mass society you can’t effect meaningful change without seizing control of the mass media. Our whole focus is on creating something irresistible to the media. In that sense, the Unabomber campaign is like a virus.

# Nomination for Unabomber for President

**Date:** September 09, 1996

**Source:** Democracy Now. <[democracynow.org/1996/9/9/nomination\\_for\\_unabomber\\_for\\_pres](http://democracynow.org/1996/9/9/nomination_for_unabomber_for_pres)& <[archive.org/details/UNAPACK](http://archive.org/details/UNAPACK)>

**Authors:** Amy Goodman, Julie Drizen, Lydia Eccles, Chris Korda

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I'm Amy Goodman, and this is *Democracy Now*. In 1968, as the whole world was watching the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, anti-war yuppies captured media attention by nominating a pig for president. This silly piece of guerilla theater actually made a serious statement about the corruption of politicians, the power of the police, and the irrelevance of national elections. In 1996, a couple of activists are taking a similar tactic, by promoting a far more controversial candidate for the White House. Lydia Eccles and Chris Korda are waging a write-in campaign for the Unabomber for president. Eccles and Korda were able to get into the Democratic National Convention in Chicago as members of the press. They invented a network called TVTV and a program called "News News", and so they were credentialed to be on the inside. That's where Pacifica's Julie Drizen met Lydia Eccles and Chris Korda as they campaigned on behalf of the Unabomber.

**Drizen:** The two of you are running a campaign Unabomber for president. Why the Unabomber?

**Eccles:** Because the Unabomber represents a complete reversal in perspective from the consensus of the main candidates who run. The Unabomber also recognized that the modern media system doesn't allow for a discussion of real alternatives to unlimited technological development, and that's why he did what he did to get attention. So he symbolizes attacking the monologue, the monopoly of the press as well as the anti-industrial concept of society.

**Drizen:** Isn't the Unabomber a terrorist?

**Korda:** The Unabomber has been called a terrorist. Terrorist is a funny word. Usually when we talk about terrorists, we talk about people who are killing people. Of course the Unabomber killed three people, but we might favorably compare the Unabomber to other people who've been considered for the presidential office: General Colin Powell comes to mind, I know at one point he was in the front runners for the Republicans, and he probably killed more people in thirty seconds than the Unabomber killed, so actually there's a certain point of view from which you could say that the ability to use violence could almost be consider a prerequisite for running for presidential office. I don't think we could think of too many presidents who've actually been elected who didn't use violence in one way or another, but even all that is not really the important point. The important point here is that were not a Unabomber fan club. We're not interested in the man, you notice it's not the Kaczynski for president campaign, it's the Unabomber for president campaign, and obviously we don't



know that Kaczinski isn't the Unabomber, we don't know that he is, the point here is that if he's nominated he can't run, and if elected, he can't serve, so it's not about the man. It's about his ideas, and whatever the Unabomber did to get his ideas more widely recognized, has nothing to do with us: we didn't do that. We are here at the convention, trying to get wider for support for his ideas, and that sense we're using the actual violence that he may have used, simply as a wedge, as a way of opening the door, because let's face it, let's be honest about this, he has tremendous mass appeal: a lot of people know who is.

**Eccles:** This is intended also just to be fundamentally the most negative possible vote, to vote for someone who can't be in office. Even people who don't subscribe to a critique of industrial society, we would like people to outright reject the political system as it's going now, in other words to acknowledge that they actually do not have participation in determining the form society takes. The mainstream candidates differ only on trivialities such as whether or not smoking is addictive.

**Drizen:** Which you say as you're smoking your Marlboro cigarette...

**Eccles:** The reason why we're seeing them talking about such trivial things is because they actually really agree in general about the shape our society should take, so that people who don't feel our society should continue along the path that it's going, which is unlimited economic growth and destruction of the human community and the environment, have absolutely no way of expressing themselves in the election. So they're left sitting on their hands. This is like the thinking man's "none of the above" vote, and even if someone just wants to voice their total alienation from what they've seen at the convention this week, this would be an option for them, to make this vote, and to try create an unpredictable element in the outcome in November.

**Korda:** We have a huge Internet world-wide web site, which is [www.paranoia.com/unapack](http://www.paranoia.com/unapack), and you can just dial that up and get all kinds of information about the campaign, and about our positions, which of course are distinct from the Unabomber's positions. We're not just talking about sticking the Unabomber's manifesto up on a web site, we're talking about an entire vision, a vision of an alternative kind of society, a society that's constructed along entirely different lines from the industrial society that we've been creating here for the last 200, or possibly 400 years, depending on how you look at it. This society would not be, as our society is now, centered around the idea of adapting the environment to the needs of technological expansion and domination, but rather...a more utopian society, in which man perhaps might find his proper relationship with the other creatures that exist on the planet, and in which we might have a less corporate view of the planet.

**Eccles:** I want say also that we're distributing materials over the internet: bumper stickers which go to feed the cost of the campaign. But also, we want this vote to be seen vote as an antipropaganda vote, because we see propaganda as being the main source of political paralysis for all groups that are trying to oppose what's going on. They cannot continue talking about their issues and wondering why they're not getting through the media. They have to deal first with the fact that this whole campaign is

a propaganda exercise, and our campaign is intended to ride on the propaganda event, and create a juxtaposition that shows how ridiculous and limited the political conversation is. This isn't about left and right, it's about centralization versus breaking down of centralization. In fact most of the left groups totally accept the idea of centralized industrial society and jobs and wage slavery. Our campaign is primarily concerned with liberty, secondarily concerned with social justice. That's where we are different from the left, and we think that the left is, in a sense, trying to equalize oppression, but that the centralized industrial system is the most important impediment to our freedom at this point.

**Drizen:** It sounds like your political philosophy is kind of a push-me pull-you: you're libertarian and you're luddite. How do those things coexist?

**Korda:** I would not describe us as libertarian at all. I would be proud to be considered a luddite, in the sense that I definitely oppose the rampant, unchecked technological progress that we've seen in the last 200 years. I feel that the result of that technological progress has been that not only animals, but also humans themselves, have been domesticated, and adapted to the needs of industrial society, and I think it's very important to understand that we can see clearly the effects that technological society has on animals. When we see those pictures from Peta, of the rabbits getting their skin peeled off, or getting the perfume sprayed on their eyes, or when we see the pictures of the pigs in their pens for their entire lifetime, or a cow that's not allowed to take a single step, we can see that that's cruel, we can see that those animals are suffering, and that that's inhumane. What a curious use of the word, because what we're not able to see is that our lives have been equally affected, and that humans in their own way also suffer at the hands of industrial society, that we too are forced into pens, that we are deprived of our freedom, that we suffer degradations and humiliations that the native people whom we replaced 400 years ago never suffered. I think it's very important to be able to see the similarities between ourselves and the animals that we domesticate, and see that we too are domesticated, and that that is the future for us. If we listen to the left, and we listen to the right, and we continue to do what the Republicans and the Democrats tell us to do, we're going to wind up with a society in which humans are essentially genetically engineered vegetables.

**Drizen:** So what are we supposed to do, go back to the farm, have a life of breeding, no electricity, and growing our own food?

**Eccles:** What we're supposed to do right now is detach from participating in a charade of participatory politics by voting for a pre-selected candidate that is not ever going to deal with real human freedom. This is really about people altering their awareness to stop having the illusion of politics, that by voting, they're actually doing anything. In terms of the rest of it, what we're looking for is people to become much more autonomous, and that means trying to unplug themselves from the plumbing system of propaganda as much as possible, trying to do things for themselves, trying to do things instead of having things, also trying to insert and trespass on corporate

communications in every way they can. We're endorsed by the vandals, billboard guerillas, street poster people, we're also endorsed by Sexpol and the Debtor's Union. We encourage people to default on their credit cards, everything that people can do to keep society from functioning normally. One of slogans is "If you think the system's working, as someone who is." So we support people trying to be as unproductive as possible in the workplace to the extent that they have to be there.

**Korda:** It makes me think, there's something funny I saw the other day...I was talking with somebody out there in the protest pen, notice I use the word pen, it kinds reminds you of veal a little bit, and this guy was saying that he thought that this was okay, you know, that these people were exercising their first amendment rights. So I asked him, I said listen, what if we had a slightly different arrangement next time, in 2000, what if instead of having this concrete parking lot here, which the delegates can inspect at their leisure, what if we had a little cell, a little padded cell, with a picture of Bill Clinton in it, and the protesters were allowed to march into the cell one at a time, and either rail at the picture and throw bottles at it, or get down on their knees and worship it, or read their rants and hand out their flyers and so forth, and they they'd be hustled out and the next protester would walk in, would it still be first amendment? Would we still have first amendment rights? Would we still have freedom of speech? He got real confused, and gave me a puzzled look, like he'd never really contemplated that, and what I'm trying to say here, is that it is a charade, that this entire process that's taking place in that building...it's a charade, and not only that, but it's a heavily protected, armed charade. It's not a coincidence that this area we're standing in bears a strong resemblance to an army barracks. The media are the most protected institution in the United States right now, because they are the real power, and that's what the Unabomber was so brilliant in recognizing. Whether his ideas were brilliant or not is not important: his ideas came from other people, he borrowed ideas from people, but the thing he recognized that no one else really recognized, is that the media are the fortress, and he went after that fortress, and he forced the media to directly publish his ideas without any mediation. That's an amazing thing, that's something really to take notice of, and we applaud that, and we'd like to see more of that.

**Drizen:** Yes, but this is not like the 1990's version of running a pig for president. I mean the person that you're running, killed people for, really, no apparent reason, and by running somebody named the Unabomber, even though he is in part a media creation, and we don't for a fact that he is Ted Kaczinski, you're almost encouraging, aren't you, other people to take it into their own hands and perhaps commit acts of violence on their own.

**Eccles:** The Unabomber clearly felt that it was absolutely impossible for ideas that he felt were critical to the fate of the human race to ever be discussed within the political system. Whether he was right or not, I don't know, but he did this as an act of guerilla warfare. Now if someone is a total pacifist (as opposed to a passive-ist), then they could condemn that, but the fact is that we're not actually putting him into office

anyway, unlike, say, Colin Powell, where we're actually putting the killer into office. There are other people who believe that you can work within the system, such as the Green party, and effect change that way. Unabomber's position is halfway straddling those two positions: we don't believe you can do it within the system, we are not using violence ourselves or advocating violence, but we're saying that by casting this vote, you are stating both that the system is closed and you can't change it, but you're also trying to do a non-violent act to try to alter the awareness and create change.

**Korda:** The most important point here is that almost any other candidate that you could vote for, you vote for Lenora Fulani, you could vote for the Green party, you could vote for that guy from Wisconsin [Larry Agran] whose name I can never remember, there's going to be a million crackpots out there, you could even vote for my good friend Vermin Supreme, but it won't do any good, because all of those vote can be dismissed as a joke, as not important, but the Unabomber vote can't be dismissed, it can't be seen as apathy, it can only be seen as rage, as an expression of real pain at the tremendous contempt that industrial society has for individuals. It's a rattling of the bars. The Unabomber campaign is being run by barbarians, on behalf of barbarians, we are the barbarians at the gates, and we're asking people to join us at the gates, rattle those gates and say look, we're going to disrupt the election process itself to the maximum extent that we can. We're going to try and get out there and force the media to report on the Unabomber presidential write-in campaign, even as it's being reported on right now. The amazing thing about this strategy is that it's brilliant, it works. The media cannot resist the lure of the Unabomber. He's got tremendous mass appeal. Everybody knows who he is. He's got name recognition bigger than anybody short of the Republicans and the Democrats, so it works.

**Drizen:** I think Charles Manson has probably still a little bit more name recognition than the Unabomber, so what's the difference between running one anti-social psychopath versus another?

**Eccles:** The Unabomber wrote a manifesto. I don't even know that much about Charles Manson, but he sort signifies the LSD-crazed serial murderer, I mean the Unabomber's violence was extremely intentional.

**Drizen:** Charles Manson was rebelling against, allegedly through violent acts, rebelling against the mainstream culture at the time.

**Eccles:** An interesting thing about the Unabomber is that he came from a liberal-left background. In his life he showed a great integrity, if it is Ted Kaczinski, which we don't know. Since Ted Kaczinski has come to be associated with the Unabomber, we're looking at someone who, over years, wrote letters to the editor, and showed a lot of concern, and basically became totally disillusioned with the possibility of working through the political process. We think the most important thing is that people lose the political illusion, so that they can then lose the paralysis that the illusion has created, and then begin to act, and that doesn't mean acting through the party system, that means the other things we were talking about, trying to assert more and more control over the circumstances of your life on a personal level.

**Korda:** We're talking about the future of the planet. I don't have to remind you, I don't think, that we're now losing a species, what, every forty minutes, that's up from every sixty minutes in the 1960's, we've already wiped out approximately one third of the species on earth, we lose an acre of trees every eight seconds in the United States. We're talking about an ongoing environmental catastrophe, and while the Unabomber didn't focus on that very much in his manifesto, he made it clear in one of his paragraphs that this was something he was very much concerned with. We're talking about a future, a technological future in which there will be no wilderness to escape *to*, and in that sense, this is an urgent campaign, it's a timely campaign, and we need to use every tool at our disposal, and as someone else once said, mutant times call for mutant tools.

**Drizen:** Now have either of you contacted, or tried to contact Ted Kaczinski, the alleged Unabomber, about your campaign?

**Eccles:** We have a letter drafted that we're going to be mailing afterwards, but we basically don't feel that he could respond to a letter anyway, but we thought that since he's so involved in the situation, he'd probably be interested in hearing about the campaign, but again, we aren't about Ted Kaczinski, we're about the manifesto, and we're about a protest vote primarily.

**Drizen:** Maybe some of the relatives of victims of Ted Kaczinski wouldn't feel that way.

**Eccles:** As I've said before, I feel great sympathy for the relatives of anyone who was killed in political strife, but I don't think anyone in the United States has ever seen a family member of a dead Iraqi in their lives. We have to think very much about the sentimentality of who is shown as victims and who is totally erased. We don't see the families of victims of breast cancer: there's a breast cancer epidemic which is probably very linked to environmental pollutants. The killing that is done by corporations in a statistical, remote manner never gets any attention, in fact it's impossible to even locate the victims. It's very easy to see the victims of an individual act like the Unabomber's, but his act is trivial next to the deaths every day from the industrial system.

## Extra! interviews UNAPACK

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**Source:** Partial transcript of Chris Korda and Lydia Eccles' TV interview with Extra! <[web.archive.org/.../www.paranoia.com/~unapack/press/extra.html](http://web.archive.org/.../www.paranoia.com/~unapack/press/extra.html)>

**Authors:** Chris Korda, Extra!, Lydia Eccles, Mass High Tech, Camera Person

**Extra!:** Why do you think the issue that the Unabomber has presented is so important?

**Korda:** The Unabomber is important because he is the only public figure right now who is raising the real questions, the real issues which are the destruction of Wild Nature and the dehumanizing effect that technology has on us.

I don't think that either the Republican, the Democratic or any of the third party candidates are going to address this question in any kind of important way.

**Eccles:** Mainstream electoral politics are dealing with trivial issues while we are headed for disaster. And there is a massive denial of the environmental disaster and the social disaster that is happening. So the object of UNAPACK, for the Unabomber Write-In Campaign, is for people to break away from the bond of politics.

Could we be more conversational? I think it works better if we can have a conversation.

**Extra!:** I just have to get these basic things down, that's what I do. Then we'll go into more things and chat. Chris, why are the issues of the Unabomber important to you? What made you so proactive about the Unabomber?

**Korda:** I personally feel that the Unabomber is very important because he's the only public figure right now getting any media attention who is going to raise the real questions, the real issue. And the real issue is the destruction of Wild Nature.

We are in the middle of a global environmental crisis. Humans have already destroyed almost one third of the species on earth. We are currently losing a species every forty minutes. That's actually up from every sixty minutes in the 70's. We lose an acre of trees every eight seconds in the United States alone. That's a tremendous crisis and I don't think that either the Republican or the Democratic or any third party candidates are going to address that issue in any kind of serious way.

The Unabomber was addressing that issue, his ideas have received major public attention, and that's a tremendous victory.

**Extra!:** Lydia, same question.

**Eccles:** To me, I was attracted to the Unabomber because he was recognizing the failure of our political system. He was recognizing that under what we are calling Democracy and freedom, the vital issues can never be addressed because the media is very involved in upholding the path of developing technology. That's why he targeted the media.

So it was a revelation to me to see someone break open the political discussion so that issues like our advance towards extinction could be addressed rather than issues like a fifty cent increase in the minimum wage.

When the Unabomber spoke, the rest of politics became ridiculous next to what he had to say. So he was the starting point and we feel like we have to pick up where he left off and push those ideas further. And the interesting thing is that the media immediately responded by trying to separate the ideas from the man, and what we are trying to do is just the opposite.

They are trying to say, we must talk about this man as a psychopath and say that what he was trying to say doesn't matter: the important thing is that he is a psychopath.

What we are trying to do is just the opposite and say the ideas really do matter. It was an intentionally political act with great commitment behind it. It was not gratuitous violence, it was extremely intentional violence. And our campaign is a non-violent campaign.

We represent the middle ground between a person like the Unabomber, who decided that the system was so closed off that no change was possible working within it, and people who believe that you can achieve change through the system.

We don't believe that we can achieve change through the system. So what we are going to do is vote against the system. We are using the classic democratic process to try and create a rupture in politics. And once that rupture is created, then we think that people can start looking at the real power issues in their life.

**Extra!:** A lot of people will immediately think that because you support the Unabomber's message, you also support the killing that he has done. Do you support the killings?

**Korda:** The first objection that people always raise is that the Unabomber is a killer, he is a terrorist. This is very interesting because there is a different way of looking at this.

We could say that the Unabomber was in fact fighting a guerrilla war. He was fighting a guerrilla war in defense of Wild Nature. And there have been, as in all wars, casualties. Now why isn't the Unabomber a war hero like General Colin Powell? Why isn't he considered a hero? Well, we can look at General Colin Powell and say that he was responsible for killing hundreds of thousands of people in Iraq, and he was fighting a war in defense of America's right to control the price of oil. The Unabomber, on the other hand, was fighting a war against technology, in defense of Wild Nature, and he is by comparison considered a serial killer or a terrorist. Well, this is very interesting. This is a double standard, and I think it is very important that people realize this.

It's one thing if you have an objection to all violence, if you completely object to all violent acts. That's admirable. I myself completely object to violent acts, and I don't believe in violence as a way to change society. But I think that...people like me are the exception and not the rule. I think in fact if you look at the matter honestly, most Americans *supported* the war in Iraq. They supported the war for oil. So really we can say that most people aren't opposed to the use of violence so long as it serves their ends, so long as it supports *their* way of life.

And I think that is very important to understand. That we need to be honest and not be naive, and understand that the Unabomber was fighting a war on behalf of Wild Nature and the media was his target. He knew perfectly well that his ideas would never receive wide discussion unless he used violence to blackmail the media into discussing them. So he had a very sensible and effective military strategy.

**Eccles:** The ideas that he is bringing up would never be allowed to be discussed under any other circumstances except as a media story of crime which frankly has entertainment value.

So when people say to us why don't you pick a mainstream candidate who is expressing precisely those views, even expressing them better? Our response is that we had Alan Keyes on a hunger strike to try to be heard in the election and he was mainstream. So even people who are an iota of the mainstream don't have a voice.

So just as you are talking to us right now because of the fact that he is a killer, if we were here working for some no-name person you wouldn't be talking to us. And I think that the very fact that your network has covered the Unabomber with your response knowing that he struck a very important chord. Part of you doing the story is knowing that there is a fascination with the man and that he really did speak to everyone in what he did.

**Extra!:** Do you think there are more people out there who support the Unabomber than are actually admitting to it?

**Eccles:** We already claim as a constituency all the people who have taken the first step and stopped voting. When people stop voting they have taken the first step of voting for the Unabomber because they have decided that they have no power by voting. So I think that gives us the majority at this point, probably more than Clinton or Dole. So we can build on that foundation. We are really looking for the apathetic voter.

**Extra!:** And you Chris?

**Korda:** I agree. If everyone who usually stays home and doesn't vote gets out there and votes for the Unabomber, we will win in November. Because everybody knows perfectly well that the media interprets apathy as an affirmation of the system. That is the only way it could be interpreted.

It has to be interpreted that way because otherwise it would be too destabilizing to the whole notion of political freedom in this country. What if the media interpreted the apathy of the voters in this country as a rejection of the system? What would we have then?

Would we declare the elections null and void? In some European countries this happens. In some European countries if enough people don't vote, they have to redo the election. That doesn't happen here, and we have to ask why that doesn't happen here, and the reason that doesn't happen here is that the media is controlled by corporations.

It's not very good, for the corporations that control the media, if the message gets out that the political system is an illusion and nothing is really being decided. That's bad. That is not going to sell stuff. So it's very important that people realize this and instead of staying home and doing nothing, which would be interpreted as affirmation, they get out there and cast a vote for the Unabomber. Because a vote for the Unabomber can never be interpreted as anything but protest.



**Extra!:** Do you have any idea what the numbers are like of the people that actually support the Unabomber? Lydia, how many people in the area are actually more supportive than we known?

**Eccles:** Well first of all, a lot of people have directly contacted me and people already call up and know about the campaign already. But more importantly, when we look to the experts to see what the psyche of the voter is and the incredible importance the press has placed on the Unabomber, especially in terms of trying to take the politics out of the Unabomber.

Together with many, many letters to the editor, and columnists in every major paper writing empathetic columns. And on top of that, all you have to do is look at advertising and you see that the majority of advertising appeals to people on the basis of the kinds of desires for freedom and self realization that the Unabomber is talking about.

So we feel like is a certain number of conscious supporters, a lot of people who are very interested, and then a lot of people who are unconsciously connected to our campaign. And our tactic is to make them conscious of it, and make that act of liberation, actually going into the voting booth and actually freeing themselves that way.

We got a letter from someone who said I have never in my life voted, I never wanted to vote, and for the first time, I want to vote, I have a reason to vote, would you please put on your web page how I can register to vote. And that is stuff we are working to do.

**Extra!:** Why do you want the Unabomber to be president? Is it just because we are in a campaign year or if we weren't would it be something different? Is that the most important thing you could think of or is it specifically him?

**Korda:** The Unabomber can't be president: if elected he will not serve. So obviously, this isn't about the man, it isn't about actually getting him elected. It's about creating a utopian moment. It's about creating a rupture in the media system, the system that covers the political election.

If enough people actually get out there and actually vote for the Unabomber in November, it will be a stunning moment. It will be historical. Nothing like that will have ever happened before in American history and that's what we are really shooting for.

We are trying to create a situation in which the media will have to acknowledge that it is not business as usual. That things can't go on the way they have been going on. That's why we have the three R's.

We have to *reveal* the resignation that people feel. People feel resigned to their technological fate. They feel dependent. They feel powerless. They feel that things can't be any other way than the way they are. They are surrounded by plastic. They are surrounded by asphalt. They are surrounded by computers. Their lives are artificial and shallow and they don't know how to change it. They feel resigned to their fate. So we have to reveal that resignation.

We have to be honest about it and then we have to try and use that resignation to *rupture* the media system, to get people to be angry about their resignation and go out there and vote for the Unabomber as an act of protest. If they do that, that would rupture the political system, the political illusion. Then we have a *rapture*, a rapturous moment. A utopian moment where people can actually permit themselves, even if it's only for a minute, to begin to imagine a society based on pleasure and freedom, rather than punishment and control and expropriation.

**Extra!:** If this gentleman is actually the Unabomber, he doesn't have a computer, he doesn't have a web site. Why do you guys have a web site?

**Eccles:** That would be like saying why did the Unabomber go to the New York Times. He's critical of the media, why would he want the New York Times to publish his manifesto?

For the very same reason, we are dealing with a control system and we are trying to crack open that control system. That control system controls our ability to, as people, communicate amongst ourselves. And we have a false dialogue imposed upon us which isn't our dialogue so that state of dependency is a problem. We use it as a tool because that is the only way we can communicate.

We have no interest in being purists, our only interest is in winning by what ever way we can by non-violent methods.

People find it paradoxical but it's not paradoxical at all. We are using the Internet for the same reason that the Unabomber used the New York Times. Because the media is controlling the communications system. They are controlling the ideas that we are allowed to consider. It's all part of one system so that is our problem.

Our choices would be to not communicate at all or to use a system to which we've been put in forced dependency upon in order to have a dialogue. The only thing that makes it at all possible is the Unabomber's original act. The crime is what makes it possible. That's what gave us the power to communicate.

The reason that we have to use the tool of the control mechanism that we are opposing is because they have stripped us of every other means of communication. It's forced us to be dependent upon it. So we don't have a choice of another tool besides various forms of mass communications at this point.

We are on the Web to do this. We are not on the Web browsing. In fact there are lots of articles about why do computer people have so much interest in the Unabomber. And I think people forget that people who are working with computers on the Internet, these are people who are forced to spend their whole life in front of the screen. Of course they are the ones who are most interested in the Unabomber. And furthermore, half the time when they come and hit on our Web page, they do it at work.

**Korda:** People keep asking if we are such luddites, if we support the Unabomber's ideas, why are we on the Internet? And the answer is, mutant times call for mutant tools. The best tools to dismantle something are the tools that were used to create it.

In this case, technological society is composed of whole layers of control and hierarchy, education, entertainment, advertising, the newspapers, the radio, the television.

All of these are layers of control by which humans are adapted to technological society. Psychiatry is another layer of control. People are actually encouraged to accept themselves, to accept their fate, to be resigned.

So we feel that the best way to attack these layers of control is to use them against themselves. That's why we try and engage you, the media. We try and engage the media and transmit messages that are essentially viruses. These are messages that are antithetical to the whole corporate system of control.

**Extra!:** Why would people support the Unabomber?

**Eccles:** I'm glad that people ask that question. And it's a question that we ask ourselves. They should sit down and ask themselves, why am I being presented with certain deaths and not others. For instance, when our enslavement to the automobile means that every year there are going to be more cases of deadly skin cancer, auto fatalities, death from stress, from working, deaths from eating high fat foods, from a sedentary lifestyle. Is there any place that those deaths are ever counted? And because they are never counted, they are anonymous. We subject ourselves to an anonymous serial killer. If you took that anonymous serial killer, that technological system with corporations, you would find that the Unabomber's killing would be nothing next to that.

**Extra!:** How do you explain that to a kid in eighth grade?

**Eccles:** I have no problem. Eighth graders understand this campaign immediately. We have no problem with young people. They understand that we are dealing with their future. The best person for this campaign is someone just out of college and realizing that they are supposed to give up the rest of their lives for something meaningless, in order to further a system that is drawing us to extinction.

I mean basically technology is the opposite of adaption. I mean normally what animals do is they adapt themselves to live harmoniously with the environment they are in. And what man has done is created technology which is a counter-adaption to the earth. It's a system of conquest and we are getting to the end of that now.

We are getting to the point where we are going to make ourselves extinct because we are unwilling to adapt to our environment. It's a collision course and people can either say we are going to remain on this path and create a bigger and bigger artificial environment or they can take the opposite path and say no, we are going to try and live in equilibrium and harmony with the earth.

But there is no middle ground, there is too much denial going on. People can push out of their minds uncomfortable truths, but we are on cars to the death camps and we're not willing to talk about it.

**Extra!:** Could you get the person who is whistling? Someone is whistling! These are great answers but the reality is this is probably going to be a two minute piece.

**Camera Person:** Try and shrink the length of your answers a little bit.

**Extra!:** Lydia, you just talked about a collision course, do you think it is too late, is there any point, why bother?

**Eccles:** I don't think it is too late at all. As long as we are in a trance, as long as we are in a collective trance, it is too late. But if we can make a rupture...I'm a very hopeful person and this whole campaign is about the opportunity that the Unabomber created. That is exciting.

**Extra!:** How's that sound in the background? We'll just have to deal with it. We are in a cafe.

(a lengthy discussion about B-roll and production issues)

**Korda:** I have something I want to add.

**Extra!:** We'll get to that, keep it in your mind. We probably pulled something from the wire on you right?

**Korda:** We sent you a press release.

**Mass High Tech:** What's your interest in this? Why did you come here to interview these folks?

**Extra!:** Because it's my job.

**MHT:** But what's your personal interest in this?

**Extra!:** It's my job. I'd be in New Hampshire skiing if this were not my job.

**MHT:** You have no personal interest in this?

**Extra!:** No, I'm just a reporter.

**Korda:** We should tell you about our reporter self-help group.

**Extra!:** Reporter self-help group.

**MHT:** How long have you been reporting?

**Extra!:** About two years.

**MHT:** Do you like it?

**Extra!:** Yes.

**MHT:** Is this one of the more interesting stories that you have done?

**Extra!:** No. I'm an entertainment reporter.

**MHT:** And this isn't entertainment?

**Extra!:** Well, I normally do actors. That's my thing. I'm an actress. We have to get on with this because they have only booked these people for half a day.

## Chris Korda interviewed by Fez Gielen

**Source:** <[archive.org/details/ChrisKordaInterviewedByFezGielenTranscription](http://archive.org/details/ChrisKordaInterviewedByFezGielenTranscription)>  
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**Authors:** Chris Korda, Fez Gielen

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Chris Korda interviewed by Fez Gielen. Subjects include assisted suicide, the Church of Euthanasia, antihumanism, post-antihumanism, neo-primitivism, the Unabomber, the supremacy of scientific knowledge, the value of civilization, and the importance

of non-procreation. The original audio recording is also available. Thanks to Norah Scooter Burch for laboriously cleaning up the machine transcription.

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**RADIO:** So I did my assigned readings and. But I'll be asking some questions at those that like the manifesto for instance addresses already but for the sake of our listeners... and I'm sure you know you've done a lot of repeating yourself...

**CHRIS:** But not lately, actually.

**RADIO:** No I guess it's been a while.

**CHRIS:** I don't interact with the public anywhere near as much as I did for a while there. I was doing it every day and I got pretty practiced at it. You might say I learned my lines. It was a little like being a politician or... being a reverend is a lot like being a politician in the sense that the main thing that you have to do is remember people's names, or it sure helps. And you kind of have to put people at ease and interact with crowds; be a forceful public speaker and give an impression of command over your topic so that people will... not really I mean you know... I don't necessarily... it's not like being a politician in the sense that you want to fool people, which is unfortunately what politicians do. You might argue that their main skill is telling ten different people ten different things but making it sound like you agree with all of them. Telling people exactly what you've determined they want to hear... so I don't do anything like that; I mostly tell people things that they *don't* want to hear. That's a big difference.

**RADIO:** And is there a reason you're in the public less?

**CHRIS:** Yeah I was a little overexposed. I think at one point it became physically much too dangerous and also the times changed. At the time when the church was the most publicly active in the late 90s and early oughts, it was a different world. 9/11 changed a lot of things but there was so much more change coming, by the end it was almost unrecognizable. You know today I think that if we tried to do anything like what we did then it would be lethal. I would be doxed, I would be beaten up, killed... Increasingly America is beginning to resemble Latin America or Central America in the sense that, you know, the rich are living in gated compounds surrounded by private security and barbed wire.

The economic inequality has reached a point so corrosive that there's the real possibility of violence. Not so much organized violence as in revolution, but just individual violence. People just, you know, disenfranchised people who just can't take it anymore taking out their aggression on the nearest person who doesn't fit into their puzzle. So that's, you know, anything that is different is suddenly very dangerous. This often happens, I mean, if we look back at the history of fascism this is how it works right—fascism is all about conformity and to the extent that somebody is nonconforming, that's a test of how politically liberal the times are. Right now the times are super not politically liberal; they're very fascistic, and it's so consequently it's very dangerous to be different in a way that it wasn't before.

**RADIO:** Were you met with that kind of aggression or violence?

**CHRIS:** Oh yeah, there's an escalating scale of violence and we were somewhere on it. I've certainly been, you know, chased; pelted with bottles. I narrowly escaped getting some free dental surgery on numerous occasions and mostly only because I had the presence of mind to have bodyguards, so typically for some of the more drastic church actions it was like running a small army; the general would be in the back, not exactly on the front, there would be a little crew of people standing around me to make sure that nobody got too close. And that's just normal, I mean, that's how you do things if you're if you're an experienced operative. You get some experience of working on the streets; you learn how to do it without getting killed, but, there were certainly lots of close calls; enough close calls to make me concerned. There were tons of death threats, of course. People were starting to figure out where I lived and all of that.

I think probably the point when it became really much too dangerous was after a bunch of people actually did kill themselves. That started to bring heat in a different form. That meant potentially not just heat from the police or, you know, from prosecutors and so on because there I think we were on fairly safe ground; certainly no more tenuous than the Hemlock Society. Distributing information about how to kill yourself is not a crime in the way that, for example, Dr. Kevorkian committed a crime; actually hooking people up to your own jerry-built carbon monoxide machine and watching them die, leaving their bodies in cars. That's a crime, but just distributing information on how to kill yourself efficiently and without any harmful effects on anyone else, that's not a crime... but that doesn't mean that you're immune from civil suits. And so, in the cases where people killed themselves following our instructions and then left information attributing that to us, there's the potential for the family of the deceased to come after us for wrongful death, and that's that was a real threat too and so that was another reason that it seemed advisable to lie low.

**RADIO:** Right now you still have instructions on how to kill oneself on your website.

**CHRIS:** I don't actually know those were removed decades or more than a decade ago but the instructions of course never really die because... God bless them, the Internet Archive and their Wayback Machine keeps everything alive forever. That's their idea, the stated aim of Internet Archive is to back up the entire Internet forever. We'll see how well that lasts into the future, but for the moment it means that if you type the right search term you can certainly find the instructions but they're not technically on our... on any server that I have any control over and that's by design.

**RADIO:** Oh but there's a link from the Church of Euthanasia site to another site at least if you check that while I was browsing Yeah I came across...

**CHRIS:** Oh yeah, really? What page is that? Let's have a look.

**RADIO:** Maybe it's under "Resources"? OK So it's a church approved link; I guess it's not your website, the ASH space

**CHRIS:** Sorry where is that?

**RADIO:** So it's the alt suicide holiday

**CHRIS:** Oh yeah but those weren't our instructions. We had much more serious stuff than that. Alt dot suicide holiday is very old; that's old hat, that's been around since the mid 90's at least. And... they have a billion methods there. They just try to list every conceivable suicide method including some very silly stuff that, is probably not a good idea but. It's a fact I'd say that most of what they list is not a good idea it's your typical kind of B.B.S. style internet group that... hearkens back to the days of, you know, newsgroups and the Alt newsgroups, especially—which is exactly what it is. So that was a very different environment, they're more just sort of showing off how much they know about suicide methods. But no, our list was very practical. We had a simple test... you can find it here... I'll point you at it. If you type "Church of Euthanasia suicide method" I'm pretty sure that'll bring it up, let's just see if I'm right about that... but the Internet Archive is amazing.

**RADIO:** Suicide method?

**CHRIS:** Yeah it doesn't look like it... let's see, how interesting. Doesn't seem to be showing up yet we could also try... Yeah I mean I it may have actually... wait wait wait wait wait. Hold on, I'm not using the right title to the guide. Church of Euthanasia's guide to suicide with helium. This looks pretty good this might be it.

**RADIO:** OK Well here's a Telegraph article called "predators tell children how to kill themselves." **CHRIS:** Here it is yeah all the stuff is out there right so here is an exact copy of it. If you type "Church of Euthanasia suicide meta-guide" with a hyphen, it'll come right up.

**RADIO:** OK Great yeah here you go.

**CHRIS:** And you know these are very specific concrete instructions about how to kill yourself with a tank of helium. And you might ask why we picked that and... it's a good question, but you didn't ask it but I'll answer it anyway. There is a simple test that the Church of Euthanasia used to evaluate suicide methods it's called the QPCDSAT test. It's an acronym. It stands for: Quick, Painless, Certain, Discreet, Safe, Accessible, and Tidy. Don't forget the tidy. And so any test that flunks one or more of those criteria is not approved. It's really as simple as that, and it's actually very difficult to find a suicide method that passes that test—it's a pretty stringent test. Of course "safe" doesn't mean safe for you—it means safe for *others*. People sometimes get confused about that. "Quick" is simple enough; "Painless" is also understandable. "Certain" is a very very important one—there's lots of suicide methods that, you know, can be very effective *except* when they go wrong. Guns are a classic example. Guns are a terrific suicide method, likely to pass most of the tests (although they're not very tidy), but they're actually not all that certain. It's surprising how many times people survive a self-inflicted gun wound and just become brain damaged. That's considered a super negative outcome. That's really not what you had in mind. So anyway certainty is important. Discreet—so a lot of people don't consider that. Driving your car into a brick wall or something is not very discreet.

Yes, so anyway... there's all these tests that we apply, but the key about helium is that it actually is accessible, so you don't need any kind of special license to buy helium; it's not a controlled substance and it's widely available. They use it to inflate balloons and lots of other things. You show up somewhere and demand a tank of helium, nobody's going to give you the slightest... you know... they're not going to look at you twice, which would not be true, for example, if you showed up and asked to buy... let's say... a tank of nitrous oxide, which would also work pretty well. Or, for that matter, if you showed up and tried to buy a tank of carbon monoxide and... we could get into a separate debate there because carbon monoxide is actually explosive and flammable so, you know, there's lots of reasons why it would be a bad idea. In short, any noble gas would do. You could make do with nitrogen. Nitrogen is seventy percent of the atmosphere, I figure roughly. You can breathe it absolutely easily.

There is a point I didn't explain about all this, which actually should have come up from the beginning, and something that the average person wouldn't necessarily be expected to know—which is that suffocation is not what most people think. Suffocation is not oxygen deprivation. You might think it is—it seems logical that it would be—but it isn't. What I mean is that your body does not have an oxygen sensor; it just doesn't. What your body has is a *carbon dioxide* sensor, so the reason you feel like you're suffocating if you put a bag over your head, is because you're breathing in your own carbon dioxide. Your body has evolutionarily adapted an ability to sense that. It's a useful thing; it's evolved over billions of years and not all—not only in humans—most animals can sense suffocation. But the point is—you're sensing the *presence* of something, not the *absence* of something. So suppose I gave you a gas to breathe that didn't contain any oxygen but that was on the list of gases that you can breathe easily, like for example nitrogen, which is most of the atmosphere. In that case you would just breathe perfectly normally. You would have no sense of suffocation, you wouldn't feel uncomfortable; you wouldn't know that anything was wrong. You would just sit there and breathe and about thirty seconds later you'd be unconscious.

**RADIO:** Wow.

**CHRIS:** Yeah that's just true... and then about five minutes after that you'd be stone dead... from oxygen deprivation... which you never saw coming. And in fact, the proof of this is... this happens fairly often in industry, so it's a common enough source of death if you look into—for example—nitrogen poisoning as a source of death; it's fairly common because there are plenty of industrial environments where you need to fill a room full of nitrogen, or for that matter argon, or there are other gases which are nontoxic—they pose no threat to you—but one hundred percent solution of them, meaning to the exclusion of everything else including oxygen, is absolutely lethal. And so this is how it works: as helium is one of these gases—you can breathe helium quite easily—the only way you'll even know anything's unusual is that your voice will get squeaky, but other than that you'll just sit there and breathe it, and you'll feel fine because you're not being exposed to carbon dioxide, so your body is fooled.



**RADIO:** Right. OK.

**CHRIS:** Right. So I mean... it's good to clear all that up. So is all of this was there; it was information we distributed, and it led to people killing themselves, and it generated a lot of publicity—as you can imagine—that was more or less the idea, right? And so it was a successful strategy, except that it became too hot. So we backed off, you know, as we'd made our point—we didn't need to keep doing it. No need to be greedy.

**RADIO:** Sure although, I mean the end goal you know, I mean... you still have billions to go

**CHRIS:** Well yeah... but there was... that wasn't the point of... there was no question that, you know, we were never... one of the common misnomers about the Church of Euthanasia is that people imagine that we set out to actually reduce the human population but this was always strictly a quixotic goal. Nobody who organized this church from the beginning ever really believed that that was going to happen. Instead, the deeper goal was to start a conversation about anti-humanism and in that we were very successful. I like to argue that we made anti-humanism a relatively household word at a time when that was simply not the case. So Save the Planet Kill Yourself was a breakout hit. It absolutely was. I mean as a bumper sticker alone hundreds and thousands of those bumper stickers went out and those were just the ones, you know, that I know about... before people started copying them. It's one of the most widely copied bumper stickers. It's, according to Spencer Gifts, which was which was my main distributor, that's like one hundred malls across the country, right off the bat or no—five hundred malls at the time—it was a huge number there were malls selling the sticker in suburbia all across the country and they... they couldn't keep them in stock! We were sending them enormous quantities—so many that it became a real nuisance—I mean it—I had to hire a special company to print them. We would count them, and they had to be banded into packs of ten. I can remember being, like up to my waist in bumper stickers. It was just absurd, the amount of bumper stickers that went out. And so those bumper stickers were quietly changing reality, in the sense that right there was a cryptic message embedded in that slogan, which, according to Spencer Gifts, was right up there with you know... “Don't like my driving? Dial 1-800 eat shit”—that's, by the way, their all-time best seller for, you know—obviously we were never going to beat that—but we were up there; we were up in the top ten, you know, and so for a while there we had it good—and that message was just being disseminated everywhere basically for free, right? And better than for free; we were being paid—very well actually—thirty five cents a sticker to disseminate this message. All of this well within the mission set forth by our tax exemption, according to the I.R.S. in a conversation which I had with them. You can think you talk to the IRS. But at a certain level you do when you've founded a nonprofit it can happen and so I had a long talk with them and they explained to me that that we could absolutely sell bumper stickers and still be a church, so long as the bumper stickers proselytized our message.

So quietly while all this was occurring, anti-humanism was being normalized to the point where nowadays it's no longer controversial—now you read about anti-humanism in *The New Yorker* and, you know, the *New York Times* or whatever; in mainstream media. It's no longer a particularly new idea, but at the time, believe it, it was. This was long before *Life After People*; this was when, you know, the Voluntary Human Extinction movement was still at least as marginal as the Church of Euthanasia. All these things were really esoteric. They were only people who were part of punk culture or people who read zines and stuff knew about it. But we changed all that—we brought antihumanism out into the limelight and gave it its fifteen minutes. And it got its fifteen minutes by a long shot, so I feel that this is the real accomplishment of the Church of Euthanasia.

**RADIO:** Sure, well in so there's some irony here right that part of part of what led to the guys sort of pulling back a bit is you receiving death threats

**CHRIS:** Yeah but it's proof of success. Yes, that's ironic in the sense that death threats were merely proof that we've actually accomplished our mission. If we were completely obscure nobody would bother sending us death threats, because we're not ... interesting.

**RADIO:** Right, sure.

**CHRIS:** So...the fact that it became dangerous was proof that we were starting to find the target.

**RADIO:** Right. And on that note I mean so I've been telling some people about this leading up to this conversation, and I mean the first question everyone asks is... or you know the first comment made is like so Chris Korda's a hypocrite right because Chris Korda is still alive.

**CHRIS:** You know yeah this is the oldest church question... and it's not a very interesting question. The real point about this is that it's none of anyone's business actually what I do.

**RADIO:** Sure, OK.

**CHRIS:** If I kill myself, I kill myself. If I *don't* kill myself, I *don't* kill myself. That's *my* decision. I get to decide whether ...*that*. I may or I may not that's up to me to choose the time and place. It's not up to anyone else, so it's not it's not even an interesting point—it's the *least* interesting question you could ask about the Church of Euthanasia... there are one hundred other questions you could ask that would be more interesting... and so this was always the problem with this question. Is that is that it makes the person who ...a certain kind of person... it makes the person who asks it feel like they're super smart; they can say 'huh huh huh gotcha!' You know, it's a kind of trolling question. Its pure form is something like "Why aren't you dead yet?" And the answer is... the short answer is "don't nudge."

**RADIO:** Right, sure.

**CHRIS:** Of course, they could then say "well that's what you're doing, right? You guys are encouraging other people to do it!" You know, the answer is "Yeah, what's your

point in the end?” There is nothing there’s nothing to discuss there, is the problem. It doesn’t lead to anything interesting; it just leads to at least to a kind of troll fest.

**RADIO:** Yeah I see. So to go back a bit we could use or to give like a brief history of the church or your sorta early forays in activism... it started with Unabomber for president, right?

**CHRIS:** No, no, no, that’s not correct at all. No, the church started way before that. The Church started in 1991, and it started with Save the Planet Kill Yourself. That was the shot fired... that was heard around the world. That took off very, very rapidly and it led to a whole chain of events. It led to the first church actions which took place in Cambridge Massachusetts... in Harvard Square, and other places. Including... there was a participation in an anti-vivisection march where we marched with a sign that said “Kill your fetus not your pet.” That was an early...kind of, practice run for what became a much more elaborate and well-oiled strategy of attaching ourselves to other, larger organizations and especially to their events, and using them as a way of surfing... to a greater public awareness of our of our aims.

So, for example, the canonical example of this—the most famous example—is the fetus barbecue. That was much later when the church was already a well-established organization, but so you could have had a fetus barbecue any other day of the year on the Boston Common and nobody would have paid much notice. There just would have been a bunch of guys with, you know, weird signs and giant banners and a barbecue grill... and nobody would have even seen it, or maybe the police would have come by, but probably not. But to have a fetus barbecue at the same time as the largest pro-life march in New England is a totally different proposition. At that point you’re having a fetus barbecue in front of Cardinal Law, you understand? Different. That’s situationism. The essence of situationism is that time and place matter, and that you have to modulate your message according to what the immediate audience is; that what will drive one audience, you know, one audience crazy will be ignored by another. So it’s all very specific. You have to *know*... you need intelligence in fact there was a whole unit of the church whose aim was to kind of ferret out information about what was going to happen in the future that might be interesting and that might be the opportunity for a dada event, which is what this is—Dada as in the famous art movement in the 1920s—Marcel Duchamp and all that. What we are is Neo-Dadaists. We use some of the same strategies that the Dadaists evolved back in the 20’s, to rile up crowds and to communicate in unorthodox ways, and to reach a vastly larger audience than they otherwise might have.

We use many of those strategies to our benefit and they often involved manipulating other organizations, particularly organizations we didn’t care for, like for example, right wing Christians. They turned out to be surprisingly easy to manipulate, so the Fetus Barbeque was an example of that... but also the sperm bank action was another very good example of that. We managed to get Christians to protest against a sperm bank simply by posing as another organization. We sent them faxes saying that we were going to protest at the sperm bank, against the sperm banks using fetal tissue

which is of course a total lie; a fabrication. But the Christians were so gullible that they showed up anyway and so then instead of finding an organization protesting with them they found an organization protesting against them so they basically were just used as a prop; they became a backdrop to our action. This is typical of how the Church operated. We would move other organizations around like pieces on a chessboard, generally because most other organizations were... not only were they not typically well-schooled in the tactics of situationism, but they also sort of they tend to be kind of do-gooders, and they think of themselves as benevolent. But we never had any, you know, illusions about that, so we were more—what’s the word I’m looking for—we were more... Machiavellian. We would outfox them from the beginning, and this was just how we operated. This is how we were able to leap into the limelight so quickly.

**RADIO:** So yeah... you’ve described the church as sort of an art piece before; as Dadaist—and I know that you guys, sort of, would use these, you know, the situationism, as more of these extreme messages to shock people and to start these conversations.

**CHRIS:** Yeah I mean you can’t... It’s clear that “Eat a Queer Fetus for Jesus” is a shocking statement, even today. If you put that on your car, you might get your windshield broken... so it was shocking then, and it’s shocking now, and it probably always will be shocking. And so, in that sense, it’s a score—like to the extent that I sat down one day and thought of that. I was ahead of the curve. I was coming up with ways to bend people’s consciousness around new ideas that were previously heretical, or that, you know, that would somehow be inconceivable.

**RADIO:** Right, so... I don’t know if you can answer this but so... where does like, the shock and the rabble rousing sort of... what’s the distinction between the rabble rousing and what you actually believe? Like what’s just shit disturbance and what, you know, is something you truly believe in a message you’re actually trying to get out there.

**CHRIS:** Well OK there’s a huge difference between the public perception of the Church of Euthanasia and ...the intentions of its founders. And of course even a difference between those two things and my own ... personal... way of looking at things. All those things are correlated and they have... overlaps, but they are different. So the public perception of the Church of Euthanasia, for example, is Save the Planet Kill Yourself. Let’s go back to that... so most people took that at face value and said OK well you know you know they thought “Ha ha that’s funny like I’m going to put that on my truck” and because... “I’m basically telling everybody to screw off like you should kill yourself” kind of thing, or they thought, “yeah I agree with that; we ought to save the planet.”

But the problem is that the statement is... a paradox. In fact, as we’ve discussed—I think previously—it wasn’t the planet that needs saving; it still isn’t. Think about it: this is the whole point that the *Life After People* guy made... That in fact, if humans were to disappear in an instant... the natural organisms that remained would be more

or less covering the whole surface of the earth again within five hundred years. Which is considerably, you know, shorter than human history, which is already an eyeblink by geological time scales. So the point is that *human beings* are what needs saving, not the planet. If humans press on their current course, it's not going to be the *planet* that's destroyed, it's going to be human civilization that's destroyed. Here we have to be careful... it's possible that some form of humanity could survive such events... so for example, suppose we push on without pause and go all the way to six degrees Celsius; basically create, you know, Planet of Reptiles again—side point—so the place where we're going in terms of the climate is not a place that's inconceivable at all.

In fact, the history of the earth has seen such conditions before. The problem though, is that such conditions don't favor mammals. The fundamental difference between mammals and reptiles is that mammals actually need to stay cool. Mammals evolved in relatively cool times. They're not well suited to a super-hot ultra-tropical climate. Reptiles are suited to that climate. That's why they're called they're called 'cold-blooded animals;' they are fundamentally different—they have a different system of respiration, and so they can take much hotter temperatures. In fact, they thrive in super-hot humid environments. So the mucky, hot, broilingly hot world that we're hell-bent on creating would not favor us. So ultimately it would lead back to Reptile Planet. The last time that the planet was as warm as we're proposing to make it, there were palm trees in the Arctic. There were crocodiles in the Arctic—look it up if you don't believe me. This is just true; that's how it worked.

This is well within the range of what's happened on Earth before and so the point is that... there is something that people really don't see... which is that human civilization is fragile—and this is my real message for you. Human civilization is new and it's fragile and so... I'm not saying that if we pushed ahead with our stupidity that there couldn't be some, you know, bands of humans still surviving— maybe cowering in caves...

[unclear] that's possible... Giant Reptiles, but I wouldn't call that a win, and I don't think you would either. The point is... that the thing that makes humanity interesting... the part of us that's plausibly worth saving; worth even discussing... is not our animal-ness, because we share that in common with all the other animals who evolved here. The part of us that makes us interesting and special and worth saving... is our *humanness*, which means our civilization. Which is all in a very short time—even compared to our own biological history we've only had anatomically modern humans for a couple hundred thousand years. But civilization is vastly shorter than that; orders of magnitude shorter than that. The history of civilization is mostly the last five thousand years, and since it's exponential, you could make a case that the part of it that's really interesting is only the last couple of hundred years. So that's beyond an eyeblink on geological time scales. That's just too small to even consider. It's almost... from the point of view of the geological time scale of earth, that is essentially instantaneous. We've gone from being kind of stumbling overgrown apes to being full-blown planet dominators in a few hundreds of years.

That's interesting. That's amazing, and it may have terrible consequences, but it is at least interesting, and the good parts of that are arguably worth saving. And that's the post-anti-human Church of Euthanasia. The post-anti-human Church of Euthanasia is all about understanding what is special about humans and what's worth saving. And, of course as you probably gather from your readings, what's worth saving is our rationality; our ability to actually comprehend the universe. That's unique. There is no other animal on earth that does that, and we don't know that there are other animals anywhere else, or anything anywhere else in the universe that does that.

There may be life forms out there that have acquired our level of understanding of their situation, but we can't prove that now because of the distances involved. We're not going to be able to prove that in any amount of time that matters to us. And so for the moment we have to assume; we have to presume that we are a kind of intelligent scuzz that has evolved on this chunk of rock that's whipping through space at an almost inconceivable speed, and that we are alone... alone in a totally indifferent universe. This is what the Hubble telescope makes abundantly clear—that most of the universe is *uninhabitable*. Couldn't go anywhere near it in fact. Vast chunks of the universe are either empty, and just unimaginably freezing cold, or even worse, they're broilingly hot and filled with exploding plasma, black holes, stuff like that. Stuff that, you know, if you were even within light years of it you'd be fucked. You can't be anywhere near it, so most of the universe is just basically completely antithetical to our existence.

There's no hope and so we're not going anywhere. Rich guys can, you know, transport themselves to the moon and Mars all they want, but it doesn't solve the fundamental problem. We do not have a life support system anywhere else in the universe at this time except on earth, and so we either survive here or we don't. But either way it's of no relevance to the universe itself. The universe is unaware of our existence and indifferent to our existence, and so to the extent that humans screw up and make earth uninhabitable themselves we're the only ones that matters to. The animals on it ... in fact for animals, it'll be an improvement. For squirrels it'll be an improvement. OK you could argue that for cows and chickens possibly, and certainly for corn and maybe roaches and rats and other species that have relatively been beneficiaries of humanity's takeover of earth's surface—for them it'll be tough shit—so they won't have as good a time as they did, though you've got to make a case that for most of those species, they existed before us, they could exist after us too in somewhat reduced conditions, and it'll all work out for them.

There's no danger of roaches going extinct, but there's a huge danger of humanity going extinct or at least of human civilization becoming untenable and going extinct. Those are real plausible dangers, and in fact there's every reason to believe that this is going to happen; that if human civilization is still around in twenty one hundred—I won't be there to verify it—but you know, color me amazed because if ever there were a lifeform hell-bent on its own destruction it's got to be human beings.

**RADIO:** So I haven't really heard you talk this way before. I read the Metadelusion blog but um... **CHRIS:** It's all about science; I mean Metadelusion is all about science.

**RADIO:** So but...

**CHRIS:** Essentially, Metadelusion rose out of a debate with Lydia Eccles, who was the founder of the Unabomber for president campaign. She is a neo-primitivist, which I am not. I am not a neo-primitive.

I had neo-primitive sympathies at one time—I think that they have their points, and I was you know, I'm not going to say that I *appreciate* Ted Kaczynski—I read the Unabomber's manifesto very carefully, and I think there's a lot a lot in it worth considering, but ultimately I don't agree with his premise. I once wrote a pretty well-known critique of it which was published in *the Realist*, but that's another story. I think that his methods, you know, were misguided at best. I don't think he really reached the people that he hoped he would have reached. But aside from that, I think that his fundamental message rests on a misassumption. I don't think that... I think that what he gets wrong, and that what Lydia gets wrong, is that there's anything about humanity worth saving *other* than our rationality and our ability to understand the universe. The rest of it—you know—forget it. This is the point of Metadelusion. The argument grew out of a fundamental debate over the specialness of scientific knowledge. Lydia accused me of "scientism" and to some extent... she's not *right*... I wouldn't say she's *right*—it's more that—she's seeing something real—what she's seeing is that I have contempt for other modes of knowledge. So, like, she would try to argue that Buddhism is a perfectly valid and equal mode of knowledge to science, or you know—substitute some other system or alleged system—and so my point about that is that that's absurd. I'm like Richard Dawkins. I mean [I'm an] absolutely unreconstructed you know—unrepentant is, sorry, the word I mean—unrepentant rationalist... in the sense that I don't accept that there's any other mode of inquiry that can arrive at real truth other than the scientific method. Anything else is just childishness. It's as simple as that.

We have we have a method for establishing whether something is in fact provisionally true, because if remember your Karl Popper you'll know that nothing is actually ever proved true forever—it doesn't work like that—things are only proved false. And so everything that we consider true for the moment is provisionally true. So gravity is provisionally true. It's the best explanation we've got for the phenomena, and until we see something better, it will do. So the real point about science; the point that Metadelusion is striving for—through its many thousands of words to make—is that science works in a very simple way. It works like this: every explanation of phenomena is judged by how predictive it is. Nothing else. In order for your explanation to receive any credit; in order for anyone to even be interested in your explanation, it has to be not just repeatable; it has to be not just testable; it has to be not only repeatable—even by people who hate your guts which is how peer review works—much more fundamentally than all of those things, it has to be predictive. And its explanations that are predictive have merit, and are preserved. Explanations that fail to be predictive are cast aside

and falsified. This is what we inherit from Karl Popper, and the road of our history is littered with failed explanations.

**RADIO:** All right.

**CHRIS:** So this what Metadelusion is about. Metadelusion is about the idea that there is something worth saving in humanity... and what's worth saving in humanity is that we're capable of actually understanding ourselves. We're capable of understanding the periodic table. We found bacteria, right? We observe the motions of the stars and we're able to understand what they're made of. This is no joke. When Einstein said "the moon is really out there," he wasn't joking. That's a scientific statement. It's funny—it was probably funnier in German—but what, in other words, the point about it is that that the moon is out there whether you believe in it or not. You know, and there are cranks who believe that it isn't perhaps, and certainly ...in humans' dark pre-history, people, you know, imagined that the moon was made of cheese or whatever they thought. But none of that matters. The fact that humans were simpletons in the past is not relevant now. Simpletons can be discounted. Because we stand on the shoulders of giants. You understand? We stand on generations now of brilliant people who gave their lives to chisel out one more little small piece of reality and understand it deeply. And those individual journeys—very isolated at first—remember, before the Renaissance, each scientist essentially worked alone, unable to communicate with other scientists in many cases, had to repeat the entire infrastructure of science from scratch starting with the most basic logic and algebra. Because there was no way to share information; there was no mail; there was no Internet. Everybody was on their own but... that's not true anymore; today we have we have Wikipedia. Today I can I could trivially look up anything and get to the bottom of it almost immediately.

And so today we truly stand on the shoulders of giants and it's because of this that you have a cell phone in your pocket, not because of childish wishful thinking. This was the point of Metadelusion. This was what upset Lydia so terribly. She couldn't accept that actually... belief is childish, and yet this is the essence of what I'm saying. I don't ...you know when I hear somebody use the word 'belief' I reach for my revolver. I don't believe anything.

**RADIO:** But you have, you clearly have an affinity for science. So, it's sort of surprising to me, I mean...

**CHRIS:** I'm a scientist for fuck's sake! I mean that's what I spent my whole life doing! I'm an engineer! I mean in my work—you gotta understand—in my work right, if you fail to predict phenomena, then your stuff just doesn't work ...and you'll find yourself out of a job. That's what engineering is.

Engineering is applied science. I spent thirty-five years building vast systems that depend critically on being correct, on actually fully understanding reality! Your wishful thinking counts for nothing in such a world. I... you know... I worked constantly with people who were further up the scientific food chain than I am, and the message was clear; the message is that Pythagoras is as real as your nose. The Pythagorean Theorem couldn't be more true. There's twenty seven proofs of it just on Wikipedia. If



Pythagoras weren't true, every building on earth would fall over. Our universe would simply couldn't be possible. We only can live in a universe where Pythagoras is true; it's just as true as a thing can be.

And so the point is that ...you know... it's just absurd to try to imagine that our wishful thinking about our origins as ensconced in things like, you know, the patriarchal religions, or Buddhism or Hinduism or whatever... that our wishful, magical thinking, could have any value compared to a system as firmly grounded in truth as the scientific mode of inquiry. This is just laughable. It's embarrassing and the fact that there are, you know, that what a third of the people in the United States think that Earth is only three thousand... or six thousand years old... this is just an outrage! We live in a time of desperate know-nothingism... In which people are *proud* of their ignorance. And this is shameful. It's a horror, and to the extent that this persists, humanity doesn't deserve to survive.

**RADIO:** Right... and so that's... I mean, that's why I sort of so... OK so that's why this sort of surprised me... because you've written a lot about speciesism and... so I mean it's one thing to you know be a proponent of science and believe in it or something...

**CHRIS:** No, but I don't believe in it. Remember, I told you I don't believe in anything. But do you really understand what I mean by that?

**RADIO:** I mean I'm not going to be able to articulate it like you.

**CHRIS:** The point is that science doesn't require belief

**RADIO:** Sure right yeah right it's just... it's just... it just *is*.

**CHRIS:** NO! No, we wish! No no no no... the problem is it requires proof, and proof is work! The real point about magical thinking is that it's *easy*. Magical thinking is the refuge of scoundrels... to famously misquote... you know it really is, because scoundrels love magical thinking, because it's so easy. The Church of Scientology can sling out any shit they like. They can sling out cheesy science fiction and people lap it up because people love easy answers to hard questions. But science isn't like that. Science is all about hard answers to questions... Answers that actually require deep understanding, careful, long, laborious work. The point is that truth isn't free, not really. You have to ascertain it.

**RADIO:** I guess it surprises me that you think the pursuit of these answers is worthwhile. I guess because...

**CHRIS:** Look if you mean you think it surprises you that I would be willing to see Earth destroyed in order to preserve human civilization? Yes. That is shocking, right; shocking coming from the founder of an anti-humanist organization. It is truly shocking, I agree and that's why it's the post-anti-human Church of Euthanasia. In other words, I had what you what you might call a conversion. I saw something that I didn't see originally, and what I saw is that squirrels are all very well. But squirrels... are not ultimately interesting. Sorry but there's a reason why we don't name them, not really. There's a reason why we name humans but we don't, you know, name every squirrel that we ever see. It's not that squirrels don't have rights—we grant them rights. This

is the point. Squirrels don't grant us rights; they can't because rights don't exist for them. Now do you see? The point is that the whole superstructure of human experience and knowledge that allows us even to conceptualize universal rights—even for humans never mind for non-humans—this is a *human* thing, only *humans* could construct such a thing because only humans have the sufficient neurological developments that have allowed us to achieve full self-awareness. And this is the flame worth preserving, and if that experiment causes the destruction of civilization then so be it.

Because what other experiment would you run? So I argue the point is, that the reason this is causing cognitive dissonance for you is because I'm arguing in the Antihumanism Manifesto that humanity should exterminate itself precisely because it's capable of feeling guilty for having done all these terrible things.

**RADIO:** Well this flame that you talk about like our intelligence has come at the cost of you know, all these other species being wiped out...

**CHRIS:** Yeah, but it's come at a huge cost to us too; fully half of the human population right now lives on ten dollars a day or less. A solid third of the human population goes to bed hungry every night and is considered absolute poor. Ok? This is true—you can just look it up in the UN numbers—a third! Right? Of—what is it—seven and a half billion people... that's a lot of hungry people! And so you could make a case that human civilization has been a disaster for humans too! And in fact this was exactly the Unabomber's point. His point was... it wasn't that he *wasn't* concerned about wilderness, he was very concerned about wilderness, but he focused primarily in his manifesto on the impact of Industrial Civilization on humans. Ultimately his argument boiled down to this: his argument was that industrial civilization might survive, but it could only survive by turning human beings into domesticated animals. And... since that was the only way it could survive that was a reason to destroy it, because being a domesticated animal is contemptible, and embarrassing, and shameful, and ... you know... he treasured the wildness in humans—he particularly extolled the virtues of frontier life—frankly I think that he was very misinformed on this point, but his ideal was something like frontier life in the eighteenth century or so, or before, in America. When a man could, you know, go out there and clear a piece of land and kill a bunch of animals and chop some wood and build himself a house, and meet life on his own terms. He considered that very glorious and everything, but I don't! I think that's laughable and absurd. I think that in fact much good has come from domesticating humanity. I'm proud of my domestication! I grew up in New York City, where everyone is domesticated because you have to be; because you live in giant towers on top of thousands and thousands of other people and your way of life is circumscribed by a billion rules and a code of conduct that's very strict and requires everybody to have a specialized job, and work for the allegedly agreed-upon greater goals of our society. I don't... I'm not embarrassed of being a domesticated human! I have served well! I served society for thirty five years or more. I've served society, and I believe in society. I want society to succeed. I don't think it's *likely* anymore; I

think that other, darker forces have gained control, and it's very likely society's going to destroy itself... but society was the only thing I was ever interested in.

I like to joke around and say "people ask me when I'm going to kill myself—it's like this—the day my debit card stops working. You got it? Really, the day the internet goes down—forget it!" I'm not one of these, you know... I'm not one of these people that is going to go to my luxury survival condo or anything like that, even if I had one... I wouldn't... I don't believe in that. I know people who are like that; it's very common actually. It's a common pretension in the financial circles especially financial managers and so on. It's like a game that you can play if you have a lot of money and...it's kind of fun... you get to learn to use guns... and you know you have this kind of fantasy of—like you know— you're a super bad-ass, and it's going to be like the John Carpenter movie or something... and you're going to, you know, hoard up all your supplies, and go to your special place... and then shoot the zombies when the zombies come.

It's a lot of bullshit, first of all, because the one thing you can say about the collapse of civilization ... is that's going to favor the criminal element. So your hedge fund managers think they can prevail, but they can't because they're not actually practiced enough. Criminals actually do this for fun, that's the whole idea of being a criminal—you actually enjoy making people suffer. You're a sociopath; you like it. You like killing people; it's fun. It's what you do. And so those guys are professionals right? They'll show up at the luxury survival gated compound or whatever and they'll kill the men and rape the women, take whatever they've got; whatever there is to take, and split because that's... you know, they're practiced. Think of outlaw bikers, right. In a collapse-type civilization the zombies have the upper hand for sure because they... you know, they have years and years of practice at fucking over rubes.

So... it was all just fantasy anyway, but the point is that even regardless of the fantasy aspect of it— I'm not even interested. I don't want to live in a zombie movie. Everything that I value about being alive comes from society; from civilization: math, books, the internet, science, the ability to understand my universe, the Hubble telescope... all of these things are products of civilization. I don't want to go back to cowering in caves. I don't even like camping! That's disgusting... like it's dirty... You know what? No hot showers? You gotta give me a break! Sorry but, like, this is just not... you know I grew up in New York City, one of the most cosmopolitan places on earth. If there's ever a place anywhere on earth that's committed to the idea of maintaining civilization... Right there in the heart of the Empire, it's got to be New York. I believe in the Empire. The Empire is the empire of knowledge, you dig? It's the empire of man's deepening understanding of his own predicament and to the extent that process [unclear] Ever be ... real hope for humanity. Humanity could pass through its current resource bottleneck and become a long lived species. That's the dream. And if squirrels have to bite it to make that possible I'm a fan. Fuck the squirrels. It's low on our list of problems.

**RADIO:** OK. So civilization is sacred. And it's sacred to humans and no one else and that's fine.

**CHRIS:** And who else would it be sacred to? Obviously it's not sacred to squirrels, right. Squirrels don't even know it exists. I mean, they may be aware of its effects—they may think like, “hey there's less acorns around here than there used to be” or “oh look, they're cutting down my favorite tree” or whatever but... in other words, the point is, that squirrels aren't going to band together and form a union and lobby Congress and say “hey we want, you know, more federal money every year for acorns!” That doesn't happen! Reality doesn't work like that! It's not some kind of, you know... this isn't a cartoon. This is real.

The point is that humans dominate the game at the moment... we have the killer app and the killer app is *intelligence*, and our ability to cooperate on large scale projects of altruism, where we create a huge system whose only purpose is to give a helping hand to other humans. That was a tremendous innovation—we build roads so that people can get around. The roads don't benefit the person who builds them—the person who builds them is just some guy who works for a huge road building company. Roads fulfill societal aims, so you could make a case that a society is defined by its shared goals. To the extent that it has shared goals which are actually constructive, then there is hope for that society. The society may still get destroyed by unknown unknowns; it may get destroyed by things that its original shared goals just didn't include, or you know weren't aware of. And so the society could be laudable in the sense of having admirable goals but still bite it for reasons that weren't anticipated. And that's, in fact, exactly what's happening to us. It's not that our society was fundamentally flawed. No, the goals of the French Revolution were right. The French Revolution was a tremendous step forward in progress, and the American Revolution as well. The idea that human beings have intrinsic value was a tremendous progression; a tremendous advance in our way of life.

In fact human beings *do* have intrinsic value. We are in fact worth saving. And to the extent that that's codified now in the U.N. charter and in many other places—that's real progress! And yeah there was some backsliding right, the Holocaust was serious backsliding and there's been lots of other horrible examples too. The Civil War was a just cause—we fought for the idea that it's not OK to own other humans; that humans can't be property. That was a just cause and we prevailed, and so we are crawling our way out of the slime and becoming actually a somewhat plausibly ethical creature, to the point where we even are now having discussions about what rights we should or shouldn't assign to non-humans. Well that's tremendous progress right? First gays... you know... first women can vote and then, you know gays can get married and next thing you know we're going to be assigning rights to squirrels or even to artificial intelligence, as they just did in Dubai or in sorry, in was it Dubai?... I forget ... I think it's in Saudi Arabia—they just assigned rights to that famous artificial intelligence that was created by Hansen robotics.

**RADIO:** Sophia or whatever?

**CHRIS:** Yes, Sophia. She now has rights so in other words, we are on a long journey of being more ethically defensible and actually having you know... becoming more advanced; more sophisticated in our way of looking at things, but that doesn't mean that there aren't retrograde forces at work; there most certainly are—the most corrosive which is greed and inequality—and it may be our undoing, but my point also is: don't forget the impact of things that we didn't anticipate, of unknown unknowns. Here's my best example... you ready? It's like this: imagine you're in the 1950s, like you know... picture that movie *Pleasantville* or something like that. There you are back in doofus land right—I mean McCarthyism—and ...you're a man from the future and you walk around trying to convince people that we shouldn't build the Interstate Highway System and we shouldn't have lots of cars and build all these giant suburbs like Levittown. Why? Because if we do that we're going to be putting tons and tons and tons of this invisible gas in the air which is going to fuck up the climate in the future and change the weather and ultimately make earth uninhabitable. You know what would have happened? Guess. They would have grabbed you off the street, dragged you off to the nearest loony bin, and fucking lobotomized you! Nobody would've believed you! They would've said you're out your fucking mind! We're not going to build the Interstate Highway System because you say that this invisible gas is going to do all this stuff? You're crazy!

Well it turned out that you would have been right. But it wouldn't have done you any good back then, and so the point is that there are there are unanticipated side effects. In this the Unabomber was absolutely right. He was correct in saying that the problem—one of the problems—the big problem with civilization is it creates a cascade of exponential unanticipated side effects, and every time we respond to some crisis, our solution in turn creates new crises and those are the unintended side effects which we then have to respond to, and our response to those still create more... and so there's this logarithmically expanding kind of fractal cascade of chaos that we engender, and there's no escaping from that. That's just the price of admission. If you want to do something as bold and as entropic—to use a big word—as civilization, you have to be willing to take on risk.

But that doesn't mean you have to be stupid. And so my argument against humanity is not so much that we're engaged in a risky enterprise—of course we are!—but it's an enterprise worth taking risk for. But that doesn't mean we have to be stupid. Being stupid is like capitalism. Capitalism is just out and out stupid. The idea that ...private avarice engenders the common good... this is just plain nutty. This is just not true, right? So we've had decades and decades now in which to try and prove that trickle-down economics works, but of course it doesn't work. The idea that we should create a system that basically has its sole purpose is to allow a tiny minority to vastly enrich themselves at everyone else's expense in the short term, totally disregarding the future consequences of their actions; that's just crazy. Of course that'll lead to catastrophe, but the point is that humans could change that. We don't have to have that economic system. I'm not saying that we should have communism or Leninism or Trotskyism or

anything else. I'm just saying that we could change that system because it's a human system; it's not dictated by biology. It's not like your liver or something.

You want to change your liver you've got big problems, because that's dictated by millions and millions of years of mammalian evolution, and you know you can't live without your liver; you can't digest food; you can't do anything—you want to build a different one? Lots of luck with that. But economic systems? Shit! Economic systems... you could build a new economic system in a couple of days and if it's popular ...you know... the whole world could agree to it by next week. You know the human systems are extremely ephemeral; they come and go and so there's no there's no set reason in stone that humans have to use an economic system that's guaranteed to lead to catastrophe. That's just not true. We don't have to, and so we could change our minds and this is exactly the kind of reason why humanity is worth fighting for—it's because it's actually in play; it's not set in stone that we're going to destroy ourselves, it's just increasingly more and more likely because more, and dumber and dumber people are taking control. But if we can manage to reverse that, you actually have a chance of creating something fantastic and very much worth fighting for.

This is the point that I'm really trying to make... is that it's worth fighting for and the fight is actually in play. Now. We are currently having a debate today in our society about the specialness of scientific knowledge. We are having that debate when Trump gets up there and says “you know that's fake news” or “we have alternative facts”—that's an opportunity to assert that there is no such thing. You're entitled to your own opinion as the senator famously said, but you're not entitled to your own facts. Have I made myself clear yet?

**RADIO:** You have. Yeah you have I'm having a hard... I guess I didn't anticipate this and I'm...

**CHRIS:** Well you know the Church of Euthanasia is full of surprises—would you really have wanted it to be boring? I mean would you want to just be exactly what you anticipated?

**RADIO:** Well sure yeah I mean yeah I came in with some blanks that I wanted you to fill with what I expected but this is not that but...

**CHRIS:** OK I mean well so give me the blanks and I'll do my best I really will.

**RADIO:** Oh no, you haven't disappointed me... I just... I mean how can you align yourself with the Church of Euthanasia any more then?

**CHRIS:** Because I think they have a point. The point is that the Church of Euthanasia is saying, that if humanity can't shape up... if we can't manage to somehow coexist with life then we're anti-life. This is something that people often get wrong. They think the Christians call themselves pro-life, but from the church [unclear] ...especially the anti-abortion ones right... but the Church of Euthanasia calls them “pro-death” and why is that? It's because by rejecting... by believing, for example, that they're going to go to heaven and so on by believing in, you know, this nebulous idea of the afterlife... What Christians are demonstrating is that they don't really take consequences seriously. Consequences means that life has consequences; the consequence

of life is death. You can't have one without the other and this much the pagans and the Wiccans... the Satanists and so on... the Wiccans... are absolutely right. The two things are two sides of the same coin.

That's in fact how evolution works. The whole point of evolution is that it doesn't work unless you have selective differential survival. You have to have a selection. I know it sounds like Auschwitz or something, but it's true. The Nazis were emulating... were in their own way mirroring actual Darwinian processes. You have to have death trimming away the stuff that isn't working, otherwise you haven't got evolution; it doesn't happen. You have to have stuff that's mutating, you need... as Dawkins puts it beautifully... you need replicators. You need self replicators, but you need self replicators operating in an environment of differential survival, where death is always there ready to snap up the stuff that isn't working as well, so that what survives... what goes to pass on its genes is the stuff that's working better. Then it accelerates. You get positive feedback, and next thing you know, it's squirrels... and next thing you know it's humans... it's a long journey from amoeba—believe it—took millions and millions of years but that's how life actually works. You need life and you need death.

And so...you know...Christians are completely misguided about this, and their refusal to accept evolution should be your first big sign right that they're not getting it; they don't really understand how life works here. In fact this is serious business here on Earth. Very very serious! It's taken millions and millions of years of trial and error just to get to this point and believe it that we can completely fuck this up and then it will be back to squirrels again.

But the Church of Euthanasia's point is that that's OK. If that's the way it has to go, then that's how it has to go. And in that case, it *should* go that way. Of course it's true that squirrels could evolve back into apes and apes could evolve back into humans eventually... but it might *not* go that way. Maybe they won't. Maybe they'll evolve into something else, something actually smarter than us. One can only hope, right? And either way—even if they do evolve back into us it won't be *our* fault because we'll be gone.

Right, so really the Church of Euthanasia is about recognizing that humanity is special, but its specialness does not guarantee its survival. You understand? That survival implies *coexistence*, not just with animals—forget animals—think about your gut, man. Think about your insides—what's in your insides. Inside your insides are billions of bugs! There's more bugs inside you than you have cells! You couldn't digest food for an hour without them! You are basically—as Dawkins put it beautifully—you're basically a convenient container that your commensal bacteria have evolved to get around in because it's a good gig; you know, it beats walking, it's warm in the winter, there's plenty of food... It's a good gig for them and it's deeper than that. It's like fractal. It's at every level. Your cell contains... basically modified bacteria, every one of your cells basically evolved its multiple parts from bacteria. Ultimately, evolution figured out the trick of creating multicellular organisms out of bacteria so that your mitochondria, and many other specialized components inside every one of your cells,

which are already fucking small, are basically things that recently were free ranging! You know, they were bacteria that figured out a new way to exist... [domesticating themselves] and so you coexist with all that stuff, and if you stop co-existing with it, you're dead. You're dead dead dead, right?

If your cells stop behaving themselves you get cancer... and you're DEAD. And so the point is, that it's all very tenuous and fragile. Our existence here is provisional. To the extent that we shape up, and play by the rules, and keep Earth, you know, somewhat tenable, and keep, you know, the climate range reasonable for mammals, and like, co-exist with plants because we need them right; we can't photosynthesize. Last I checked humans aren't going to be photosynthesizing anytime soon, which means we need a shit ton of plants to keep ourselves alive, and we actually need a lot of the other animals to keep the plants, you know, in the right proportion, and to keep the insects in the right proportion... all the rest of it.

It's all extremely fragile, and it's evolved over, you know, millions of years to be the way it is because that way is the right way. Because that way keeps entropy about right; about what's manageable.

We've got to talk about that. We've got to talk about entropy a little bit. See, the point is that that you can't have life without entropy. You can't. It's the price you pay for doing business... but that doesn't mean you have to fucking maximize it! It's like saying you can't live without spending money—of course you can't!—but it doesn't mean you have to go out and spend it all tomorrow, right? You could save some for the next day. You could be *prudent*. Humans so far aren't really showing a lot of...joy in prudence, but they used to, actually.

You could make a case that when we were more religious, we had more of a reverence for prudence, and that was a good thing. Not everything about religion is bad; not everything about anything is bad. Everything has good and bad aspects. One of the good aspects of religion is it gave humans an organizing principle that actually maximized certain highly successful strategies like... communality. You know, basically working for the good of the entire community, of considering the future, of having reverence for life, you know... especially for agrarian life, and trying to keep things, you know, more or less the same so that our food would survive and stuff. Those are all good things.

You know, you go back and look at those gothic cathedrals, right—I've seen them in person—they stand for something. They stand for a highly ordered way of life, and yeah there were bad aspects of it. Yeah, eventually it led to stuff like the Spanish Inquisition. Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition! ...but it led to a lot of good things too, right? It was a symbol of a way of life in which people didn't have to ask why. They knew why. Everything was done for the glory of God, which basically meant— for the continuity of human civilization. We could use some of that right now! If Christians actually stood up for that for a change, I might actually agree with them!

We need an organizing principle that actually has a future, and enriching *yourself* at the expense of *everyone else* is not that principle, you dig? Like what I'm saying is, that the death of humanity is not going to be climate change... the death of humanity



is neo-liberalism; the idea that empowering individual actors to maximize their selfish interest at the expense of everyone else, and especially of the future, could lead to good things. It won't! It can only lead to disaster. And to the extent that we model our entire socio-economic order along such principles, it will be short-lived, and we will be back to squirrels in no time. But that was stupid! We didn't need to do any of that! And to the extent that that actually happens it will be one hundred percent self-inflicted, and we richly deserve it. And in this sense I'm completely in tune with the original Church of Euthanasia, which is all about condemnation of human stupidity. Human stupidity is a thing, man. It's a real threat.

**RADIO:** But now instead of saying all right the noble thing to do is let's exterminate ourselves, let's take it into our own hands and sort of run toward extinction... you think, like, it's going to happen, or, you know, maybe not, but probably it's going to happen and that's fine let's let that.

**CHRIS:** You know I think you're mischaracterizing. The truth is, The Church of Euthanasia was not primarily a suicide organization though we certainly encouraged it. The... you didn't have to commit suicide to join the Church of Euthanasia; you're mischaracterizing something important here. Membership in the Church of Euthanasia involved one thing, and *only* one thing, and it wasn't suicide. Please, for of the for the benefit of our listeners, why don't you tell us what it was!

**RADIO:** No procreation.

**CHRIS:** Right! You had to take a lifetime vow of non-procreation, and I'm still down with that! I still haven't procreated and none of my members have either. And so the point is that *non-procreation* was the point of the Church of Euthanasia. Ultimately, that was the only thing you actually had to agree to. Suicide, and abortion, and cannibalism, and sodomy—the four pillars—those were all optional. Strictly optional. Approved, but optional. Right? And so the point is that by not procreating... you're having exponential effects. Right?

You could recycle garbage or whatever it is you do... whatever... for your entire life right? You could recycle and change your light bulbs and, you know, have solar panels and so on... but that only has a linear effect. That only affects *you* and *your* consumption. But now imagine if you have two kids and your two kids grow up to be pro-life Christians and they wind up having huge families; they each have ten kids apiece, and then all their kids wind up being brainwashed too, and they have ten kids apiece... Before you know it, you've created an enormous, ever-expanding exponential tree of side effects that long outlive you, which you have no control over. You'll be dead and in your grave, right? But meanwhile your kids are still out there growing more and more and more... and probably not using the right light bulbs either... And so you're fucked, right? You've lost control. Ultimately, your impact was determined, not by the individual consumption decisions you made in your lifetime, but by your procreation decisions; by your reproductive decisions. And this is why the church focused on non-procreation—because it is the single most important consumption-related decision that any human being can make. By cutting off your potential offspring, you are eliminating

an entire exponential tree into the future of cascading consequences, which otherwise you would have no control over.

You might think “oh well I’ll brainwash my children and so they’ll be, you know... they’ll only have one kid apiece or whatever,” but actually history shows that the more you try and brainwash your children to do X... the more likely they are to do Y. And so in fact it never works that way in practice and the only way to ensure that your children don’t wind up leading to population growth is by not having them. This is clear, right? Absolutely crystal clear.

So this is a laudable thing. This was the part of the Church of Euthanasia that was truly worth sacrificing for: gaining wider acceptance of the idea that non-procreation is a fundamentally just cause, and that it is a cause that is laudable from the perspective of long-term anti-humanism. The idea that if humans can’t live within limits, then they shouldn’t exist at all. And they won’t exist ultimately. Is that clear enough?

**RADIO:** It is, yeah... and maybe we should, I mean... because I just we haven’t talked a lot about sort of the, you know, the pillars of the Church of Euthanasia or whatever. For our listeners... so the four pillars are: Abortion. Sodomy. Cannibalism and Suicide.

**CHRIS:** And they form an acronym: SACS.

**RADIO:** So it’s pretty clear how suicide and abortion... you know... work toward the goal of human extinction. What about cannibalism and sodomy? Why are those important to the church?

**CHRIS:** Well sodomy is clear enough right ... sodomy is often misunderstood as meaning anal sex, but that’s not at all what it means; it has a biblical definition; it’s very old word. What sodomy strictly means is sex not for procreation. It’s often associated with spilling of seed. Though it could be associated with homosexuality, for example in women. But strictly speaking, it’s the idea of spilling your seed on the earth, right. So masturbation is technically a form of sodomy. Yeah right, the idea that the purpose of sex is to expand the human race. And of course there’s some truth to that particularly when the population was a lot smaller, and so to the extent that men were wasting their seed, they weren’t doing The Thing. They weren’t using it for its intended purpose, which was, you know, God’s plan on Earth, which was for there to be lots more humans, right? So this is what sodomy means. So sodomy, of course, is a sacrament in the Church of Euthanasia. Not just because it’s a means to the prime directive of non-procreation, but because it’s symbolic. It symbolizes rejection of the idea that the... continual expansion of human numbers is laudable or a goal worth having.

That, on the contrary, it symbolizes the idea not just that sex could be for pleasure, which is important. But that the idea of living within limits begins in the most fundamental way. With sex. So this is key, right? You’re making it every time you’re having sex—you’re making a conscious choice either to [risk], or to *not* risk not failing to live within limits. That’s clear.

And then for cannibalism well so you know strictly speaking... Vegetarianism and veganism are not *required* in the Church of Euthanasia. The idea is that... it's suggested that if you have to eat flesh you should eat *human* flesh. So this all goes back to Peter Singer; I think it was Singer who said... Was it Singer I'm trying to think of? It might have been the other Singer there's two Singers in this domain; I sometimes mix them up... but one of them famously—I think it was Peter—who famously said that, “for animals the Holocaust never ended. For animals every day is the Holocaust...” You know... actually his famous quote was, “for animals it's Treblinka every day...” Something like this; I'm slightly misquoting it but, you know, if you've ever read *Treblinka* and have some idea what that means, you know it's pretty graphic! This is one of the great horrors that ever existed throughout history. And you know, for animals, that's just another day.

**RADIO:** Yeah, and ...a part of the anti-human manifesto... sort of advocates a species Holocaust and now, you know, you could've used different wording... that's a deliberate sort of controversial word choice. Why...?

**CHRIS:** Well, I didn't advocate species Holocaust; what I said is that that's what's actually occurring. **RADIO:** Oh sure.

**CHRIS:** Humans are causing a species Holocaust, and that's not only short-sighted in the sense of it ultimately leading to human extinction—which it would—but it's also monstrously unethical. And so to the extent that human beings are trying to evolve a more just way of life that is actually ethically defensible, it's a huge black eye for us. Just as much as slavery was, or just as much as the enslavement of women essentially... effective enslavement of women you know women used to be property, and they were basically, you know, once they were wedded they had no rights indistinguishable from those of their husband, and so on. All that would be considered monstrous now. It is considered monstrous except in the most regressive retrograde countries, you know, in some of the Islamic countries perhaps, you know, that these beliefs still persist.

But for the most part, the world has moved beyond that, but not with respect to animals. Not at all.

And so animals are the new frontier. After we get done, you know, with gay marriage... we've got a

lot more work to do. Because, in fact, we cannot expect humans' ethical system to survive until it confronts the fundamental problem of having created Treblinka for animals. That's not going to work. It's not just because it's not going to work in *energy* terms, it doesn't work in the sense that having all this enormous population of humans consuming meat is a huge driver of climate change and many other environmental problems, the eutrophication of the oceans and so on. It's shortsighted in the physical sense. It's fucking up earth's chemistry; no question about that. It's leading to grotesque conversion of land, cutting down a forest to grow beef for, you know, fat Americans who are then going to die of heart attacks.

The whole thing is monstrous logically and physically, but more fundamentally it's monstrous ethically. We simply can't... it's as monstrous and impossible as slavery was

for us at the time. The people... the radical Republicans were great heroes of the Church of Euthanasia, by the way, guys like Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner—look them up later—Thaddeus Stevens is a great hero because he was somebody who fought throughout his life, very viscerally, for a just cause. He saw that civilization couldn't continue and still allow slavery; that they weren't compatible. That civilization... had within it the seeds of its own destruction; that as long as it continued to have such corrosive injustice it contained... or you know... agglomerated inside of itself it would fail. So it had to be purged. We had to get rid of this injustice. We had to just expel it for once and for all. If we had to fight a brutal bloody war over it, then it was a war worth fighting.

Well, the war against consumption of animals is just as worthwhile. We have to fight this battle. We have to ultimately arrive at a position where humans are vegetarians or vegans, not just because it makes sense environmentally, but because it makes sense ethically.

**RADIO:** Right. And so using the word holocaust I mean it's going to you know that brings up... you know something that really happened to humans and it's a touchy subject to people but you want that shock to sort of you know make them look at what we're doing here and realize...

**CHRIS:** I don't know why ... it's only a touchy subject for people because they're sort of misinformed or something. I mean, you know... in other words, the Holocaust was just the worst atrocity that humans, you know, ever actually ever actually *admitted to*. This is how I like to describe it and this would upset my German friends because of course in Germany have strict laws about this, where you know, you're not allowed to compare anything to the Holocaust, even today that's true. It's a crime and I've committed that crime many times and I'm proud of it because it's a crime that needs to be committed.

In fact, dreadful as the Holocaust was, you can make a case that humanity has committed and continues to commit vastly worse crimes. Crimes against non-humans, and the only reason that they're not recognized as crimes is because we don't value non-humans ethically. But so from the point of view... you know... if we want to get specific, right... if we were going to value the crimes of non-humans... Massachusetts, where I live, would be the... it would be like, the world's capital of Holocaust memorials. There would be Holocaust memorials in Fall River, in New Bedford, in

Gloucester, in Boston itself, in Rockport, all up and down the coastline of Massachusetts... in Hyannis; everywhere. There would be monuments to the holocaust. Why? Because that's where the whales were almost exterminated from, and in fact some species of whales were actually completely exterminated.

Imagine that. What I mean when I say "exterminate"? What I mean is I don't mean like, something bad. I mean as in erasing that species' information from Earth hard drive, permanently. Like no take backs. No backups. No. That information is gone forever. You will never have that species again. Just like the passenger pigeon—really gone. No undo, right? So you know... it would... enrage people, but I would say look

you know I'm not... trying to lessen the horrors of the Holocaust. The Holocaust was certainly a dreadful... the most dreadful, and certainly the most industrial-scale attack against a group of humans ever in our history so far, but that doesn't lessen the fact that actually Jews survived it... in terms of their actual culture and their biological inheritance—to the extent that they can be distinguished biologically, but they really can't so let's to avoid going to that whole debate—let's just say that they had some cultural inheritance; some socially evolved inheritance to make them distinguishable as a people right. That survived!

There are, you know, there are temples all across the land in this country. Jewish culture survives ... where you can't say the same about certain kinds of whales, right? They're really gone. Gone—gone. And so the point is that actually, humanity has committed worse horrors also using industrial technology—believe it. Whales were hunted industrially...the only thing that makes the Holocaust so shocking, I think, for people to think about is that it was the first time that they'd seen animal processing—Victorian animal processing technology—directed at human beings. And it was a horror. It's like oh my god I can't believe that they're actually herding people into box cars and like, rendering people in giant rendering factories [into] big piles of you know, gold jewelry and hair and bits of clothing and so forth, and skin, and who knows what?

I mean, that this is a horrible idea but the point is that we do it to animals all day long. All day long. And so what should make the Holocaust frightening to those who have the eyes to see it with, is that the technology was so familiar. In fact, this was well understood technology that the Nazis didn't have to innovate very much, because they could simply recycle existing technology that had been used on animals for a hundred years. And so the point is that, just like Peter Singer said, the Holocaust is ongoing. It's just that its targets are unvalued; they're not considered worthy of consideration and so they just sort of don't exist.

And so the Holocaust churns along quietly without anyone particularly noticing or caring. And that's abominable, and that's got to stop. And to the extent that humanity is going to survive, it's going to have to address that because it is so corrosive ethically to our structures. It's part of the wrong. It's like neo-liberalism in the sense that it's a cancer on the part of humanity that's worth saving.

**RADIO:** Right. So... just realized we've been talking for a little over an hour I don't want to take too much more of your time but I've got a few more questions written down... **CHRIS:** By the way I have a question for you.

**RADIO:** Sure, yeah.

**CHRIS:** You know where you can get a copy of this recording? **RADIO:** Yeah of course do you want like the RAW file or the finished... **CHRIS:** Yeah, I want the raw file from my records.

**RADIO:** Sure oh yes sure I'll send it to you right after we talk.

**CHRIS:** Great, thanks.

**RADIO:** No problem. So. I wonder if your thoughts on this changed—in the manifesto it talks about transhumanism. So you know the idea that you know maybe

humans could escape to another planet; start over, or upload our consciousness to computers or something. Is that viable? Is that worthwhile?

**CHRIS:** Well I think it's a distraction. I think that it's... the fundamental problem is that it smacks of escapism, and it feeds neatly into the neo-liberal agenda as well, so—there's something that I didn't point out earlier—which is that in many respects neo-liberalism and new-ageism have something fundamental in common. It's not often observed, but it's this... The fundamental message of new-age thought is that everything happens for a reason. It's a kind of fatalism, you know—that there's karma—or something... it's always something like that operating, and so the idea is that if good stuff happens to you, it's because you deserve it. It's because you did something good in a previous life, or because you're, you know, sending out good vibrations or whatever it is, and of course... conversely, if bad stuff happens to you, it's because you deserve it, right?

Well this should sound familiar! It should sound like neo-liberalism. It should sound like our president and his advisors right, because that's exactly what they say. In fact this was lampooned mercilessly and wonderfully in a Brazilian T.V. show; a dystopian sci-fi show called... “Three Percent.” ... the, kind of, mantra of that future society is “you've succeeded because you have *merit*.” Well of course it's... you know, it's a cycle right, that's what you call a cyclical definition. It's absurd in fact; it makes no sense. But this is a fundamental contradiction at the heart of our society right—is that we have a bunch of people for disparate reasons who are believing in a kind of magical thinking instead of grasping, as they should, that [they're] merely really lucky. That they won the sperm lottery and that there's, you know, inequitable distribution of resources at this point in our history as a people.

And consequent to that some people are—as William Blake put it so eloquently, right—“some are born to sweet delight, some are born to endless night,” right? And so that's just bad luck. Most people, they don't get an education. They don't get trained to be computer programmers or anything nice, and they're lucky if they can get a job working at Wal-Mart because they didn't get any breaks, because ultimately despite, you know, having some marginal safety, there is a huge percentage of people who never get a shot; who aren't going to become a... get a chance to be good at anything. And that's a monumental injustice and this too needs to be addressed. But the point is that... neoliberalism would have us believe that that's just tough titty for them and that's because those people didn't have merit.

Because everybody who is successful is successful because they deserve to be and new age thinking says the same thing. It says well you know I guess they just didn't have good vibrations, you know? And so this is all a kind of lie—right—it's a lie that people have come up with, the purpose of which is to rationalize the ugly features of the present. You understand? Like the fact the present political and social and economic arrangements for the most part are extremely ugly and violent and getting worse, much worse. The reality is becoming more unequal and more fascistic, more like the gilded age which, as we must recall, didn't end well. So people forget that,

but the Gilded Age was followed closely by what...the First World War, and the ... Marxist communist revolutions in Russia and China and... Germany, and then because we weren't done yet, the Second World War, which killed tens of millions of people right because it really took that.

We actually had to level whole cities and reduce them to piles of bricks before we could actually say OK maybe this wasn't such a good idea; maybe we need to reorganize our whole society and start actually expropriating wealth from the rich, which is what we did. People forget that too, but this was all what Thomas Piketty and Walter Scheidel had to say; is that in fact it takes a catastrophe before governments are willing to ... get some balls and actually start seriously challenging oligarchy and privilege.

People forget but immediately after the Second World War in this country, in the United States of

America, the... top nominal tax rate was ninety-four percent. Imagine that, ninety-four percent! Sounds punitive! It sounds inconceivable! If you tried to talk about that today they'd lock you up. It would be like talking about climate change back in the 50's right? Nobody would believe you. 94%. But it's history—just look it up; it's true! In fact we had, you know, in some cases, one hundred percent estate taxation. We decided to go after oligarchy and inherited wealth, because there was a perceived positive benefit from breaking it up; from trying to create a more egalitarian society in which more people would have an opportunity. And we sent people to college with government money and built the Interstate Highway System—OK that had some side effects—but the basic premise... the idea was noble right? The idea was to create a more egalitarian, interconnected society, where more people would get a shot at a decent life and so would be able to contribute more meaningfully to the further welfare of humanity by being good citizens.

Being good citizens but yeah, OK, clearly neo-liberalism got the upper hand in the 1980s. And now we don't believe in that anymore we don't believe that government should exist, never mind that government should invest in making us better citizens. We just shouldn't have any government! It's like back to the Warring States period, you know it's going to be like medievalism again. You know that scene in the beginning of—it's famous—the beginning of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* where the two ...where King Arthur goes riding by and the two people are grubbing about in the shit. One says to the other “musta been a king!” the other one says, “How do you know?” and the first one says “because he hasn't got shit all over him!”

Well yeah it could be like that again. You want to live in a world like that? That's what it would look like right, when we... could be cowering in caves, or we could be grubbing about in the dirt while King Arthur goes running by. But that would unwind a shit-ton of progress. That would involve *fantastic* destruction of progress, which is useless and worthless and totally stupid and avoidable. If we could just actually challenge power structures in our society, but unfortunately it looks like, based on history, that the only way we challenge power structures in our societies is when there's

a catastrophe like the Second World War. When we're actually you know, vaporizing whole cities with nuclear weapons. That's what it takes to organize people. People are not, you know, easy to organize. It's like herding cats. It's very very difficult to get people to focus on an external threat unless it's extremely present and for this, tragically, we can thank our evolutionary environment.

In our original evolutionary environment long-term thinking was not optimized for, because there was no long-term. Your life on the on the savanna was likely to be brutish, nasty and short. Thomas Hobbes had it right. And so you know, I mean, like you evolve lots of stuff. You're super good at focusing on the present. That's why we love to watch sports right, people love to watch basketball, football and stuff, because it's all about getting the hole, now! Now! Get in the hole, now! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! People love that. It's because it's perfectly in tune with our original evolutionary programming, which is all about like "kill that thing now so we have something to eat, motherfucker! Kill it now!" or like "Look here comes the lion you know last week the lion, you know, ate my brother's head off right so we should run away." That kind of thinking, we're super at.

We can definitely handle immediate external threats, but long term threats, you know, nebulous threats, threats that are,... you know require critical thinking... invisible gases and stuff ...we're not programmed for that man, and so we have to change our programming, you dig? And so we *are* changing our program. Humanity has been involved in changing its programming for one hundred years or more! The whole history of civilization is effectively the history of us changing our programming, but it's accelerated drastically with the advent of technology.

And so to the extent that there are experiments with artificial intelligence... [that] help us to change our own programming, to make it something more constructive that has a decent chance of survival on this, our only home, the earth right, then I'm all for it. But if we think if it's just going to be more like rich people saying oh yeah we can let the planet go to hell because we're going to be fine in our special luxury condos on Mars or on Alpha Centuri then I'm *not* for it.

I think that's just pure escapism and that is something that the transhumanists, I think, share in common with the Catholics, in the sense that they're... it's always about the hereafter. For that matter the neoliberals—it's always the same with them. It's like "don't worry about the future because we're going to the happy place—and everybody else—don't worry about them. They're just sheep you know, and we're going to go to the happy place in the end, so it doesn't matter if we fuck up the earth. It doesn't matter if we you know... deoxygenate the entire ocean and all the ocean dies like something out of *Soylent Green*. Don't worry about it, because we'll be fine, we'll be in our gated condos on Mars." This just is just pure escapism. You might as well substitute heaven for luxury condos on Mars and you get the same exact result. It's all about fucking the future so that the privileged minority in the present can do whatever they want without any restrictions or limits on their behavior.



I'm saying that's crazy! That path can't work... that either humanity starts to have shared goals that involve long-term biological survival on earth or we're just not around, you dig? We're just not around.

**RADIO:** All right. Great. That might be. It might be everything.

**CHRIS:** You don't get to hear me preach very often I bet.

**RADIO:** No no it's a privilege. Really.

**CHRIS:** You see why I was that it was the Reverend, right?

**RADIO:** Seriously yeah yeah. Really good at holding court.

**CHRIS:** But it's not just holding court... it's also saying stuff that most people have never really connected.

**RADIO:** Sure.

**CHRIS:** The central skill that I have in all of this... the real reason is not just because I can get up in front of a crowd and shout at people, any fool can do that. Rather there's something deeper going on... What made what made it necessary to found a church in the first place is that there was something unique to be said. There are certain threads being woven together here that are not often connected. This is the core of it—right—is that there's a vision here, a vision not just of how humanity has been, but how it could be.

**RADIO:** Right

**CHRIS:** And that's what makes it worth having a church for. That's... to the extent that we're going to believe in anything, we're going to believe that there is hope. We're going to believe that there is hope for humanity and that humanity is worth saving, while simultaneously believing that if humanity persists on its current vector, that it deserves everything it gets. That it deserves to go extinct, richly. And that...we would rather have Planet of Reptiles.

**RADIO:** Right. And so how are you spreading the good word today now that, I mean, the Church of

Euthanasia has somewhat... you know... moved away from the spotlight... or are you a part of any...

**CHRIS:** The truth is I don't. I mean, you know the truth is that I mostly live out of the public eye. I have other interests and you know, I was... I'm best known for the Church of Euthanasia after all, but I was also well known for my electronic music. I had more than a decade of success with that, and...

**RADIO:** I'll be including some of that in the show by the way if it's a...

**CHRIS:** Great, you know I've super proud of that. You know there's something we could say... I could say about that actually there too. I mean I've tried to... I've done a lot of things in my life and I've tried to bring all of my faculties to bear on everything that I do and in the area of electronic music, though it's not well known, I am a pioneer. It's not often you know if you look at my Wikipedia page, there won't be much discussion of that but, you know, the truth is that I pioneered something.

What I pioneered was the use of polymeter in electronic dance music. It was almost unknown before. In fact polymeter is still very esoteric even today. At the time

polymeter, you know, you'd say that word "polymeter" nobody would have any idea what you're talking about, or they say "oh yeah polyrhythm, I know what that is" but it isn't. Polyrhythm and polymeter are two different things. Polymeter is a... So "polyrhythm" just means lots of different rhythms. But polymeter... possibly at once possibly you know alternating... Polymeter is related to odd time. Odd time is like... art rock— bands like Yes, Pink Floyd or whatever.

It could mean... so odd meter means either just playing in an odd meter, like seven or five, or it could mean alternating between meters, as Yes often did. But that's not what polymeter does either. Polymeter is when you actually have multiple meters going at once and they stay synced, meaning they're all multiples of some common unit, like a quarter note, but within that unit they drift so that if you have, for example, five and four at the same time then the pattern that's the super... the meta pattern; the super pattern that's generated as a result of those two things will be have a length of twenty.

**RADIO:** Right.

**CHRIS:** So it'll repeat itself every twenty beats, and if you add a seven to that so now you're doing five four and seven all at the same time, suddenly you have a much bigger number, right. Now you have twenty times seven which is one hundred forty right, so suddenly that's a lot of beats. And so if you don't have to get to very many prime... combinations of prime numbers before you have hundreds and hundreds of beats; enormously complicated patterns which actually, for all practical purposes, won't repeat on any reasonable [timescale]... you know, any reasonable duration, so I would use these techniques to create variation, and in fact I've built special software whose only purpose was to compose in polymeter, because conventional sequencers have no ability to do this because nobody values polymeter, and we can have a whole separate discussion about that, which will be for another day, about why polymeter didn't catch on.

So I would ... put it in the shortest sentence and just say that the polymeter didn't catch on because it's undoable without technology. You need machines to do it. Humanity's natural impulse is to try and get *into* phase, not to intentionally go *out of* phase. So I built special tools whose only purpose was to enlarge phase space and to construct enormous patterns that would all be drifting in a predictable way out of phase with each other, and then back into phase, and this was how I made most of my electronic music, and the best fine example, probably the finest example of that system at work is the first one... so the first track on the first Church of Euthanasia album *Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong*. It's called "Buy." **RADIO:** Right.

**CHRIS:** "Buy" is in Polymeter, it has... it has five, seven, eleven, and thirteen, and of course four as well. So, that's an example of polymeter at work. It could be something like the bass is in one meter, the synth is in another meter, the closed hi-hat is in one meter, and the open hi-hat is in still another meter... and all these patterns drift against each other creating this kind of tapestry; a kaleidoscopic tapestry of subtly shifting variation, which makes it sound as though it were bespoke. It makes it sound

as though I had hand-crafted every last piece of that. In fact I merely handcrafted the patterns in the software, of course, and then let the patterns do their thing.

So that's how I compose my music. And so—this is interesting—most people don't know this about my music. They would encounter it and they'd say, "Well Chris Korda's music sounds different, you know... it's a... it's definitely, you know, it doesn't sound like other techno house music, or other electro music" but they wouldn't necessarily be able to say *why* it sounded different. Well anyway now you know why it's different. So I'm still working on all of those things. I have more of that coming.

I've been working on virtual pottery for the last year, and before that I was working on an alternative kind of new musical instrument that makes it possible to play jazz by only using the white keys, so it would automatically handle all the complexity of the chord structures and scale structures of playing jazz trivially...like using a kind of artificial intelligence called an expert system, and that was a wonderful invention. I actually presented that at a conference. So I have lots of intellectual interests, and I pursue them.

I don't feel that I want to be limited in my life just only to the Church of Euthanasia, but I think that the Church of Euthanasia is important. I still embody it personally, and I still espouse it and I still feel strongly about it. But I don't necessarily want to spend every day of my life out there in the public proclaiming it, precisely for the reasons that we outlined earlier in this interview. In part because it's not just you know... because it's too dangerous, because it's the external conditions have changed, but also I think it's fair to say because I don't want to keep doing the same thing.

**RADIO:** Sure.

**CHRIS:** Because life is short, you know, and I only have so much time on this earth, and I devoted you know, a good chunk of my life—fifteen years at least—full time to the Church of Euthanasia and that's a lot of anyone's life. And so I feel that it's necessary to move on from that and continue to do other things.

**RADIO:** And you developed software for the first color 3-D printer.

**CHRIS:** That's true yeah... for work... my job for eighteen years. I worked as a software developer for thirty five years but eighteen of that was in the 3-D Printing industry, and the first company I worked for about fifteen years was originally called Z Corporation, later known as 3-D Systems. They got bought out—in a hostile takeover actually—which kind of ended my career with them, unfortunately... but they were a wonderful company, and they made the world's first color 3-D Printer, and it was the only one for a while, there was literally exactly one.

Some Japanese company that hired us to do it because they apparently had taken out a contract from the government to build it and then they pissed away all the money, on—I don't know—hot tubs or who knows what, and at the end of the contract they didn't have it and so they were casting around crazily trying to find somebody who could do it on short notice, and Z Corp agreed to do it for reasons that remain opaque to me but we ...took the gamble, and the idea was that we would build them this one prototype and they would get to use it and satisfy their contract, and then after three

months we were allowed to turn it around and develop it into a commercial product, which we did. So I worked on all of that and wound up being kind of the software guru for 3-D Color printing at a time when, you know, we were the only company in the world who did it.

And so it was really a very exciting time for me. I got to be an innovator... of course it wasn't only me, I worked with a lot of other engineers but I was definitely at the core of it. I wrote the firmware, I developed the firmware architecture which is a big deal. It's like, you know, that's a big cathedral. I like to tell people that you know, the Gothic cathedrals are very impressive, but by far software is the most complicated thing that humanity has developed.

That if you saw what Microsoft Windows look like spread out like a city... it would dwarf any human city. Vastly more intricate. Airplanes are, you know, held up as being super complicated... so airplanes are measured in man lives—a man life is if you have... a guy working forty hours a week, every day of the year or, you know, whatever—fifty weeks a year—That's a *man year*, right? So that's one guy's labor in a year. So now... a man life would be like fifty of those, because you know you only get about fifty years of work, that's under optimal assumptions, right? Assuming something doesn't... doesn't go wrong, you might get fifty years of useful work out of a guy. So of course you don't actually wait fifty years to build an airplane, what you do is you get fifty guys and you have them all work for a year, and you just got a man life.

But probably it takes more than that. Probably you need like a couple, you know, a couple of man lives. You get a couple hundred guys working for a year, and bingo you could design something as complicated as an airplane. Well so, believe it, microprocessors like an Intel I7 you know... or whatever... it's more complicated than an airplane, lots more complicated! And so you need a lot of man lives to design that.

**RADIO:** Yeah.

**CHRIS:** It's amazing. They are the most astonishing things that human beings do. But so you know... I only explain all this...so that you know... firmware architecture or any kind of software architecture is... definitely a lofty pursuit; it's occupied a huge portion of my life on this earth. I've designed a lot of open source software and I believe in the open source model. I believe in allowing my work to be modified by other people, and keeping them free. I agree with the Electronic Frontier Foundation and all of that, of Gnu... I'm a big supporter of the open source community, and I feel very good about having contributed in some ways to, not only to the spread of software, and to the spread of human knowledge, but also... being able to bring new forms of art into existence by building special tools.

**RADIO:** Yeah yeah because I was going to ask if those projects sort of jive with your beliefs like 3-D Printing, or... it's a machine that creates stuff, but is the idea that you ...

**CHRIS:** Yeah, to tell you the truth, I only did that for money. I needed money because the Church of

Euthanasia, you know, farmed every last dollar it made back into the Church of Euthanasia. In fact

Church of Euthanasia cost me money. Believe it. Like I had to work to support the Church of Euthanasia you dig? Like the Church of Euthanasia probably made a hundred thousand dollars during its existence; it was a nonprofit. But every last dollar of that of course went back into the Org and got spent, you know, to do more wild stuff because that's... I mean, that's how it has to work. It's a charity right? It's...

You're not allowed to just pocket the money and buy a boat or something. It doesn't work like that. But not only that, even granted that... I had to still sink more money, especially into the electronic music part of it. All that stuff costs money, and so I was basically, you know, supporting it and so I had to work for a living. And nobody... it's hard to make a living writing open source software. The world doesn't work like that, so I had to have, you know, work a day job. I did for most of my life. I sat in a cubicle and worked with other engineers and developed products and, you know, 3-D printing is not the most destructive thing you could ever do. I mean it's pretty wasteful; you waste a lot of ... resources... you probably burn a lot of electricity and stuff, but it's not like working on missiles or something, you know, it's not *actively destructive*.

I had plenty of offers that I could have done... things with my career that were way more evil than 3-D

Printing! 3-D printing is mostly just kind of harmless, and kind of stupid in the sense that most 3-D Models just get thrown away. So you know a guy is making shoes or whatever... he wants to see a model of something before he 3-D prints it, because you're going to print a million of them and you don't get to say, "you know what I changed my mind!" after that so you want to see a model of it. So you print a model that's not quite right, you throw it away, you make some changes, and you print another model. People throw away 3-D models the way like ordinary, you know, people who work on documents throw away paper, you know, you just throw it away.

So I mean it's all kind of wasteful, but I mean it's not always. My second job I worked for guys who are doing casting, so they would build these beautiful one-off molds for ferrous metal casting. Well that's very beautiful. I mean, it's a thing you couldn't do before. It was very expensive to do casting because it cost so much money to build the molds. You have to pay artisans for, like you know, to take them weeks or months to make these molds by hand. And now you can just print one. Well that's amazing. It has its points, there are there uses for it.

But it's not; it wasn't really dear to my heart in the way that polypeter or, you know, artificial intelligence music... artificial intelligence -enhanced musical instruments. You know that's more dear to my heart, I like things like that. I'd like to pursue art. If I had... my druthers I would only pursue art. And I'm actually at a point in my life where that's more true than it was decades ago, so I'm very, you know—that's a big success. I planned reasonably effectively in my life and had a lot of luck, so now I'm able to focus more on my art. But in the past, you know, it wasn't like that; I had to work for a living, and you know—I don't feel shame about that. Most people do, you

know. It's good... in a way it's good for you. It builds character. I don't think that it's wrong to work, in the sense of contributing usefully to, you know, some meaningful enterprise that's part of your society, even if it isn't necessarily near and dear to your heart personally. It's always better to work at something that you love. It's better if you can work at what you love, that's optimal. But very, very few of us are lucky enough to have that gig. So most of us work at something that we, you know, that we like (hopefully) or that we can at least tolerate.

**RADIO:** Sure yeah. All right Chris. A message for the listeners what can the listeners do to if... if they like your message and want to do something to help?

**CHRIS:** Well the first thing they should do is something that they don't do and that is to not procreate... I just want to say one other point about this which is, look—non-procreation is a very unusual thing to ask people to do. You're not asking people to *do* something, you're asking them to *not* do something. This is extremely unusual, right? You know... it's... and so... you think it would be an easy sell, right? Look at it this way: ...by agreeing to do this one thing, you get a get out of jail free card. You get a pass on everything else; that's how the church works. It's kind of a slacker deal. You get permanent bragging rights. You no longer need to recycle.... you don't have to... you can use incandescent light bulbs. You can own a fat fucking truck and like... burn lots of fossil carbon. You can have a big house; you can have several big houses. We don't give a shit how much you consume, or what else you do with the rest of your life.

It's an amazing deal. You can take planes every day if you want—fly around the world and be a jet setter. We don't care about any of that. We only care that you not procreate, for reasons that I outlined earlier in this interview about the differences between linear and exponential effects on the future. And so the point is that actually—it's not just that it's a good thing or ethically a good thing. It's a benefit to *you*. You will get bragging rights. *You'll* be able to do whatever you want. *You'll* be free, and *you* will have more resources to do those things with. Whatever meager resources you have—right—they'll be more valuable if you don't have to spend them on your spawn. You'll have more to spend on yourself and your project. And so what I would encourage people to do is—if nothing else—adopt non-procreation from a purely self-centered point of view. I'm OK with that. We don't care *why* you don't procreate. You don't have to prove... you don't have to eschew procreation for some set Church of Euthanasia reason. We don't care! We only care that you don't procreate. If you don't procreate because you're selfish and you just want to spend all your money and your resources on yourself? Great! Deal! Sold!

**RADIO:** Great! Good deal.

**CHRIS:** There you go that's my message for your listeners.

**RADIO:** Awesome OK thank you so much Chris, I really appreciate that.

**CHRIS:** You're very very welcome. I have to say, I enjoyed it and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

**RADIO:** I did yeah I mean, I didn't know what to expect, but I know I really enjoyed it.

**CHRIS:** Well if you liked it that... much we'll do it again sometime. I could talk till the cows come home. That's one thing I've learned to do. Send me that audio—Who knows maybe I'll make it into a book. It's always been one of my great goals, you know—I never actually wrote a book and lots of people complain about that, so you of all people should write a book because you have so much to say, and so much of it is unusual... but I'm just terrible at writing, I'm a miserably poor writer.

I agonize over it, unlike my father, who is quite good at it. He can just sit down—I've seen him do it—just sit down at a typewriter and write as if it were like water. It just pours out of him. He doesn't even have to ... correct anything. It comes out in fully formed sentences. I admire people who can do that, but it's so not me. I'm a sculptor and an editor, you know... I constantly agonize and constantly need to re-arrange the order and fuss with it. So the consequence is, I write terribly slowly and by the time I finally get the sentence the way I want it, I forgot whatever it was I was trying to say.

My natural form is... this form. I do best in, I think, what the Greeks called *dialogic*—where there's a conversation. I can play back and forth where you ask me questions and the questions direct the flow. And so for me like one of the great strengths of a good interview is a good interviewer, which you have been. You know, is it stimulating? In other words, does it go in the right direction, and does it ...do I get worked up and do I start to really feel it? It's that "feeling it" that I can't I can't seem to manage when I'm just sitting in front of the modern day equivalent of a typewriter. So the only way I would ever write a book is exactly this way...

**RADIO:** Have someone transcribe while you spoke

**CHRIS:** Yeah exactly... like... I mean... you know, we're in good company. Miles Davis felt the same way. Like 'awww maann; I don't wanna write no book. That's a drag man. Fuck that!'

**RADIO:** But the manifesto, I mean... you know, I spent this week sort of poring over it, and I mean— that's good writing in it and it really resonated with me and so...

**CHRIS:** Well thank you very much for saying so! That's kind of you. It is... it is good writing but believe it, it was a labor of love and it took much, much too long. If you if you think of it of how long it is... it's what, you know, it's... The, you know... Unabomber's manifesto dwarfs it right? I mean it's not even you know it's not even a fifth of the... might be a fifth the length... of the Unabomber's manifesto, and it took me years to get it all straightened out. At that rate of flow I don't have enough years left on earth to write a book. And so the right way is... this way. The right way is to just get the ideas down in one form or another because for... whatever... for good or ill I learned at an early age to speak in fully formed sentences, and so it comes out of me in the end as if I had written it, and it comes out in a natural order. What I am is probably... for better or worse... I have a natural gift as an orator. And the right thing

to do with people like that is to just let them orate! Let them do their thing and write it down afterwards.

**RADIO:** Right, and I'm happy to do that. And... I mean in my show I don't really editorialize much and it's going to be mostly you talking and I mean yeah so this is...

**CHRIS:** Oh yeah, well you'll have to edit; we've generated more material that you can use but my point is ...

**RADIO:** Sorry, wait I a minute I mean I *don't* editorialize...

**CHRIS:** Yeah no I dig; that's awesome. I think that's very very very good you know I think that that's the right approach. But I just meant that it could be that it turns out that big chunks of this can just be turned into text and used directly.

**RADIO:** Yeah.

**CHRIS:** And we don't even necessarily have to pay a human being to do it...the audio to text stuff is getting WAY better.

**RADIO:** Yes.

**CHRIS:** Scary better. It's almost at the point where you could just do it and then correct it afterwards and it's good enough.

**RADIO:** I mean I don't know if you have an iPhone but I'll have conversations *near* my iPhone and then have things advertised to me based on, I mean, seems to be... you know... pulled from things that I said in the vicinity of my cell phone.

**CHRIS:** I really have no comment about that. I've heard rumors that it's true it; wouldn't shock me. There's tremendous resources being thrown into artificial intelligence right now, and into speech recognition and so forth, I mean, things are changing very very rapidly, you know. We're at an advanced stage of Ray Kurzweil's logarithmic curve there—everything is going exponential at once and... you look at the Keeling Curve or whatever, and it's just like kind of... it's our larger situation writ large right? The atmosphere contains the carbon dioxide record of our exponential growth, and so... yeah... things are cuckoo. Increasingly the past is not necessarily a good guide to the future, and so I don't doubt that you know, a young guys like yourself...you are going to live to see marvels that I can only, you know, dream of.

**RADIO:** Marvels and horrors, yeah.

**CHRIS:** Well hopefully more marvels than horrors, but there's no guarantees of course. My generation hasn't done you any favors. Could be more horrors. I hope not for your sake, but you... certainly you will live to see some marvels and not only in the form of killer robots hopefully.

**RADIO:** Let's hope so! OK Chris, all right well I'll send you this file and if you want to talk again I mean be in touch, it was great.

## Unabomber Gets Internet Backing

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/chicago\\_tribune.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/chicago_tribune.html)>

April 06, 1996



By Cornelia Grumman, Tribune Staff Writer.

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It's unclear what one of the most famous technophobes of the moment, the Unabomber, would think about his popularity on the Internet, perhaps the ultimate symbol of modern technology.

Nearly a dozen Unabomber sites can be found on the Internet, from news groups like "alt.fan.unabomber" to the FBI's Unabomber site to the World Wide Web site that promotes the Unabomber as a write-in presidential candidate.

The Unabomber's manifesto and commentaries on the manifesto can be found at dozens of sites with the click of a mouse.

That the Unabomber's treatises on the evils of the Industrial Age are receiving a wide audience on the global network is an irony not entirely lost on Lydia Eccles of Boston, who on Wednesday posted her "Unapack" site promoting the Unabomber as a write-in presidential candidate.

"The basic idea is for people to write in the Unabomber as a way of rejecting the bounded political menu that they're given," she said in an interview using long-distance phone technology. "People are extremely oppressed and dominated by the technological system. I don't condone it but I want to take advantage of it, and I think that's very different."

Eccles is among a handful of radicals who are riding the wave of publicity generated by the Unabomber case to promote their own anti-technology causes.

The Church of Euthanasia's "Freedom Club" web site draws sympathetic connections between the Unabomber and anarchist writers such as John Zerzan and Jacques Ellul.

Christine Korda, who posted the web site, dismisses any suggestion that such a site might be considered insensitive.

"What the Unabomber is saying is vastly more important than the methods he has used to bring them to the public eye," said Korda, whose group is attempting to persuade people to vow not to procreate.

## SMART BOMBS

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/smartbombs.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/smartbombs.html)>

By Rev. Chris Korda

I think we can all agree that violence is best left to the experts. The Unabomber killed people, and he didn't ask for permission first. He even made his own bombs. How do you suppose the economy is going to work if people start making their own bombs? When Nixon wanted to blow something up, he called up his pals at the Air Force and said "I've got a map of Cambodia here, and some pins, and wherever I put the pins, I want big holes. No need to tell Congress, though. It'll be our little secret,

okay?” And his pals said “Can do, Mr. President,” and pretty soon Cambodia looked like the surface of the moon.

Now when you bomb a country back to the Stone Age, you ensure that only the toughest, most ruthless people survive. So suddenly it's year zero, and the Khmer Rouge are marching everyone out of the city into the countryside, or what's left of it, to fend for themselves. People couldn't stay in the cities, because there wasn't any food. We bombed all the food. But that's okay, because—as the *New York Times* pointed out at the time—“the destruction was mutual.” All over America, farmers are still being maimed by unexploded landmines. That's why President Clinton wants to outlaw them. Here in Boston you can hardly walk down the street without falling into a bomb crater. We never hear about it because history, as we all know, is written by the conquerors, not by us, the poor conquered Americans. It was a noble effort, but they beat us, didn't they. We slaughtered millions of them gooks, ravaged their land, and completely destroyed their way of life, but we lost the war. We didn't actually manage to make them love America.

So violence is best left to the experts. Like George Bush. He was no draft-dodger. He was an expert. No one ever questioned his credentials. When Iraq threatened America's inalienable right to control the price of oil, did George make a pipe bomb and send it to Saddam? He called up the Pentagon and said “pave Iraq.” The Joint Chiefs sure do love a chance to test those nifty new weapons that you—the hard-working taxpayer—pay top dollar for. So they said “Can do, Mr. President,” and pretty soon there were burning oil wells, and the bodies of a hundred thousand dead Iraqis were baking in sun. Kinda makes you thirsty, don't it? Pass the bottled water. It's hard work, but hey, we can't let those towel-heads tell us what to do. Wait a minute, they're the terrorists, we're just peace-keepers. We're on a mission from God! What are you, some kind of Communist? Do I sound like Noam Chomsky yet? Bear with me.

Sure the Unabomber was violent, and got away with it, but that's not so unusual. The peculiar thing was that he used violence to gain access to the media. And he didn't just want to go on the Jerry Springer show, he wanted 35,000 words in the *Washington Post*. Eight pages, in small type. Unmediated access, with no editorial clearance. This made reporters mad as hell. They have to deal with editors every day, telling them what to write, cutting up their stories, dropping them for no reason, and here this Unabomber comes along and publishes a whole manuscript, footnotes and all, right there in the damn newspaper. Who's his agent? I mean we can't have this, for God's sake, it's totally irresponsible. He could have said anything. He could have criticized our corporate clients. It's funny, I didn't see any advertisements on those pages, I wonder why. And what if everyone wanted access to the media, then where would we be? Out of a job is where. The American people need us to decide what's important and newsworthy. That's why the TV news is half weather. Americans have a right to know what the temperature is out there.

The Unabomber stormed the media fortress, and he captured the flag, but his strategy had a fatal flaw. In the end, most people skipped his manifesto, either because

they'd already been convinced that he wasn't an expert, or because they just didn't care. Computer literacy is one of those oxymorons, like "sustainable shopping": why read when you can click on things? The average American is unlikely to read 35,000 words on any subject, not even sports, never mind the future of industrial society. Too many words, not enough pictures, and who reads the *Washington Post* anyway? He should have cut it down to a page and run it in *USA Today*, or better yet, made it into a screenplay. A Unabomber video game. Merchandise rights. It's probably just a matter of time.

## Anti-Semitic Superstar

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/beammeup\\_eng.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/beammeup_eng.html)>

Chris Korda and his Church of Euthanasia use a lot of things when it comes to achieving their goals. Oke göttlich and Jörg Sundermeier have taken a close look.

The Church of Euthanasia, which Chris Korda leads as Reverend, preaches an end to human reproduction. Sex is good, says Korda, but the spread of humans brings nothing but misery. "Save the planet, kill yourself!" is one of his church's slogans. A song with the same title can also be found on his record, "Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong" (Gigolo/EFA).

Korda came to electronic music via jazz: "I started playing the piano and guitar in 1977, then got into rock and later jazz. I studied music theory for many years under excellent teachers like Jerry Bergonzi. In the late 80s I played in a swing band, then fusion, then psychedelic rock and taught at a small music school. My first contact with electronic music was Vangelis. Then, in 1991, when I started crossdressing and moved to Provincetown (Massachusetts), I got to know house and deep house. I started producing electronic music around 1993 and soon my first CD 'Demons In My Head', an ambient sound collage, was released."

But making good music was not enough for Korda. He soon began to think about the fate of the earth, and he describes himself as a "very unusual personality". He was so inspired by the idea that humans must cease to exist that he set up a teaching community. And music became a vehicle for him. "Electronic music is a widespread form of propaganda. It simply conveys content, at least if you assume that it is produced in an intelligent way. I cannot identify with the tired clichés of rock or punk, which mass-market fake rebellion. I am against politics, so the apolitical nature of the techno scene is actually an advantage for me."

So far, the church leader's teachings sound somewhat sympathetic. But Korda is neither naive nor a bad propagandist. He subordinates technology to his goal. He hardly sees his music as art anymore. When asked about the vocal samples in his tracks, he explains: "Repetition is a highly effective form of propaganda and is therefore outdated. With the voices on my pieces, I want to make the listener curious and create interest, while the repetitions of the phrases reach them subliminally."

Doesn't that make him an entertainment musician? "My music is only effective if it entertains people. Boring propaganda doesn't work. The Unabomber is a good example. His 30,000-word manifesto was well thought out, but had no entertainment qualities. Most people put it aside and turned to the sports section."

The defense of the Unabomber is not without reason. Korda repeatedly refers positively to the right-wing academic who saw salvation in the nature-boy movement and carried out assassinations to spread his teachings. Korda finds the American excitement over the Unabomber bigoted; it seems surreal in view of the fact that American B52s are bombing the population of Yugoslavia back to the Stone Age. He believes the Unabomber's teachings are correct, but they do not go far enough for him.

Although he admires militant actions, he does not consider violence to be an appropriate means of achieving his goals. War in particular is failing completely: "Historically, wars are completely ineffective forms of population reduction, not only because they are followed by baby booms, but also by industrial reconstruction and economic growth. Modern wars are fought in cooperation with industrial forces and could be seen as spasms of technological and economic growth. As Thomas Pynchon says, 'Don't forget that the real purpose of war is buying and selling.' Moreover, war causes unacceptable destruction of nature as long as it is forbidden to use biological weapons that only kill people." But Korda is not really concerned with anti-capitalism. Korda does not see himself as an advocate for people, but as an advocate for animals. He sees them as being directly threatened by industrial societies.

He is less concerned about people. He is also relatively indifferent to the Holocaust. "War is not the exception but the rule, the true essence of industrialism. Production and consumption combine at the highest point of efficiency in a single process of disintegration. What made the Holocaust so shocking was that the camps and railroad cars were so familiar, so ordinary. The same techniques have been applied to animals for a century and are still in use today. In the USA we slaughter more than a billion animals a year, often in 'factory farms' that look very suspiciously like Dachau."

He is not particularly interested in the accusation that this is relativizing the Holocaust. "I do not ignore the suffering of the Jews. What matters to me is that there are still Jews, perhaps not so many in Europe, but certainly in the United States. To put it bluntly: as a race, as a culture, the Jews are growing back. The millions of non-human beings that we have exterminated in the last 500 years are not growing back. They cannot grow back because they have disappeared forever." The Holocaust is no longer a specific event; according to Korda, it happens everywhere and every day. The Jews are therefore just one victim among many. This is pure anti-Semitic filth.

Korda only examines political and historical events in relation to their impact. He twists events to suit his purposes. The Holocaust and war simply appear to him to be ineffective. Doesn't that mean that Korda would have welcomed a "successful" Holocaust? He doesn't dare go that far. Korda condemns genocide, especially that of the Native Americans. When asked about this, he points out that everyone should end

their lives voluntarily. Why he defends the Unabomber's murders, however, remains a mystery. His anti-capitalism also remains strangely vague.

Reports on the Church of Euthanasia's actions like to emphasize how much fun the participants are having. A techno record, actionism, founding a church — it all smells like a pop spectacle. Especially since it is always and only Korda who is the focus of the actions. The CoE writes that there is a photo of the naked Korda in a crematorium oven in Dachau. The photo was planned to be used as the cover of the upcoming album. Korda, it seems, will use any means necessary to ensure the success of this "special personality". He is obviously happy to accept being an anti-Semite.

*Rev. Korda's **response** to the charge of anti-Semitism.*

*The preceding is a translation. The original language is **here**.*

## Response

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/beam.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/beam.html)>

*The cover of the Church of Euthanasia's new CD **Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong** features a **photograph** of Rev. Korda naked inside one of the ovens at the Dachau crematorium. The German music magazine "Beam Me Up" has charged Rev. Korda with anti-semitism, and the following is Rev. Korda's response.*

Nationalists believe that one group of humans is superior to all others. Concentration camps are a well-known symbol of what happens when this belief is carried to its extreme. Dachau has been preserved as a monument, to remind visitors that something shameful happened there. National shame has had positive consequences: patriotic displays are still discouraged in Germany to this day.

Humanists believe that one species is superior to all others. This belief has also been carried to its extreme, with an equally predictable result: the extinction of at least a third of the non-human species on earth, over a period of a few thousand years. The pre-human rate of extinction is estimated at one species from any major group every million years. By comparison, a species currently disappears every thirty minutes.

The Jews suffered terribly, but any sane person will admit that there are still Jews in the world. The same can't be said for the millions of plant and animal species that have become extinct as a result of the human population explosion. Where are the symbols of this species holocaust? Where are the monuments to remind us that something shameful has happened, and is still happening, every day, faster and faster?

The Nazis stabilized the currency, built autobahns, and restored national pride. Many Germans were grateful, and avoided asking too many questions. It was better not to know where the trains were going, because knowing would mean either accepting guilt, or fighting the Nazis. Today, citizens of the industrial nations are in much the same position. Each year, there are more cars, computers, and shopping malls filled with merchandise. It's better not to know where the oil is coming from, or where the

garbage is going. It's better not to know that the earth is poisoned. Why spoil the fun?

The Holocaust was not an exception, but the rule, the extension of industrial technology to the extermination of humans, rather than insects or plants. The railroads and crematoriums were familiar, because the same techniques had already been applied to animals for decades. In the United States, one billion animals are slaughtered every year, in factory farms that look suspiciously like concentration camps. It's better not to think about this, while we watch the flesh cooking in our ovens.

By August of 1999, the human population will exceed six billion. Wilderness will continue to vanish like smoke, and with it the biological diversity that keeps the planet habitable. A planet of weeds, on which only rats, roaches, pigeons and humans thrive, is not only ugly and shameful, it is the next step towards a desert planet. Members of the Church of Euthanasia take a lifetime vow to never have children. This is one way of facing the shame, and taking personal responsibility for allowing the earth to heal.

## Death To All Humans!

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/gettingit.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/gettingit.html)>

**The Church of Euthanasia's modest proposal**

by Mark Dery

Published August 2, 1999 in *Whoa!*

[NOTE: For a less biased presentation, read **Mark Dery's interview with Rev. Korda**]

What the world needs now is suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. That, at least, is the Church of Euthanasia's modest proposal. A tax-exempt "educational foundation" dedicated to the proposition that all men (and women) are created superfluous, the Church has staked its claim on the far fringes of the negative population growth movement. According to a Church spokesperson, "The Church is devoted to restoring balance between humans and the remaining species, through voluntary population reduction."

The Church, which claims "hundreds" of card-carrying members as well as one thousand "e-members" scattered across the Net, is based in the Somerville, Massachusetts, apartment of its cross-dressing cleric, the Reverend Chris Korda. It was there, on a hot summer night in 1992, that she (though male, Korda prefers the female pronoun) had the fateful dream that set her on a mission from God — or, more precisely, from the alien entity she calls the Being, a cheery mix of Klaatu and Kevorkian — who noted the dire state of the global ecosystem and advised, "Save the planet: Kill yourself!"

Or, less messily, evangelize others to kill themselves. Thus was born the Church of Euthanasia, whose theological cornerstone is the single commandment "Thou shalt not procreate" and whose four pillars of wisdom are its radical solutions to the population explosion: suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. This doesn't mean, by the way,

that pederasty is a “Euthanist” sacrament; the Church uses the term in the biblical sense, meaning any sex act not intended for procreation, such as anal or oral sex. Nor does the zealously vegetarian Church condone Hannibal Lecter’s idea of frugal gourmet; its endorsement of cannibalism is merely a special dispensation for those “godless flesh-eaters” who can’t kick the habit. As the credo on the Church’s Web site states, anthropophagy, Euthanist-style, is “strictly limited to consumption of the already dead.”

Even so, Korda, a strict vegan, can’t resist suggesting that cannibalism is environmentally friendly. “We have 60,000 auto-accident fatalities a year,” she says. “That meat is getting buried in the ground. It should go straight to McDonald’s, where the food is already so processed I don’t think anybody would notice the difference.”

As neo-Situationist street theater and gonzo media-wrenching, the Church is a howl: God’s revenge on Operation Rescue in a universe ruled by Abbie Hoffman. Tastefully turned out in a chic little cocktail dress and silver bangles, the Reverend has led her troops into battle against pro-lifers, Buchananites, and Jerry Springer. Rallying around a banner emblazoned with the admonition, “Eat a queer fetus for Jesus,” the Church has serenaded horrified Operation Rescue protestors with its marching song, “All We Are Saying/Is Fetus Paté.”

Under the guise of Pedophile Priests for Life, it has waged guerrilla media war against the Catholic activists Our Lady’s Crusaders for Life, brandishing an inflatable sex doll nailed to a life-sized crucifix and squirting the Crusaders with a water pistol shaped like a humongous penis. Anti-abortion protestors “try to intimidate everyone with shock tactics and disgusting props,” says Korda, “but we can out-shock and out-disgust them any day. We’re seizing the moral low ground right out from under them.”

And when they’re doing it, Korda and his Euthanists are unquestionably on the side of the angels, not to mention social satirists like Abbie Hoffman (an acknowledged influence). But the laughter curdles when Korda extols the virtues of the Unabomber, rationalizing the murder of a timber industry lobbyist and father of two who wasn’t even the bomber’s intended victim as a “worthy target, when the goal is correctly understood.”

Moreover, the misanthropy that lies just beneath the surface of the Church’s baby-loathing and breeder-bashing aligns it with unhappy bedfellows like Randall Phillip and Jim and Debbie Goad, all of whom are listed as “contacts” in the Church’s house organ, *Snuff It*. Phillip’s zine *Fuck* is an echo chamber for his white-supremacist ravings about the joys of thinning the herd through infanticide and mass murder. (“I smile wide all day in the sunshine that glistens off your mutilated bodies.”) The Goad’s self-described “bible of hatred,” *Answer Me!*, is a bullhorn for spleen-soaked rants such as “You Turn Me Off,” in which Jim Goad declares, “Sex is merely the continuance of the species, so I’m dead-set against it. The only bodies I want to see are yours burning.”

Asked about the connection between the Church and a toxic misanthrope like Phillip, Korda replies, “Randall’s descriptions of humanity as a ‘Martian invasion’ have much in common with my view...I tend to view humans the way a being from outer

space would: As a species, housed among many other species...Humans are behaving like bacteria in a petri dish, and if nothing is done their fate will be similar.” She clarifies her position: “I can certainly be described as a misanthrope — or, more correctly, an anti-humanist.”

Misanthropy, it turns out, goes hand in glove with the Malthusian gospel that the Church preaches. In Thomas Malthus’s “Essay on the Principle of Population” (1798), the Ur-text of population apocalypticism, the good reverend recoils in Gothic horror at the engulfing poor. Similarly, Paul Ehrlich can barely suppress a shudder of revulsion, in *The Population Bomb*, at the locust-like masses swarming around his taxi during a ride through Delhi: “My wife and daughter and I were returning to our hotel in an ancient taxi...The seats were hopping with fleas...The streets seemed alive with people. People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing, and screaming. People thrusting their hands through the taxi window, begging. People defecating and urinating. People clinging to buses. People herding animals. People, people, people, people.”

Here, then, is Dorian Gray’s true face: The racism, classism, and virulent misanthropy that too often hide behind the dream of a pre-industrial, nay, pre-human Paradise Regained, a world emptied at last of the eating, washing, sleeping, visiting, arguing, screaming, begging, defecating, urinating masses. And the masses, naturally, are always the teeming, undifferentiated others — everyone, that is, but me.

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Mark Dery has written about new media, fringe thought, and unpopular culture for *The New York Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Village Voice Literary Supplement*, *Suck*, and *Feed*. His collection of essays, *The Pyrotechnic Insanitarium: American Culture on the Brink*, was published by Grove Press in February, 1999.

## Der Spiegel — The Mirror, 48/1996

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/derspieg.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/derspieg.html)>

Society [Gesellschaft]

Sects — Religion

“Make love, not babies”

Henryk M. Broder on religious zealots in the USA, who want to reduce the number of people on the Earth

From the front the Reverend Chris Korda looks a little like Demi Moore, from the side he resembles Caesar in the Asterix-Comic.

In a long black dress, with a little handbag across his chest, a five-pointed silver star around his neck and long, pointed earrings, he would draw envious looks in any group of women. The hairdo is in place, the makeup is perfect, the lipstick not laid on too thick. Only in his carriage does the Reverend show that he did not come into the world



as a woman. Chris Korda moves more gracefully, it is true, than Heinz Rühmann in Charley's Aunt, but that certain swing of the hips, which women command by nature, is not his strength.

Reverend Chris Korda is founder and spiritual rector of a church called the Church of Euthanasia (COE). Because it is recognized by the official US government financial authority as a socially-beneficial educational institution, gifts to the Church are tax-deductible. Contrary to the practices of other churches, religious societies and sects — which treat their adherents to a profusion of rules, requirements and prohibitions — the Church of Euthanasia knows but one “commandment”, which they preach absolutely without compromise: “Thou Shall Not Procreate”

Whoever makes this single law his own, whether Christian, Moslem, Jew or Atheist, is welcome as a member. Mothers and fathers of children will be taken in, too — provided that they pledge to bring no more progeny into the world. Whoever agrees, and then makes a child anyway, will be excommunicated. “We welcome the children,” says the Reverend, “however, we find there are already quite enough of them.”

This reduction to the bare essentials is not the only essence of the COE. Founded in 1992 and registered in the state of Delaware (“because the taxes there are cheaper than in Massachusetts”), the COE is some bytes ahead of its time, a church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century — thanks to the Worldwide Web and the Internet.

In the Boston vicinity, the center of its activities, the COE counts only “a couple dozen” registered members, in the entire USA “a couple hundred.” However the host of hangers-on, says Reverend Korda, “is in the thousands and is constantly increasing.” Over 100,000 guests have visited the Homepage of the COE (<http://churchofeuthanasia.org/>) in the past year, and this year it appears as if it will double.

In the beginning people forgathered in a tiny “chapel” in the cellar of a multi-family house beneath the picture of the suicide doctor [lit.: dying-helper] Jack Kevorkian (“We admire him from a safe distance”) and together read texts from Albert Camus, James Baldwin and Allen Ginsburg. In between these meetings the members and hangers-on of the COE communicate with one another in the world-wide space of the Internet, and likewise the sermons of Reverend Korda are electronically dispersed as “E-sermons.”

Other than the “chapel”, which is reminiscent of a surrealistically gotten-up party-place from the ‘50s, the leadership circle around Reverend Korda convenes in the “Middle East” on Massachusetts Avenue, one of the few restaurants in the city to which the Reverend does not give a wide berth. Because he is a vegan, a radical vegetarian. Not only does he eat no meat and no fish, he shuns all animal products, living consequently without milk, eggs, cheese, curd and butter.

In the summer the Reverend wears linen, in winter rubber. He uses a lipstick made by “Clinique”, as the manufacturer does not test his products on animals. Let other divines serve God and mankind, Reverend Chris Korda has assigned his service “to the Earth and the animals [Arten].” So that the Earth is not destroyed and the species survive, the human population of the Earth must be reduced — “through voluntary measures”, as the Reverend intones, in no case through force.

Among these measures are the renunciation of propagation, discontinuing the taboos against and the criminalization of suicide, and the promotion of sexual practices that do not serve reproduction. "There are simply too many people on the Earth," says Korda, as he spoons up some pea soup, "either we reduce the number of people, or Nature will take the duty away from us."

In fact it is no longer a question of if, but only of when. Thus the process of self-destruction could at least be slowed down through judicious conduct.

"We are not the only organization dedicated to protecting the Earth from humankind," says the Reverend, and checks his hairdo and makeup in a mirror, "we are actually relatively moderate, since choice is our remedy, there are others who are much more radical."

The "First Church of Christ, Abortionists", for example, who are in favor of forced abortions; the "Voluntary Human Extinction Movement", who would like to do away with the human race in one generation; the "GAIA Liberation Front", a "very extreme group", who would spread a deadly virus, to bring about the final resolution of the problem of mankind. And then there's always the "Unabomber Political Action Committee", a support group for the alleged "Unabomber", arrested in Montana at the beginning of April. The Reverend can well sympathize with his love of nature and hatred of civilization.

The leader of The Church of Euthanasia, was born in 1962 in New York, son of the novelist Michael Korda ("Success", "Power") and a playwright. He is of course neither a millennialist nor weary of his own life. For the sticker "Save the planet, kill yourself," which he designed and distributes, Korda offers a dialectical-spiritual explanation in two parts. When a person is at the end of his rope and needs to kill, then it would simply be better if he were to kill himself instead of another person — or an animal. Moreover, "kill yourself" could also mean: kill your Self, become something else!

Korda knows that he provokes ambiguities, surmises and misunderstandings. And indeed he wishes to do so. "Lack of clarity / unclear situations are good. They get people's minds out of their well-worn ruts. Although neither transvestite nor transsexual, he often wears women's clothes, since he does not have to adhere to a sex role. And there is a concept for it: "a transgendered person," a person beyond gender.

Early on in life, at 12 or 13 years of age, he felt that he "had an extremely unusual personality," his outlook on things seemed to be "entirely different, as if from another star." He had "very few friends, and as a result displayed more anger in school, with his parents, and all authority." He resisted all attempts "to break me, to make me function like everyone else."

At age 14 he ran away from home, later he studied Information Science and went through "several careers," such as street musician, jazz guitarist, sound technician, record producer, and female impersonator in the cabarets of Provincetown on Cape Cod. For all that, his only profession was "consultant" and "knowledge worker," he advised individuals and companies how they could make best use of their knowledge.

In 1992 he meditated a great deal and one day had “a dream and a vision”: “Save the planet, kill yourself!” Had he not founded the Church of Euthanasia out of this experience, he would apparently have been dead before long, by his own hand. The church is his personal survival strategy.

As his “heroes and models,” the Reverend Korda names the philosopher Rudolf Steiner, the sex researcher Wilhelm Reich, and the anarchist Abby Hoffman — a wild mix, which, however, would not cause an explosion in the civilized climate of New England.

Korda signs his letters with a friendly “Thank you for not breeding,” and when he goes shopping with his Mitsubishi, he does not forget to feed the parking meter. Should global collapse be imminent, the Reverend wouldn’t want to make the situation worse through disorderly conduct. He considers good manners to be very important and rejects war as a means of population control. “First of all war destroys the environment, second, after every war there’s a baby boom, which equalizes the losses.”

Also on the question of why he preaches his message to Americans, whose rate of population increase is relatively static, instead of taking it to the high-reproduction inhabitants of the third world, he has a rational answer prepared. “We have no right to be giving advice to people we have exploited. Besides, each North American produces 100 times as much trash as an African.”

During this year the organizational structure of the Church of Euthanasia should be completed. Korda, supported by a three-person directorate, but finally doing everything himself, would like to organize a country-wide field-operation on the model of the “Thank you for not smoking” campaign. Everywhere in the USA, on billboards, those gigantic advertising signs along the highways, the sentence “Thank you for not breeding” should be on display. Then he would like to carry through a “procreation-free day,” first in Boston, after that in Massachusetts, finally throughout all of America, “but, of course, with sex.”

Korda knows that this is a Utopian idea. And his idea of creating “a procreation-free, sex-friendly and vegetarian place of refuge,” for like-minded people “who don’t want to live together with those people,” is in this same category.

So he concentrates his energy at the present time on what can actually be accomplished. He borrows from Radio Shack a battery-operated bullhorn and from Rent-A-Wreck he rents a beat-up little army truck with which he takes a dozen placards, and as many friends as are willing to do so, on a sortie to the Front.

Pious Christians from “Operation Rescue” have been called up to demonstrate in front of Preterm Clinic in Brookline. At this place, just two years ago, a fanatical abortion opponent shot a staff member of the clinic. But the demonstrators don’t want to think of the murder, only that in the Preterm Clinic abortions are still going on.

Beneath the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Protectress of the Unborn, about 100 believers pray the rosary. Across from them stands a handful of counter-

demonstrators with pro-choice placards, women from the National Organization for Women (NOW). They shout “Keep your rosaries off our ovaries!”

A couple meters farther on, separated from the police by a barrier, Reverend Korda and his friends have gotten into position. Of all the groups they seem to have the most fun at the demo. The words (“Peace, Love and Sterility,” “Fuck breeding”) come across as a joke through the displacement of the political statements. But the believers from “Operation Rescue” don’t let themselves get provoked, they never even look over at them, as Korda’s people shout “think quick, think fast, every prayer may be your last!”

The way seems open for a confrontation as an elderly woman from the “Operation Rescue” demonstrators goes across to the Church of Euthanasia people, takes a tiny flask from her pocket and sprinkles “holy water”. But a policeman pulls the woman back: “Ma’am, just keep going.”

After the demonstration Korda and his friends balance the books over a mug of coffee at Dunkin’ Donuts. “There were three times as many of us as the people from NOW.” Rebecca, who carried the sign “Make Love Not Babies” is also pleased: “The police had a lot of fun.”

Then the party breaks up. The truck from Rent-A-Wreck has to go back, otherwise there’s another day’s rent to pay. Then Reverend Korda wants to get right to his computer, to update the Homepage. “Have a nice day,” he calls to a passerby, who turns toward him, “save the planet and kill yourself.”

The sect craze of Americans is little written about publicly. While people in the Federal Republic regard sects with distrust, in the USA extremely ludicrous quasi-religious groups can get going quite freely. The “Church of Euthanasia,” founded in 1992, is one of more than 1000 communities of belief in the USA. They are in favor of a “restoration of the balance between the Earth and humankind” — by reducing humankind. The sect, headquartered in Boston, whose actions are reminiscent of Dada, is recognized as an educational organization.

**CAPTIONS:**

Church of Euthanasia leader Korda: procreation-free, sex-friendly, vegetarian.

in front of a picture of suicide doctor Kevorkian.

p. 152 Korda demonstrating Rosaries and ovaries

p. 153 callout: Words of sterility, and holy water.

At the demo, the police have a lot of fun.

## Mark Dery Interviews Rev. Chris Korda

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/dery.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/dery.html)>

**MD:** You remark, in the *Spiegel* article, that “there are simply too many people on the Earth,” which begs the obvious question: How many is too many? In other words, at what point, precisely, did the Earth become *overpopulated*, as opposed to merely populous, in your opinion? Your statement that there “too many” implies that some

human population might be acceptable to you, as opposed to the far fringes of the Deep Ecology movement, where *any* human population is seen as a viral infestation that should be eradicated. Is humanity the problem, as the most misanthropic of the eco-radicals would argue, or is the conspicuously consuming, solid-waste producing lifestyle of the highly industrialized nations the culprit? If the latter, why don't you specifically target the so-called First World in your "Save the Planet-Kill Yourself" message? As well, why not call, like the Unabomber, for a return to a pre-industrial lifestyle, rather than the eradication of humanity itself, which is what your message seems to imply? Alternatively, if in fact you *are* calling for the extermination of Homo sapiens in the name of salvation of the planet, why frame the problem in terms of *excess* population—"too many people on the Earth"—rather than population, period?

**RCK:** Unlike some of its sister organizations—the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement, for example, or the germ-warfare advocates at the Gaia Liberation Front—the Church of Euthanasia is not advocating human extinction, except possibly as a last resort. The Church is devoted to restoring balance between humans and the remaining species, through voluntary population reduction. Modern humans are out of balance, not only with the world, and with each other, but within themselves, in the sense of mass neurosis that Wilhelm Reich described. The restoration of balance will require a leap of consciousness within each individual; the day-to-day operations of the Church are a heartfelt—albeit Quixotic—attempt to provoke that leap, using the propaganda tools of industrial society.

Paleontology tells us that humans have existed in a recognizable form for at least two, and possibly as much as four million years. By contrast, the world-view that now dominates 99% of humanity was almost unknown 5000 years ago. The rapid expansion of the modern world-view follows not only writing and symbolic culture, but more importantly the transition from nomadic hunting and gathering to sedentary agriculture and its obsession with surplus. Daniel Quinn has aptly contrasted the tribal and modern views as those of "leavers" and "takers," implying that tribal humans, whatever their shortcomings, did not imagine that they were the sole purpose of creation and that earth should only grow food for them. Tribal world-views typically include a profound reverence for wilderness, a belief in the rightness of the natural world, and a marked preference for "being"—oral tradition, lore, ritual, shared experience—over "gaining" of material things.

Unlimited population growth is the inevitable consequence of a society based on "gaining", without regard for future generations, even of humans. The question is not when the earth became overpopulated, but when humans became unbalanced, and began to live in an unsustainable way. Most people agree that "taker" culture evolved—or devolved—out of "leaver" culture, but the change is almost always presented as a dualism, either as "progress" or "disintegration", depending on your point of view. Only two directions are considered, forward—towards progress—and backward, the "return to pre-industrial life" you mention. Could humans choose to live in a sustainable way, at a greatly reduced population, by rediscovering ancient wisdom, without abandoning

their scientific advances? Possibly, but only if the industrial nations set the example, by drastically reducing both their populations and their consumption. This is why the Church explicitly targets that tiny percentage of humanity who reap the dubious material benefits of domestication: the technological elite, the users of the internet—in short, your readers.

**MD:** You were affiliated with the Unabomber For President group, UNAPACK, and have said that you're "very sympathetic" to his beliefs. Help me out: I'm having difficulty reconciling your Unabomber fandom with your stated opposition to "all involuntary population reduction." Thinning the herd through serial mail-bombing strikes me as "involuntary," at least for the luckless wretches who opened Ted Kaczynski's packages. Moreover, color me hopelessly humanist, but I fail to see the political virtue in blowing away someone like Hugh Scrutton, whose apparent crime against humanity was renting computers, or Gilbert P. Murray, an official of the California Forestry Association who wasn't even the Unabomber's intended victim. Don't you have some pause about a man whose campaign of terror seems one part ideology, nine parts sociopathology? Most of the Unabomber's victims were *not*, as you've asserted, "directly connected to either genetics or computer science." In addition to *one* geneticist and *one* computer-science professor, they included an advertising executive, a timber-industry lobbyist, an engineering professor, an airline president, a psychology professor's assistant, a university secretary, a school guard, and two computer store owners—hardly the power elite of the Industrial Society he railed against. How deep can the Deep Ecology run in a man who wrote in his diary that he had "no regret" that the wrong man—married and a father of two—was his accidental victim?

**RCK:** All worthy targets, when the goal is correctly understood. The Unabomber was not attempting to assassinate the "power elite" of industrial society, nor could he, since they are obviously too numerous and replaceable. The Unabomber was fighting a guerilla war against the media system, represented not only by the corporate fortresses of the New York Times and the Washington Post, but also by thousands of lesser protectors of the status quo, such as yourself. His strategy was to blackmail the media into publishing what would otherwise be unpublishable: a 30,000 word indictment of every aspect of the technological state, including specific advice on how best to destroy it, in what may prove to be its only moment of weakness. He chose his victims carefully for their symbolic value, leaving the media with little choice but to publish his manifesto, footnotes and all. It can be argued that the strategy was nonetheless a failure: the public largely ignored the manifesto, having already been cleverly persuaded that its author wasn't a sanctioned expert—despite his academic credentials—and could therefore be safely ignored. From this point of view even the relatively incoherent efforts of the Church of Euthanasia are more effective, because they are disguised as entertainment and therefore sell themselves easily without the need for blackmail.

Personally, I have neither the skill nor the disposition to be a successful guerilla, and in any case I'm already too well-known. I encourage voluntary population reduction in

my official capacity, but as a private citizen, I applaud the courage and tenacity of those who do battle with the technological state, and occasionally win small victories, against impossible odds. Our global, industrial prison-state has six billion inmates, consumes unimaginable quantities of minerals, plants, and animals, and vomits a toxic soup of death into every remote cavity of this once-flourishing planet. American criticism of the Unabomber's violence seems especially surreal at this moment, as our B-52s reduce the urban population of former Yugoslavia to stone-age conditions. To think that such monstrous abuse of power can be corrected by nursing pacifist sentiments in the wilderness—or what's left of it—is simply naive.

**MD:** The CoE's rhetoric sometimes fudges the distinction between population reduction and pedophobia. Flamboyant baby-loathing, from Evelyn Waugh's revulsion at his own offspring to Debbie Goad's bilious *Answer Me!* screed, "Babies Are Dirty" ("Babies are dirty. Babies are disgusting...When I see a newborn, I feel nauseous."), is a tried-and-true vanguardist tactic for outraging the bourgeoisie. Given some of the CoE's fellow travelers—the career bad boy and *Answer Me!* publisher Jim Goad, the serial killer-worshiper Randall Phillips, both of whom make fleeting appearance in *Snuff It*—it's tempting to see the CoE as part of the venerable tradition of certifying one's credentials as a subcultural badass by scandalizing the squares.

**RCK:** No, Mark, I think you are the one most concerned about "certifying your credentials as a subcultural badass." I have no patience with smug academics who masquerade as cultural revolutionaries, or self-styled "culture jammers" who drape their feeble leftist sentiments in art-world jargon, the better to be pimped in trendy galleries. While there are undeniably too many of them, babies are natural enough. Pompous critics are truly dirty, and boring.

**MD:** Marvelous. I've only skimmed your last two responses, but they're every bit as spirited as I'd hoped—especially that blast of buckshot directed at "smug academics who masquerade as cultural revolutionaries, or self-styled "culture jammers" who drape their feeble leftist sentiments in art-world jargon, the better to be pimped in trendy galleries." Well worth the price of admission! (But I'm confused as to which I am, since I'm not an "academic"—I hold no degree loftier than a B.A., and have never taught—nor have I ever styled myself a "culture jammer." For the record, the trendiness of CB's gallery is right up there with short-sleeved suits and Whitesnake albums; I've pimped my feeble, jargon-encrusted leftist sentiments in far hipper cultural brothels, I must protest.)

Now, my last question; I look forward to a showstopping response, at least the equal of your answers so far.

As I understand it, the CoE's holiest commandment, "save the planet, kill yourself," is founded on the neo-Malthusian article of faith that the Earth's population is exploding exponentially, thereby straining the planet's presumably already groaning carrying capacity to the breaking point. The next millennium, the story goes, will witness environmental apocalypse and social breakdown—"suffering on a scale we can't even imagine yet," as you put it, *Population Bomb* nightmares that will make some

wish they “had killed yourselves, because this planet is going to be a very grim and frightening place.” The Church concedes the disproportionate environmental impact of highly industrialized societies—the exploitation of nature as an infinitely renewable raw material for capitalism’s vicious cycle production and consumption. Nonetheless, the Church focuses almost exclusively on what it sees as the dire, almost apocalyptic need for population reduction, championing abortion as a social good and contraception as a global obligation. In so doing, it lays the full burden of social responsibility at the individual’s doorstep.

The CoE’s emphasis on individual choice, rather than corporate power and capitalist ideology, strikes me as a strategic error that leaves it tilting at windmills. Moreover, the misanthropy that lies just beneath the surface of the CoE’s baby-loathing and breeder-bashing aligns it with the unhappiest of bedfellows—naked apologists for the power elite like Ehrlich, whose *Population Bomb* reels with Hieronymous Boschian visions of the overbreeding underclasses, like the swarming, locustlike masses glimpsed during a taxi ride through Delhi: “My wife and daughter and I were returning to our hotel in an ancient taxi. The seats were hopping with fleas... The streets seemed alive with people. People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing, and screaming. People thrusting their hands through the taxi window, begging. People defecating and urinating. People clinging to buses. People herding animals. People, people, people, people.” Here, then, is Dorian Gray’s true face, the racism, classism, and misanthropy that are too often hidden behind the dream of a pre-industrial, nay, pre-human Paradise Regained, a wilderness world emptied at last of the eating, washing, sleeping, visiting, arguing, screaming, begging, defecating, urinating masses. And the masses, naturally, are always the teeming, undifferentiated others—everyone, that is, but me.

**RCK:** I can certainly be described as misanthrope—or more correctly as an anti-humanist—but that doesn’t make me racist or classist. In fact I oppose both on the same grounds that I oppose nationalism and humanism. Racists imagine they are superior to other races, classists imagine they are superior to other classes, nationalists imagine they are superior to other nations, and humanists imagine they are superior to other species. Globalists imagine industrial society is superior to all other cultures, hence the need to export it to every corner of the globe. The common thread through all of these, obviously, is superiority. Personally, I remain unconvinced of my superiority, despite years of expensive conditioning. I tend to view humans the way a being from outer space would view them: as a species, housed among many other species.

Overall, as a species, since, say, 500 B.C. or so, humans have been behaving oddly. They started by cutting down all the trees in their places of origin, often in order to make boats to spread themselves everywhere else. They have been amazingly effective at turning wilderness into human biomass, but until recently appeared oblivious to the long-term consequences of this strategy. Now that the consequences are abundant—in the form of climate change, topsoil loss, and toxicity—changes are being made, but for the most part they are half-hearted reforms, far short of the about-face that is so urgently needed. The tool-wielding apes—again, viewed as a species—are either sucking



as hard as they can on the tit of industrial society, living in flamboyant denial of the limits of their environment, or seeking to do so as soon as possible, usually by going to war with their neighbors.

Thus the most prominent characteristic of the human species appears to be a lethal combination of arrogance and stupidity. The underlying problem is that humans think they are superior to everything else, when in fact—from the point of view of long-term survival—they are the least well-adapted social creatures on the planet, unlike the ants, who are much more likely to inherit the earth, as Paul Erlich has observed.

As you correctly point out, the Church of Euthanasia focuses primarily on population rather than consumption. It is also true that our message is only received by the elite of the industrial nations, who are leading the charge, in terms of consumption. So the question is, since most of the industrial nations are approaching population stability anyway, why do we focus on population?

Suppose you're a "good consumer." Let's say you recycle, buy "green" products, donate to environmental causes, and so on. You even limit yourself to one child, and you're determined to raise the child with values similar to yours, ensuring that he or she will carry on the good work of saving the earth for future generations. Now let's just say, for arguments' sake, that your child rebels against your middle-class, intellectual, politically correct conditioning, and winds up swilling beer in a trailer park, with three kids. It happens. And what guarantee do we have that those three kids are going follow in the noble footsteps of their grandparent? None whatsoever. Let's say one rises above his humble roots and becomes an investment banker, with a Porche, a house in the suburbs, and two fashionably dressed children. Another elopes with a biker, sets up shop in a nearby trailer park, and produces some less well-groomed specimens. The third becomes a priest and only has sex with boys—a partial success anyway.

Guess what? You just wiped out all the gain from your recycling, "green" consuming, and tax-deductible contributions. Not only did you wipe it out, you reversed it, many times over. How did it happen? It happened because individual consumption affects the future *linearly*, while procreation affects it *exponentially*. The impact of a single child on future generations can't even be approximated, because there are too many variables. It should be obvious by now why the Church is advocating massive voluntary population reduction in the industrial nations. We're advocating it because it's the only way the current generation can affect the distant future. It's just too late—way too late—for cutting back on consumption and hoping for the best. We can no longer afford to gamble on something as tenuous as the transmission of values from parents to children. We need to reduce the number of Americans, Europeans, and Japanese, as soon as possible, by at least a factor of ten, no matter what.

I also believe it's unreasonable to demand that people abandon all of their social conditioning at once. It's not just a question of giving up convenience. The people I'm reaching have, by and large, learned only the skills that are useful to industrial society—mathematics, logic, reading, writing, analysis, and so forth—and have absorbed the esthetics of industrial society—such as they are—in the process. I'm no exception

to this. I identify strongly with technical culture, because it's all I know. If I were suddenly transported to the wilderness, even given friendly tribal neighbors willing to tolerate my ineptness, I would almost certainly go crazy. No amount of wishing would make me a tribal person, raised by oral tradition to love wilderness and survive in it easily. Deprived of usefulness, my experience would be similar to that of elderly people confined in nursing homes.

By comparison, not having children is hardly even a sacrifice, for me, or for most members of the technical elite. The decline of birth rates in the industrial countries only proves this point. Most people I know are much too busy answering e-mail and updating their web pages to raise children, even if they were willing to give up so much of their disposable income. The very rich continue to breed, in part because children have become status symbols, but more importantly because they can afford to pay others to raise their children for them. Leisure time is the holy grail of technological society, and is unlikely to be increased by procreation. It's possible that the elite will prove self-eliminating, in a kind of reverse Darwinism: population reduction via hedonism and sheer selfishness. From this point of view, the Church of Euthanasia is simply encouraging an existing trend, a reasonable strategy in any situation.

**MD:** As a "protector of the status quo" and gutless stooge for the manufacturers of consent, I usually fabricate my so-called "facts" outright, of course. But I'm feeling *GiGi* tonight, and have decided, just this once, to report empirically verifiable facts. Please assist me in my campaign for fairness and accuracy in mass mind-control by nailing down the following details:

1) What's your relationship to UNAPACK? Did you found it?

Unapack was founded and run by Lydia Eccles. I was merely a loyal campaign worker. I wrote some of the campaign literature, dealt with the media on numerous occasions, and accompanied Lydia to the New Hampshire primary and the Democratic Convention in 1996. I was also the Unapack poster girl.

2) Are you "Chris" or "Chrissy?"

Both.

3) Randall Phillips is listed as a "contact" in *Snuff It* #4. Why? What's the connection between him, or his thought and writings, and the CoE?

Randall's descriptions of humanity as a "Martian invasion" have much in common with my view from outer space described above. Humans are behaving like bacteria in a petri dish, and if nothing is done their fate will be similar. The main difference is that while he identifies "intelligent", aryan, male humans as superior, and presents himself as an example thereof, I don't share his optimism, and regard him—and myself—as part of the problem.

4) So are the Goads. Again, what's the connection?

The Goads have a flair for expressing the pervasive ugliness of modern life, and for linking the ugliness to neurosis and sexual abuse, in the most shocking and personal way. Again, we agree about the problems, but not about the solutions.

# This Is How The Church Of Euthanasia Cult Started

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/grunge.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/grunge.html)>

by Felix Behr

At the end of The Jerry Springer Show's episode "**I Want To Join a Suicide Cult**," which aired on August 11, 1997, Jerry Springer took to the stage to give a short speech condemning his interview subjects: "The point is, **cults** are dangerous and not entitled to the protection of religion, not because of what they believe, but because of what they entice their adherents to do." The text is taken from a transcript stored on the website of his interviewees, **the Church of Euthanasia**.

The Church of Euthanasia portrays itself as an anti-human religion with one commandment, "Thou shalt not procreate", and four philosophical pillars: suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. It should be noted that in each case, the Church of Euthanasia only promotes voluntary or consensual forms of population decrease, i.e. no killing.

However, despite their posturing, it seems more likely that the Church of Euthanasia is an activist project taking performance art to an extreme. Evidence for this can be found in the "Religion" section of the their websites page on **Antihumanism**, which dismisses the subject: "[Religion is] proof that humans are stupid." Further proof for the cultish aspects of their group serving merely for aesthetic shock value is their self-description on **their official Twitter page**: "a non-profit educational foundation devoted to restoring balance between humans and the remaining non-human species, through voluntary population reduction." The point, which they also made to Jerry Springer, is that no one will hear the message without an evangelist.

## Unabomber for President!

For the founder of The Church of Euthanasia, such tactics as appearing on The Jerry Springer Show in a performative act of conversion were nothing new, nor even the most extreme. In the 1996 Presidential Election, **Chris Korda**, inventor, artist, musician, developer, and founder of the Church of Euthanasia, helped launch the **Unabomber** for President campaign. Their bumpersticker ethos read "FED UP WITH 'PROGRESS'? Write-in UNABOMBER For PRESIDENT '96."

To be clear, as Scott Winkour was in his contemporary piece for the ***San Francisco Chronicle***, the group, Unapack, were not interested in endorsing Ted Kaczynski, but the 35,000 word rant he wrote against modern society. Chris Korda protested this heavily in the piece when asked why she chose the name rightly associated with terrorism: "I haven't committed any acts of violence. I'm a pacifist. The Unabomber used violence to gain access to the media. It's not something I'd do, but he has presented us with an opportunity we must exploit." More interestingly for us is that they followed up with a rationale for risking the association anyway, explaining "We've recognized

that in a mass society you can't effect meaningful change without seizing control of the mass media. Our whole focus is on creating something irresistible to the media." Considering how even though the Church of Euthanasia's activities have died down since seizing the public attention in 1997, they keep on cropping up in articles by *Film Daily*, *Backpackerverse*, and ... here ... the tactic certainly works.

## Thank you for not breeding

So now that we have unpacked the nature of Chris Korda's activism as guerilla theater, we should return to the Church of Euthanasia. According to an information panel for the Church of Euthanasia's 2019 retrospective at the Parisian gallery **Goss-well Road**, Chris Korda was inspired by a dream in 1992. During the dream, she was visited by "The Being" who spoke for Earth's inhabitants in other dimensions and it warned them that our ecosystem was failing. The core point that Korda understood was that every aspect of environmental collapse resulted from **the overabundance of a single species**: homo sapiens. So the only way to continue was to halt procreation. Korda woke up muttering the new motto of the Church of Euthanasia: "Save the Planet – Kill Yourself."

To facilitate their suicide aspect, the Church of Euthanasia also gave out resources such as how to asphyxiate oneself. However, according to the **St. Louis Dispatch**, after a 52-year-old woman in Missouri followed the instructions in 2003, the Church of Euthanasia removed the instructions to avoid the threatened legal ramifications.

Yet another controversy Korda purposefully sought was their video "I Like to Watch," which was, as they describe on the **Church of Euthanasia's webpage for it**, "a four-minute music video which explores the connections between the September 11 attacks, professional sports, and pornography." They released it on December 11, 2001, prompting the *Washington Post* to describe the footage as "our new porn."

## What now?

Whether it's a **cult**, a performance piece, or simply a massive joke, the Church of Euthanasia has only been in the headlines of weird lists and retrospectives. In 2019, an interviewer for the ***Boston Herald*** pointed out that Korda kept on slipping between the present and past tense when talking about the Church of Euthanasia.

Korda smiled and responded with "It's more alive than ever." Apparently, for instance, an independent sub-group had started in Belgium without even reaching out to Korda. By the time she discovered it, the church had already converted hundreds, if not thousands of people. "So what that tells me is that the Church of Euthanasia is now officially, it has been like this for years, it's completely a self-sustaining meme. Younger people just keep rediscovering it. We don't need to keep doing the same things. Even if we could do the same things — which we can't, that would make no sense. But

it has a life of its own now, and it's arguably more relevant than ever, most of the predictions we made in the early 90's came true."

Now, the conditions of the climate have worsened, prompting more people to embrace various forms of antinatalism, a philosophy that is against the idea of procreation. However, as an article on the rise of antinatalism in *The Guardian* ends, antinatalists have always believed that the world was no place to bring children, meaning that the anxiety we feel now is simply inherent to being alive.

## Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong interview of Chris Korda

Chris Korda

Dadaist ecology or performance?: six billion humans can be wrong. We interviewed...

**Chris Korda**

**Founder and leader of the Church of Euthanasia**

by José C. Cabezas

"I was born in New York and have lived in Boston for over 15 years. The details of my life are not relevant to what I want to say," says Chris Korda when someone asks about his private life. This would be understandable if it weren't for the fact that Chris Korda is not a typical character.

Korda has largely become known for releasing an album on the German label International DeeJay Gigolo (an affiliate of Disko B). Both labels are well known for their penchant for constructing absurd stories around their artists and putting them on the sleeves of their albums. So when you read in the booklet for *Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong* that "the Church of Euthanasia is an educational foundation dedicated to restoring the balance between humans and all other species on Earth through voluntary population reduction," that "the only commandment is Thou Shalt Not Procreate," and that "sex is only practiced for pleasure, and if necessary, abortion is used," you can't help but think that it's all just another setup by those funny guys from Munich.

### Well, it turns out he's serious.

A little internet research quickly unravels the mystery. It's all true. The Church of Euthanasia really exists ([churchofeuthanasia.org](http://churchofeuthanasia.org)) and Chris Korda is a real person. We find articles, interviews, videos, merchandising, photos, etc. Of course, it's the latter that catches our attention; it turns out that the Chris Korda on the album, the one who appears on the cover and in the photos of the Church's demonstrations, is a man, not a woman.

It's not that the act itself is something that has never been seen before. There have always been transvestites, and even more so in the world of entertainment. However, they have rarely gone beyond that. They rarely leave that world to take an active

part in the real world (AIDS doesn't count — it's not real — it's just something you see on TV). Chris Korda has surrounded himself with a paraphernalia that combines electronic music, (anti-)art and the most provocative propaganda. Perhaps his ideas about overpopulation and the like are nothing new (nobody disputes that). The novelty lies in the staging, in the way of showing it, of attracting our interest. In an era in which we are submerged in an avalanche of information of such calibre that our attention span is completely exceeded, it is essential to dress the products in an appealing, and at the same time strident, way so that they stand out from the rest of the offers.

And if Chris Korda has done anything, it is to create controversy. In a society as puritanical and scandalous as the American one, Korda begins by attacking from within (almost always the most effective way) by creating a church whose four pillars are suicide, abortion, cannibalism and sodomy (understood as any non-reproductive sexual act).

## **The species holocaust.**

"We are witnessing a mass extinction of species. One species disappears every hour, four times faster if we are talking about tropical rainforests."

It's a bit far away, isn't it? Tropical forests are something we see on Channel 2, which makes us feel aware for a while, but which disappear as soon as we turn off the TV. The Amazon has nothing to do with us. Of the 10 to 15 million species that inhabit the earth, half live in tropical rainforests. A large part of these species are undiscovered and will become extinct without ever being seen. Rainforests are crucial. In a single tree there can be 1,200 species of beetles, of which about 300 are specialized in that particular kind of tree. Thousands are cut down every day.

But the Amazon is very far away from us, right?

"It has been estimated that before humans came, one species in a large group became extinct every million years. There have been five major extinctions in the geological history of the planet, including one that wiped out 95% of species. The most likely causes of all of these are astronomical (a comet hits the Earth, fills the atmosphere with dust, obscures the Sun, the planet freezes over...). Sooner or later, the cause of the extinction disappears: the dust settles on the ground, the ice thaws, and life is restored."

*-And why should this time be different?*

CK: The extinction we are experiencing now works differently. Unlike with the comet, the cause is not going to disappear, because we are the cause. We are changing the chemical composition of the planet, of the oceans and of the atmosphere. But humans do not yet have the power to completely destroy life on the planet. Even if we detonated all nuclear weapons at once, some of the bacteria and viruses would survive.

*-Sooner or later, life would be restored again...*

CK: Just because we can't destroy the earth all at once doesn't mean we can't do it slowly by reducing its biodiversity. Life creates diversity because it's an excellent

survival strategy. Diverse systems adapt much better to change. Imagine a forest that contains ten thousand species. For some reason, the temperature changes a few degrees and half of those species disappear overnight. It's a full-blown extinction event, but there are still five thousand species in that forest that will be able to adapt to the new climate and evolve into new ones that will replace the extinct ones.

But now we cut down our hypothetical forest and plant it with just one species, something useful to us – corn, for example. The temperature changes again. What is the probability that our genetically modified corn can survive? Very low. The corn dies, the topsoil turns to dust from lack of activity, the wind blows it away and we have a man-made desert. Are we reducing the probability that life will continue on earth? Yes.

By reducing the number of species on Earth, we are creating a planet of weeds, with man as the ultimate weed. The only ones that will survive will be the genetically modified species that are useful to us (cows, chickens, pigs, corn, wheat, etc.). The rest will be rats, cockroaches, pigeons and other species capable of adapting to an increasingly hostile environment, created by and for man.

## **Save the planet, kill yourself.**

*-And what is the Church's position on Euthanasia?*

CK: The history of industrial society is the history of diversity – both biological and social – leading to monoculture. The Church of Euthanasia fights for diversity and therefore opposes all forms of human growth, including economic and technological, but especially demographic. We want to see fewer people, using less stuff and generating less waste. The average person finds these goals deeply offensive and antisocial; they cannot help but be offended because their scale of values is based on Humanism, the belief that man is the measure of all things and that without him the world would have no value or meaning.

This arrogant idea leads directly to a hierarchical order of existence, with man at the top. God tells us in Genesis: “Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it and subdue (...) all living creatures.” That is what we have done until now, with catastrophic results.

Humanism is the greatest heresy in the Church of Euthanasia, which could well be the first anti-human religion.

*-But there doesn't seem to be much chance in this “holy war”...*

CK: Humanism has been exported to every corner of the planet, and with it the mechanistic worldview. Kings collected taxes, built roads, established uniform codes of justice, turned forests into ships, and sent armies to distant lands to “collect.” Thanks to their efforts we now have Nike and Pizza Hut and an objective, standard, predictable world with divided and efficient labor. Since it is entirely impossible to reverse this course, the position of the Euthanasia Church is purely symbolic. We cannot stop humans from killing the Earth, but we can make them feel guilty about it. And we

can also opt out. By not having children, consuming as little as possible, and finally by committing suicide.

*-Do members of the Euthanasia Church have to commit suicide?!*

CK: Of course not! However, if someone really wants to do it, they should wait until they are a member. That way, they automatically become a saint, without any paperwork. It is also important that they leave a note of thanks (or blame) to the Church and, if they wish, some kind of inheritance.

*-And why haven't you committed suicide?*

CK: Maybe I will. Believe me, I think about it every day. But maybe if enough people pay attention and stop procreating and consuming so much, we might be able to reduce the population and build a more sustainable future. That hope is the only thing keeping me alive; if it ever dies, I'll die with it. The question is how much of yourself are you willing to sacrifice for the rest of the species on the planet and for future generations?

## **Purity is for losers.**

The Church of Euthanasia's actions range from counterattacks to anti-abortion protests to (blind) tastings of human flesh outside supermarkets — being vegetarians, they suggest the consumption of dead humans for those who do not want to give up meat. Their more subtle attempts (such as the *Snuff It* fanzine or the CD) get, however, much more media coverage.

According to Korda, any press for the church is good press. His website lists all the articles that have been written about him, whether positive or negative. Chris Korda has nothing to hide. The son of Michael Korda, editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster and grandson of one of the architects of the British film industry, Korda began experimenting with gender roles a decade ago. For those who know him personally, this is all common knowledge. However, it is something he does not usually talk about in interviews.

“Looking back, I think cross-dressing was the beginning of an attempt to balance myself internally, in a psychological sense. Specifically between my masculine and feminine poles, but also in other ways. I worked imitating *Paris Is Burning*-style women and even participated in drag-queen contests. I never got past second place; I couldn't compete with street queens who had nothing else to earn or go back to prostitution or drugs.”

*-Have you ever considered sex change surgery?*

CK: Yes, of course. We barely survive childhoods of harsh conditioning. Many people are severely damaged and never recover — this is how the proletarian technological society is perpetuated. I think it was in realizing the “discomfort” I was experiencing with my gender that I began to progress towards balance. And in trying to balance myself internally, I began to realize all the imbalances in my environment. The answer is logical: I gave up the idea of surgery because it is the typically Western, patriarchal,



interventionist, invasive solution to a problem that cannot be solved that way. You go to the doctor complaining that you feel trapped in an extreme gender role and the doctor says, “Well, if you have \$30,000 and a very high tolerance for personal pain and suffering, and two or three years to spend on this, we will gradually introduce you to another gender role. Opposite, but equally extreme and ridiculous.”

*-But, didn't you have surgery?*

CK: I think it's a shame that so many people succumb to it when what they really want is... ambivalence, balance, being in a point between the genres — where we should all be — giving up the extreme and embracing subtlety and ambiguity.

Cross-dressing is imitating the opposite gender, and that's positive, but the next step is *gender-bending*, occupying the space between genders. There are people like Dennis Rodman, the basketball player, who had the courage to do it while being a member of one of the most famous teams in history. And he did it in public. It was quite surprising.

*-Do you find these types of attitudes positive?*

CK: Well, there are a lot of grey areas. It's one of the main ideas of the Euthanasia Church: Nothing is all good or all bad. Even though something may be harmful in one way, it may also be beneficial in another.

The same can be said of their propaganda methods. Proclamations like *Save the planet, kill yourself* are double-edged swords. They are very powerful, but they can send the wrong messages to the public. And even more so when that public is — for the most part — neither accustomed to nor prepared to read between the lines.

## **Propaganda, situationism and Dada.**

“The essential function of all modern propaganda — newspapers, magazines, books, television, movies, the Internet and every other imaginable medium — is to convince us, at every moment, that there is only one right way to live. Sustaining this illusion consumes vast amounts of resources, which is why the content and information industry is now the largest and most profitable in the world. Escapist dramas like *Star Trek* try to convince us that thousands of years from now, people will live comfortable lives with hot showers and slaves to cook for them. Disney spends billions of dollars on “historical” films in which our ancestors wear strange clothes but act like us and even talk like us. There is very little chance that we could understand our ancestors or their tribal behavior. Just as little chance that they could understand ours.”

*-However, the Church of Euthanasia agreed to participate in a mass program like The Jerry Springer Show. Isn't it contradictory to use the same media that you criticize?*

CK: We are not required to be consistent, or to make sense. In fact, we often are not. All we have to do over and over again is to break through the blockage that prevails in people's minds and tells them that things can continue as they are. We are here to interrupt that current that drags us along and the tactic that works well at a given

moment is the one we will use. If it helps to be rational, we will be rational. If it helps to be irrational, we will be irrational.

*-And how could appearing on such a frivolous programme help you?*

CK: First of all, we were offered to be on it. Also, its audience is predominantly poor, black housewives who are very, very likely to have children. They are a very important target for us. On the other hand, I prefer tabloids to so-called respectable or mainstream formats, because they are much less censored and you can say – more or less – what you want, as long as you are not boring.

*-But in the program you were treated as a kind of suicide sect and that could overshadow the ecological content of your message...*

CK: We are not one thing. We are a ministry of propaganda. We do what is most effective at the moment. The essence of situationism — and we are situationists — is to perceive the right place and time for an otherwise useless action to be very effective by unleashing a much greater force. In this particular case, we were able to manipulate a situation to our advantage. Jerry Springer did not expect to have intelligent guests; he had never had them before and he has not had them since.

“We live in an age where there is almost no meaningful communication. People have been trained to separate every bit of information they receive into convenient categories so that it can be assimilated and basically ignored. Most of the time we are not dealing with people but with their mental secretaries, who file, catheterize and sort everything into good-bad dualities.

“My goal is to destroy those categories as much as possible and present information that cannot be assimilated, that does not fit into those boxes. The best possible response to an action by the Church of Euthanasia would be ‘What the hell are you doing?! I don’t understand, explain it to me’. This is an ideal reaction because it would allow us to go in and make people start thinking for themselves about something they didn’t think about before. We are looking, in a way, for a kind of deprogramming.”

*-But that is something that Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber) was also looking for, for example, and it didn’t help him much.*

CK: The Unabomber published the whole truth, unvarnished. 30,000 words in the world’s most widely read newspapers. And almost nobody read it. Most of those supplements ended up in the trash for two reasons. First, he had no entertainment value. Most Americans are incapable of reading 30,000 words on any subject, not even sports, much less the future of industrial society. Second, the Unabomber didn’t realize that his audience had already been convinced that he was a lunatic, a serial killer, and that they could safely ignore anything he said.

These are serious propaganda mistakes that we are not committing.

In contrast to Chris Korda’s seriousness, other members of the Church of Euthanasia, such as Vermin Supremo (one of its main activists), have a decidedly humorous attitude. “Of course we are serious, but the humor in the Church is undeniable. The Church’s response to the collapse of industrial society is to create a Dadaist spectacle and take it to the streets, right under everyone’s nose. This is a big part of what dis-

tinguishes us from others. There are so many cults to choose from, which one are you going to stick with?”

## **The cover of discord.**

The German music magazine *Beam Me Up* did not share Vermin Supreme’s sense of humour, however, and denounced Korda for anti-Semitism because of the original cover of *Six Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong*, which showed Korda himself naked, lying in front of the mouth of one of the crematoria at the Nazi concentration camp in Dachau. The Church’s response was not long in coming.

“Nationalists believe that one group of humans is superior to all others. Concentration camps are symbolic of what happens when this belief is taken to an extreme. Humanists believe that one species is superior to all others. This belief has also been taken to an extreme, with an equally predictable result: the extinction of at least a third of the Earth’s species within a few thousand years.

“The Jews suffered terribly, but any sane person will admit that there are still Jews in the world. The same cannot be said of the millions of plant and animal species that have become extinct because of the human population explosion. Where are the symbols of this species holocaust? Where are the monuments to remind us that something shameful has happened and that — worse — it is happening every day, ever more rapidly? The Nazis stabilized the economy, built autobahns and restored national pride. Many Germans were grateful for this and avoided asking too many questions. It was better not to know where the trains went, because to know that would mean accepting blame or fighting the Nazis. Today, people in industrialized nations are in a similar position. There are more cars, computers and shopping malls full of stuff every day. It is better not to know where the oil comes from or where the garbage goes. Why spoil the fun?”

Ultimately, the album cover had to be changed in order to distribute the album in Germany (their record company is in Munich), something Chris Korda called “a tragedy, but it was necessary. Germany was the perfect place for that cover. Here in the States, almost no one would have understood it because there is not enough education to recognize the image. They would have thought it was a pizza oven.”

## **Buy, consume, be happy.**

“Governments have always been involved in drug trafficking. The British sold opium to China to pacify the population. The Americans smuggled cocaine from Central America to pay for the war in Nicaragua. They used heroin earlier to weaken hippies and students opposed to Vietnam. LSD-25 was a failed attempt at government mind control.

“The best forms of mind control appear to be voluntary behavior; controlling actions directly consumes too many resources (that was the main reason for the collapse of

the Soviet empire). It is much more efficient to control thoughts and the best way to achieve this is with effective propaganda (like the American one, the most advanced in the world) that makes citizens believe they have total freedom, while behaving according to ideals shown on TV.”

-What is the relationship between phenomena such as club culture and these types of social control methods?

CK: Club culture is a perfect example of propaganda in action. Like the missionaries of the Spanish empire, ravers travel around the world teaching doctrine and replacing social diversity with monoculture. Every club in every city is the same: people dressed the same, taking the same drugs and dancing to the same records, with the same lights and the same fog machine. The totalitarian slogan of the 1998 Love Parade – One World, One Future – could easily have come from Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. A million standardised humans gathered around a phallic DJ tower, worshipping at the altar of homogenised techno-rave culture.

Signed by DJ Hell himself after accidentally buying his first EP in New York in 1997, Korda released his first album last year. His musical childhood began in 1977, when he studied piano, guitar and music theory with several excellent teachers (such as tenor Jerry Bergonzi). In the 1980s he played in swing, fusion and psychedelic rock bands and was a music teacher at a small conservatory. His first exposure to electronic music came with Vangelis and, later, with house (he mentions Black Box, Robin S. and The Orb).

He started making electronic music in 1993 with *I Just Can’t Let Go* and that same year he released his first CD *Demons in My Head*, a “terrifying but beautiful” (in his own words) collage of ambient sounds. He then joined Gigolo where, now focused on electronic dance music, he released two EPs and, now, an album.

*Six Billion Humans* ... is hard to categorize. Produced by Korda himself, it presents an attractive mix of electronic music and propaganda designed as a mass consumption product (as mass as electronic music can be) and containing enough hooks to attract many and diverse audiences. On the one hand, collaborations such as those of Michelle Grinser, Richard Bartz or Hell himself, ensure the musical quality of the album. On the other hand, the content of antisocial, anti-consumerist propaganda — anti-everything in general — and the treatment of it are most attractive. Hypnotic repetitions of proclamations, perversion of mass slogans (the *One world, one future* of Love Parade ’98 is transformed into a furious *One world, one shit!*) and hilarious cynicism in the lyrics. Three potential hits: *Save the Planet*, *Kill Yourself* in which Korda recounts the dream in which an alien intelligence (The Being), spokesman for the inhabitants of the earth in other dimensions, inspires him to create the Church of Euthanasia; *Fleshdance*, the first cannibal anthem aimed at dance floors, and *Six Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong*, in which the tremendous Chicks on Speed (another group on the border between art and music) take their anger out on capitalist society.

“My goal is to communicate profoundly subversive and antisocial ideas to as many people as possible. This can only be done by using the methods of Mass Society. To

a certain extent, you are part of that apparatus. In a way, my goal is to convince you that my cause is a good one. To convince you enough that you will be willing to play along and make these ideas available to a larger percentage of the public. If I succeed in persuading you, I have succeeded. If, on the other hand, I convince you that I am either a nutcase or an object of entertainment, I have failed in my cause. Do you see the problem?

*Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong* is released by International DeeJay Gigolo Records and distributed by So Dens.

*The preceding is a translation. The original language is **here**.*

## Chris Korda, deadly is the question

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/laliberation\\_eng.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/laliberation_eng.html)>

**An antinatalist activist with a biting humour, founder of the “Church of Euthanasia”, the American artist is celebrating her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with her first major retrospective in France, at the Confort Moderne in Poitiers.**

Chris Korda in May 2022, published in Terraforma Journal, Issue no. 3, June 2022. (Thomas Hauser/Courtesy of Terraforma Journal.)

by Marie Klock

published on August 1, 2022 at 7:00 am

[Rough translation via Google; the original French is **here**]

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It is in an oven that we meet Chris Korda, at the bar of the Modern Comfort (Poitiers, July 11, 30 degrees), at a door of the hall which houses his first retrospective of such magnitude. The dodger is even worse, a few days later, when we listen to the conversation again to transcribe it (Berlin, July 19, 39 degrees). The computer is overheating and the fingers sticky with sweat struggle to follow the rate of speech of the American artist, skidding on the keyboard. The body disgorges, the brain capitulates. These words hammered out by Chris with all the energy of his soft voice haunt us like a chorus: “I told you so!” Not only did she tell us so, but she yelled at us through all possible channels, starting with this legendary banner carried around from demonstration to demonstration, available in stickers, badges, T-shirts, white capitals on a background black, no punctuation, no frills: “SAVE THE PLANET KILL YOURSELF”, or “SAVE THE PLANET SUICIDE YOURSELF”.

## Intercommunicating cells

Chris Korda is 60 years old. Thirty years ago, she founded the Church of Euthanasia. She is an artist, anti-natalist activist, musician, coder, researcher, transgender, vegan, erudite, biting, talkative, impossible to sum up because arboreal, curiosity made flesh.

Like a website generously stuffed with hypertext links, the exhibition devoted to him by the Modern Comfort, put together hand in hand with the Parisian gallery Goswell Road, offers gateways to some of the many intercommunicating cells. of which this fascinating creature is made.

View of the exhibition at the Confort Moderne. (Pierre Antoine/Photos: Pierre Antoine)

By way of welcome, above the door through which one enters this large hangar, a world population counter identical to that which welcomes the visitor on the churchofethanasia.org site. The units parade at full speed; by December, we will be 8 billion. As a teenager in the 1970s, Chris says she felt “fully aware, at the age of 13, of the possibility of ecological disaster. My mother said it was because she was reading Rachel Spring’s *Silent Spring* [best-seller ecologist released in 1962, note] when she was pregnant with me. The library where I grew up was overflowing with books that depicted human assaults on the planet. Perhaps most significant was *God’s Own Junkyard*, a photographic essay on the pollution and deterioration of American landscapes, particularly in the form of highway billboards. I understood very young what the price of industrialism was”. And overpopulation, against which she officially entered into a Dada crusade with the foundation in 1992 – after being visited overnight by “a being” who brought her the revelation – of her “sect of suicidal people” as the host Jerry would call it. Springer on his famous fucking talk show.

## **“You shall not procreate”**

Within the Church, she is “Reverend Chris”. At his side, his friend and mentor “Pastor Kim”, astrophysicist Robert Kimberk, presented as “a true Renaissance man, excelling in mathematics and painting” (two of his paintings, full-length portraits of Chris and himself naked as worms, are exhibited in Poitiers for the first time), but also several cardinals as well as a kind of bogeyman, the abominable “Vermine Suprême” who joined the movement in 1997 and counts among his acts of weapons of ‘cumming in the face of Christians with a penis-shaped squirt gun’. The Church requires its members to comply with its unique commandment: “Thou shalt not procreate.” It rests on four pillars: suicide, abortion, cannibalism and sodomy. *Snuff It*, the quarterly publication of the Church, however tempers black on white in its second issue: “1. Suicide is optional but encouraged. 2. Abortion may be necessary to prevent procreation. 3. Cannibalism is obligatory if you persist in eating meat. 4. Sodomy is optional but strongly encouraged.” And to the concern of a reader who questions the first pillar, the Reverend responds in his great leniency: “Of course, you don’t have to kill yourself! But if you really want to, join the Church FIRST. Thus, you will automatically become a saint, without any other administrative formality.

A sense of sarcasm that explodes in your face when you read the slogans suspended from the ceiling or planted on wooden strips, carefully crafted because they are destined to be preserved over the years: “EAT PEOPLE NOT ANIMALS” (eat people, not

of animals), “DIE YUPPIE SPERM” (dies, dynamic young executive sperm), “LOVE THE EARTH TIE YOUR TUBES” (love the planet, tie your tubes), “BONER DONER” (boner giver), “STUPID MONKEYS » (assholes)... As many messages as a magnificent series of photos taken on the spot of the demonstrations, but also videos filmed with a camcorder and broadcast in a pleasant little projection room, allowing you to see the situation. Particularly delicious, an “Earth Day” raft sabotage, a human being skewered and roasted like a pig (for fakes, need we specify?) in the middle of the street, or these actions carried out in front of clinics practicing abortion and where pro-life activists try to dissuade patients, rosaries in hand, their prayers drowned out by the chanting of Vermin and his acolytes: “What do we want? Abortion! When do we want abortion? Now ! Why do we want abortion? Because it tastes good!”

I Like to Watch (2001), by Chris Korda. (Null Records)

Between round anniversaries, shortages of raw materials and fuel, heat waves, fires and alarming regressions, in the United States, of the right of women to dispose of the occupants of their uterus, one could hardly have imagined a better context to celebrate the work of Chris Korda. She has been living in Berlin for a few years. The United States, this “place full of prudes, psychos, guns and babies” she “never wants to live there again” and she is ready to “go through all the trouble it takes to not have to go back there”. Including learning German to qualify for permanent resident status? That’s kind of the problem: Chris still has a bunch of things to do on this Earth and isn’t “sure” of having the time to devote herself to a language that she “doesn’t like as much as that”. She is moved: “I would have liked to devote the next decade of my life to composing music for the piano, to continuing my research on complex polymetries, to exploring the universe of the new atonal harmony”, but there still has struggles to fight, “even though I’m old, even though I’m tired – it’s not the time for me to hang up my gloves yet”. Although overwhelmed by the feeling that people don’t want to hear. “It doesn’t smell good for civilization, but when I say that people just smile and tell me I’m right...and the majority of them spend their weekends on ketamine, and I can see why..”

The devastating humor she used as a weapon took a hell of a burst of lead in the wing. Brigitte, the friendly inflatable doll who accompanied the processions with her carnivorous baby emerging from her bloody pussy, is crucified on a white wall. “This whole phase of my work related to the Church of Euthanasia was steeped in irony, because I basically agree with Oscar Wilde who believes that ‘if you want to tell people the truth, make them laugh, otherwise they’ll will kill you’”. But I began to change my mind around 2018 when I arrived in Berlin because the sinking of the boat is no longer a hypothesis: it is sinking, people are in the water, and we don’t don’t make fun of someone who is drowning. Ironic detachment is no longer appropriate.”

The Brigitte doll and her carnivorous baby, in 1996.

## Acute awareness of the power of civilization

A long debate conducted online on the Metadelusion blog with her comrade Lydia Eccles made her understand that she fundamentally differs from her neo-primitivist comrades in that she “does not wish to see civilization destroyed”: “It’s true that I contributed to the campaign “Unabomber for president” [launched in 1995 in support of eco-terrorist Ted Kaczynski] but I ended up realizing that I did not agree. I identify too much with civilization! I grew up in New York City! Right in the heart of Manhattan! 56<sup>th</sup> street, among these huge towers! It’s one of the most cosmopolitan cities on Earth, and I was raised by two brilliant people, intellectuals. I grew up reading, I wore glasses, I was frail, you could sum up my childhood by saying I was always picked last on the dodgeball team. All my education determined me to have an acute awareness of the power of human civilization, of the strength conferred by the love of knowledge.

It would take another two pages to talk about his computer work and his passion for numbers, and at least four times more to cover not only his discography but his rhythmic research; recommend the essential album 8 Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong (“8 billion humans can’t be wrong”) for warming up and let curiosity do the rest. It can be listened to in full in Poitiers until August 28, and on the Internet as long as the Internet exists.

## Purity is for losers

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/purity.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/purity.html)>

**The Church of Euthanasia and Chris Korda**

by Chad Parenteau

## Introduction

*“The Church of Euthanasia was inspired by a dream, in which Rev. Chris Korda confronted an alien intelligence known as The Being who speaks for the inhabitants of Earth in other dimensions. The Being warned that our planet’s ecosystem is failing, and that our leaders deny this. The Being asked why our leaders lie to us, and why so many of us believe these lies. Rev. Korda awoke from the dream moaning the Church’s infamous slogan, Save the Planet — Kill Yourself.” –From The Church of Euthanasia web site.*

Headed by Korda, who resides in Somerville, MA, the Church of Euthanasia, a federally recognized and therefore tax-exempt educational group, preaches biodiversity and the willful depopulation of the Earth in order to save its many species from extinction. They have one commandment, “Thou Shalt Not Procreate,” and four pillars: suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy (which they define as any nonreproductive sex). Potential “Euthanists” only have to adhere to the COE commandment, adopting



if children are later desired. Members with children are excommunicated only if they give birth to more after joining.

Actions have included counterattacking an abortion clinic protest with signs that say “Eat a Queer Fetus For Jesus” and “Pedophile Priests For Life,” to holding blind flesh taste tests outside a supermarket (They profess to be vegetarians, and suggest the eating of already deceased humans for those who insist on eating flesh). Their comparatively subtler efforts that have more entertainment value receive more mainstream coverage than their demonstrations. These include Korda’s techno CD’s and their print/E-journal, *Snuff It*, hailed by *Time* magazine in 1995 as one of the “Hot ‘zines on the web.”

All press to the COE is good press. A part of their web site lists all the articles ever written about the church, whether they are objective or with a negative bent. Korda told me he has nothing to hide and even challenged others to dig dirt up on him. It isn’t easy tracking down information; and when you find it, there isn’t much his web site doesn’t already tell you. He is the son of Simon & Schuster editor-in-chief Michael Korda, whose own father helped to establish the British film industry. He started experimenting with gender roles less than ten years ago. For those who have encountered Korda, all this seems to be common knowledge; you just won’t get it directly out of his mouth—not if you’re writing about him, at least.

Some might say it was his father’s lawyer that stopped him from talking (as claimed in a gossip column of a 1996 issue of *New York* magazine). A year after, however, Korda—who was “Chrissy” Korda at the time, and asked writers to refer to him as a her—talked at length in Boston magazine about his family and his past with no apparent reluctance. Recently, he informed Mark Dery, who interviewed him for the online magazine *GettingIt* that he is both Chris and Chrissy. Despite this, the Korda I’ve witnessed these past few months has seemed decisively male and gave me no requests to refer to him as a her. What happened between then and now (to me at least) is a mystery. According to Korda, his past is not as important as his self-anointed mission.

Korda expressed disappointment that when the COE is given any significant space in a periodical, it’s done with an A&E slant. An ideal situation, said Korda, would be a trial over a suicide inspired by the church, something the area’s premiere paper and other mainstream press would have no choice but to report. Their web site not only offers advice, but sainthood to anyone who commits suicide and mentions the COE, be it in a positive or negative light. “Provided they don’t do it for some really asinine reason,” added Korda.

“It’s been a disappointment to me that no one’s actually killed themselves and then had their parents sue us,” Korda told me in the course of our interviews. “That would actually punch through the media shield.”

An intended visualization for this piece came after my interviews with Korda. After he sent me a taped copy, I sat down to watch the episode of *The Jerry Springer Show* that he and other members appeared in over two years ago under the title “I Want To

Join A Suicide Cult.” The guest roster included a woman named Grace, who said she wished to join, and an ex-boyfriend, Chuck, who wanted to stop her.

As they reported on their web-site, one of the main goals was to attack Neal Horsley, head of the Creator Rights Party, whose own web-site, which applauded the persecution and murder of doctors who perform abortions, was shut down earlier this year. Watching this, I felt it was an even bigger set-up than they let on. Chuck, who said he split with Grace over her refusal to have children and didn’t want to wear condoms because they were monogamous, was too perfect a foil. Grace’s decision and Chuck’s struggle to win her back both seemed non-existent except through Springer’s monologue.

The kicker was when Springer gave what I thought was the answer to his own question of why they acted the way they did.

“Grace, in fairness, if [don’t populate the planet] is all you guys were saying, you wouldn’t even be on the show because that wouldn’t be a major issue and people would be agreeing with you.”

Korda chimed in: “That’s right, and isn’t that interesting, Jerry?”

Grace got up from chair and walked to the edge of the stage, sounding charged up: “Wait. You got it. Jerry, that’s exactly it, Jerry!”

It was then that I remembered “A Modest Proposal,” the satirical essay written by Jonathan Swift in 1729, often evoked in articles about the COE. In it, Swift, with statistics and cold logic, proposes that Ireland (his homeland) cure its famine simply by eating their infants. This essay, when read in a teacher’s class I was in, sparked such debate that one of my fellow students even said she didn’t think it was satire at all, and that Swift was dead serious.

Good God, that’s it. This is what the church is about. They have the modest proposal for the upcoming twenty-first century. At least, that’s what I thought to myself. Being able to view the COE material in a certain context, I had at least a clearer vision of how the article would end.

By July, I found a newly posted letter from someone who announced a pending suicide. The letter closed with the following: “Thanks for the support, not that you convinced me, but I appreciate the camaraderie.”

I had no proof of its authenticity when I discovered it. Still, it floored me, witnessing satire becoming dogma, if it hadn’t been already.

When I first heard of them, it was through writer and ‘zine publisher Reverend Richard J. Mackin, who described them to me as a “street theater group.” *The Jerry Springer Show* described them as a suicide cult, much to the objections of fellow-guest Grace, who was inducted after the show. “You called it, ‘I Want to Join a Suicide Cult,’” she told Springer. “I’m joining an educational group that’s talking about overpopulation.”

Korda’s response when I asked him about it: “Of course we’re a suicide cult.”

Throughout our talks, Korda made it clear that he and the COE strive, among everything else, towards ambiguity, and to not be defined as any one thing. As of this writing, Korda has accomplished that much.

## **A Day In The Life**

April 24, 1999. The Boston light radio station, WBOS, held another “Earthfest” at Boston’s Esplanade near the Charles River, featuring an unexciting array of musicians. I hadn’t come for any of this, but in fact was searching for the familiar banners of the COE, who were ejected from last year’s Earthfest. After breezing past the various environmental booths, I headed down towards the River’s edge and the concert stage, which the various concession stands (serving hot dogs, doughboys and other foods questionable by environmental and vegetarian standards) were next to. The tables stacked with environmental literature were a considerable distance away from the musical hoopla and placed under large tents that had all the visual allure of the hospital tents you see in war movies.

Down by the river, I found the first vestiges of the COE gathering. Young men and women by or on the docks, sporting signs with such sayings as NO ONE REALLY CARES, THANK YOU FOR NOT BREEDING and MAKE LOVE NOT BABIES.

One the water, a women rode on a kayak with the sign, LOVE THE EARTH TIE YOUR TUBES. At one point a family walked up to the docks. A little girl in a pink-hooded jacket was in tow. One of the women, presumably the mother, pointed to it.

“See the sign?” she asked the child, presumably not being able to read it herself. The family moved away soon after I heard her say that.

More children were to come at the docks, a couple even getting close enough to one member who sported a respirator mask and the sign FEELING MATERNAL? ADOPT! I walked ahead to the loosely boarded edge to better watch and film Korda and others assemble their trademark SAVE THE PLANET KILL YOURSELF banner on their makeshift raft.

“How is that saving the planet?” a kid asked me, pointing to the banner.

I said he’d have to ask them.

## **The Arrival**

“He’s never coming back to shore ever again,” one member joked. “He’s becoming a pirate.”

When Korda finally arrived, it was not by land but by the river, as he had promised in a press release. The attack was two-pronged. From the raft, which swayed heavily from the strong winds, the church used their sound system to voice out such mantras as “Buy. Buy. Buy. Consume,” while other members and supporters stirred things up on land.

Among the supporters on land: activist Ian MacKanon, preaching free radio and passing out information on Liberation Day; COE member and self-styled clown Vermin Supreme, who sported instead of makeup, a megaphone to go with his mocking voice, taunting passerby to eat more hot dogs; and Mackin, passing out free copies of his Earthfest “Litter A Park for the Earth” issue of his ‘zine *Protests Are Your Best Entertainment Value* (PAYBEV).

*(A quick aside: Supreme is possibly the second most recognizable member of the COE and has been with them almost since the beginning. “People on the street totally believe that it’s real,” he said, adding that he attempts to give an element of humor to the COE demonstrations for those who watch, “trying to diffuse their anger.”*

*“Of course we are real,” asserted Supreme, who also does his “political clown shtick” during elections, running for tittles he invents himself. He ran during the 1996 presidential elections for “Mayor of The Entire United States of America.” He plans to run in 2000 for “Emperor for a New Millennium,” pushing for mandatory tooth brushing.*

*“More fun than any cult you can imagine,” is how he described the COE. “They just want your time.”)*

“The Church of Euthanasia” blared an electronic-friendly voice from the raft’s speakers. “Information so powerful, you actually use less.”

“They’re so bad,” chuckled Supreme, as he walked further away from the main body of protesters and lost himself in the crowd.

It was hard not to laugh. Especially when a powerboat started circling violently around their raft, its driver protesting the noise. This was followed by a playing of the mantra found on their dance single “Fleshdance”: “Cow, Chicken, Pig, Human, What’s the difference?”

## The Message

The following quotes are excerpted from Korda’s address from the raft to the Earthfest goers, taken from both our recordings, as Korda told me he spoke from no script.

“Let me ask you something. What does the Sheraton Hotel chain have to do with saving the earth? What does Royal Sonesta have to do with saving the earth. I know: Not much. And guess what? Royal Sonesta and Sheraton are the two biggest sponsors of the WBOS Earthfest. This has got nothing to do with the earth. This is hot dogs. This is pushing baby strollers. This is littering a park for the earth. That’s stupid, and that’s why we’re here. We’re here to tell you that the earth is dying. The planet is in trouble. This is not a joke. We don’t do this because it’s fun. We do this because it’s real. This is what Earth Day was supposed to be about.”

“They don’t like to hear what we’re trying to say over at WBOS. They don’t like to hear it because it might interfere with business as usual. That’s what this is all about, is business as usual. Buy. Sell. Buy. Sell. More stuff. More consuming. More babies. More stuff. More production. More consumption. Well, not for us. We’re drawing a line. We’re saying it’s got to stop at some point. It’s humans versus the earth. Humans

may have evolved on the Earth, but they are no longer of the earth. They draw a distinction between themselves and every other species on Earth, and that's not going to work. It's not a good strategy."

"We're here to talk to you today about the bombing of Yugoslavia. Yeah! What's that go to do with the Earth? Huh?"

"You bet it does. That's right, because Milosevic is doing his ethnic cleansing, and we're doing ours. We're cleansing species. He may kill Albanians, but we kill species."

"Make no mistake. Humans are tough. Humans are very tough. Humans are like rats, like roaches, like weeds, and that's what we're going to have if we keep on down the path we're on. We're going to have a weed planet, a depleted planet on which there is no real world left with real wealth anymore. Wealth is not measured in dollars. Wealth is not measured in office parks. Wealth is in biological diversity. We're offering biological diversity. That's what we're here for. We're standing up for biological diversity. We're standing up for the diversity of species on the Earth."

"Shut the fuck up!" yelled a passer by from the shore, once Korda finished.

"You're beautiful, dude, you're beautiful," replied Supreme, who chimed in with his megaphone once Korda finished. "Save the planet, kill yourself ... Those misguided youths in Colorado? They had half the right idea. Unfortunately, they did it in the wrong order. They should have killed themselves first. Those people in Colorado would've killed themselves first, there would have been no problem now, would there?"

## Catch-Up

I arranged to meet with Korda before I could dive into the COE web site and its information, tracing from Korda's speech some paraphrasing of the Gaia Liberation Front (an organization the COE quotes but does not support because of their proposal to use involuntary virus warfare to depopulate the planet) and David Quammen's "Planet of Weeds," its full text also available through the web site. The COE dogma, however, was not what I was primarily interested in. That information was and still is readily available. I wanted to look into their strategy for spreading that information, which has received very little print in comparison to Korda's constant elaboration of the Church's commandment and four pillars.

I remembered Supreme's words about Littleton as Korda stepped in the Middle East, maybe a month after the Littleton massacre, wearing black shorts and shirt, and a long black coat, displaying his normal, unapologetic stance on issues for all to see, though we were the only two eating at a table. When he ordered his vegetarian dish, I simply had a Coke, just to stay safe.

"The fine print is that they lied to us, as they could have been expected to do," started Korda, referring to the police. "Lieutenant Bearfield, who was the commanding officer that day told us that we had every right to do what we were doing, and that we could continue to use our sound system ... to address the crowd but that we would

have to do it at the docks for our own safety because they weren't confident of the construction of our boat."

"In any case," he said, "they moved us off to one side. They towed us off to the dock, and then when we'd been on the dock for maybe ten fifteen minutes maximum—by that time the big heavyweight cops had already gone, which is stupid on our part. If we'd have been smart, we would have started broadcasting immediately, just to test their mettle."

Coincidentally, police sirens wailed past us somewhere in the background as he finished berating his own actions. "But instead we waited, just to socialize for a few minutes, cranked the sound system back up and within seconds, we had two very big state police cops on us, informing us that if we didn't turn off the sound system that they would arrest us and confiscate the sound system."

The Massachusetts Police's public relations office, who I had contacted to reach this Lt. Bearfield or anyone else who would speak on this, never got back to me.

"So there you have it," Korda began again. "It's a classic cop trick. We spent the rest of the afternoon—or I spent the rest of the afternoon—chasing down various officers, including Lt. Bearfield. I got Lt. Bearfield to reconfirm that we did have every right to use the sound system, then I tried to explain that to the officer who shut us down, but he wouldn't talk to me. Basically we had a kind of tense standoff, where the officer who wouldn't talk to me was saying, 'Lt. Bearfield's in charge. Whatever he says goes. Your issue is with him, not with me. I'm not going to talk to you.' So in effect, by not giving me any assurance that he wouldn't arrest me, they were leaving open a situation where we would turn the sound system back on, they would arrest me, I would say, 'Well, hey, you can't arrest me because Lt. Bearfield said that we could do this.' They would call up Lt. Bearfield, and Lt. Bearfield would say 'I never said that,' and we'd be arrested."

Korda said he wasn't interested in this scenario, so the matter was dropped and he and the COE left the grounds with no further problems. "All throughout the standard Church of Euthanasia policy is in effect: no one's ever been arrested at a Church of Euthanasia action, and I have no intention of starting now. Once you get arrested, the police can seriously curtail your freedom to do these things in the future."

"But on the other side of that," Korda added, "we've got real trouble with First Amendment rights in Boston and everywhere in the United States." He brought up the (selectively enforced) Park Department ordinance requiring a permit for any gathering of more than two people. "Even on the public sidewalks, where they can't get away with that, they can make you keep moving; and they can get you for obstructing traffic."

"So we've been," he explained, "in some cases, been forced to march around in circles. If we try and attach ourselves to someone else's event, for instance, like the Right to Lifers ... They can get us for interfering with the Right to Lifers' permit, or they can get us for obstructing a parade."

Although Korda conceded the futility of requesting a permit to obstruct someone else's demonstration, he said the COE plans to apply for a permit for their own parade, which is still in the planning phase. "The basic theme would be a parade to stop traffic," he said. "Of course we wouldn't advertise it as a parade to stop traffic. The city would never allow that. We would advertise it as a diversity parade, and under the banner of diversity we would try to recruit as many diverse organizations as possible, probably under some type of cover organization."

According to Korda, there's good reason for such secrecy. "I don't think there's any organizations in Boston that wholeheartedly supports us, but that's part of our position. Of course we're unpopular. What we're saying is fundamentally antisocial and antihuman. We're campaigning against five thousand years of industrialism and globalism. We're attempting to interrupt the normal flow of economics. We're against business as usual. We're against production. We're against mass society. And above all, we're against technology."

## Jerry Again

*"You know, I suspect most of us think this is all crazy, that these are all a bunch of loonies playing with something short of a full deck. Clearly, to the extent that these folks can influence vulnerable and impressionable minds to do destructive and harmful things, they are, of course, dangerous."* –From Jerry Springer's closing statement on the COE appearance.

"First of all, it was offered to us," said Chris, after I asked him why he appeared on *Jerry Springer*, of all places. "Second of all, it does reach, predominantly, poor black women who are at home and were likely—very likely—extremely likely—to have children, so that's an important target audience for us. Third of all, I personally prefer tabloid media to so-called respectable, conventional media because tabloid media is less censored. With tabloid media, you can basically say whatever you want. The only restriction is that you can't be boring."

I brought up the fact that the "Suicide Cult" theme of the show may have distilled any environmental messages they were there to convey. For Korda, this didn't seem a concern. "We're not any one thing. We're a propaganda ministry. We do whatever is going to be the most effective [thing] at any one time. The essence of Situationism—and we are situationists after all ... is perceiving the right place and the right time in which what would otherwise be a useless or ineffective action suddenly becomes very effective because it unleashes a much larger force."

"In the case of *The Jerry Springer Show*," he said, "we were able to manipulate a situation to our advantage. Jerry Springer wasn't expecting to have intelligent guests. He's never had intelligent guests before, and he's never had them since."

## Reason Vs...

Not having seen the show yet, I asked Korda what reactions he received after the show. “Outrage and confusion, of course.”

Is this what he wants all the time? I related to him something that happened on the Esplanade during the Earthfest protest, when a conversation was had between a normal bystander and one of the COE signholders. There was a relatively rational exchange of opinions without the cursing and lashing out other onlookers demonstrated. (I hadn’t mentioned, because he probably already knew, that Mackin was also talking to others, using the COE as a draw, as Mackin said he has in the past.)

“Well, that’s fine,” said Korda, almost flatly. “I’m not opposed to reason ... I think that that’s not really my area of expertise. I make plenty of rational arguments, of course, all day long; but the [core] of the Church of Euthanasia is that we’re not bound by the limits of rationality or the limits of good taste.”

“‘Eat A Queer Fetus For Jesus’ is a profoundly offensive statement to most people, and that’s very positive.” Korda’s positive feeling stems from his view on how the exchanging of information is hindered today. “I think that we live in an age when almost no meaningful communication is taking place because people have been trained to separate everything, every piece of information they encounter, into neat categories, so it can be assimilated and essentially ignored. Most of the time when we’re dealing with people, we’re not dealing with them at all. We’re dealing with their secretaries, their mental secretaries, filing, categorizing, sorting into neat dualisms of right and wrong and good versus evil.”

“My object,” continued Korda, “is to destroy those categories as much as possible, to present people with information that can’t be assimilated and that doesn’t fit into their categories. The best possible response to a Church of Euthanasia action is, ‘What the fuck are you guys doing? I don’t understand. Explain this to me.’ That’s an ideal reaction, because then we can step in and actually get people to think for themselves, and say ‘Well, what do you think it means? What do these words say? Do they have any resonance at all?’ And then people are forced to say, ‘Well, geez, never really thought about it before.’”

“That’s the kind of reaction we’re looking for. We’re looking for, in a sense, a form of deprogramming.”

## An Impasse

It was my turn to sail into troubled waters. I asked Korda to go a little into his own life. He steadfastly refused to go into family. “It’s not relevant,” was his only reply. Only when I awkwardly persisted for more did he shoot me down in more detail and in the process turn the metaphorical camera away from him. “What kind of interview is this really? If this is an interview primarily about me, then I’m less enthusiastic. As you can imagine, I’m a missionary of a sort. I’m a person with a mission. My goal is to



communicate ideas which are profoundly subversive and antisocial, to as large a group of people as possible ... It can only be done by using the tools of Mass Society, okay? The tools of mass society are television, radio, newspapers, all of that.”

Then he made the camera do a 180-degree turn. “So you are part of that apparatus, to a certain extent. In a way, my goal is to persuade you of the righteousness of this cause. To persuade you sufficiently so that you are willing to put yourself on the line, and make some of these ideas available to a larger percentage of the public. To the extent that I succeed in persuading you of the rightness of this cause, I have succeeded in my strategy. If I fail, and I convince you that I am either a crackpot or perhaps some subject for entertainment, or that it would be useful to dig up dirt on my family, then I’ve failed in my cause. Do you see the problem?”

After a little more banter, we focused less on his past experiences and more on his past attitudes before his vision. He brought me back to 1991, the year, Korda said, he started crossdressing. “In retrospect, I feel that crossdressing was the beginning of an attempt to restore balance within myself, in a psychological sense, specifically between my male and female polar opposites, but also between other aspects of myself.”

“But I couldn’t see that at the time,” admitted Korda, who at that same time made a journey to Provincetown and liked it enough to stay, working as a female impersonator, experiencing house music for the first time, and entering drag-queen competitions. “Second prize was as about the best I ever did,” he said. “I couldn’t win, because my competition consisted mostly of tough street queens, who had nothing to fall back on except maybe hooking or drugs. That gave their performances an edge that mine just didn’t have.”

Korda said he returned from Provincetown “still very rough, still a lot of problems, but I built on that,” ending his story with the dream about The Being. “In that dream, I first became aware of the larger imbalances around me. That awareness was expressed in the slogan ‘Save The Planet Kill Yourself,’ and in the lyrics of the song itself.”

That song can be found on the recently released *Six Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong*. It’s the third album CD Korda has put out to date which shows his interest in house music has not diminished. “I like its soulful quality,” said Korda, who, though his background is primarily jazz, finds little difference between techno and other styles. “I think we’re surrounded by a lot of really bad electronic music, but we’re surrounded by a lot of really bad non-electronic music too.”

## Compromise

*“The Jews suffered terribly, but any sane person will admit that there are still Jews in the world. The same can’t be said for the millions of plant and animal species that have become extinct as a result of the human population explosion. Where are the symbols of this species holocaust?” –Chris Korda’s response to anti-Semitism charges from German magazine Beam Me Up. From The Church of Euthanasia web site. Later removed.*

At the time we talked, Korda hadn't even started to try to get radio play here in America, though he made it clear that he expected the CD to do better outside the country than inside. "Generally, Europeans are much more open-minded about electronic music or about art in general. The United States tends to be, by and large, a very close minded place. Even though it's very dynamic and active in terms of being a source of mass culture, in my experience, Americans tend to be much more patriotic, xenophobic, racist, homophobic, and generally close-minded than their European counterparts."

Other topics, however, still hit hard in Catholic-influenced Germany. Topics such as religion, abortion, and most notably, The Holocaust. This caused Korda to change the cover of *Six Billion Humans*, originally a photo of Korda in an oven of the Dachau German death camp of World War Two. "And yet Germany would have been the one perfect place to release it," observed Korda. "Here, in the United States, we'll release it with this photograph, and most people won't get it, because they aren't well-educated enough to know that it's Dachau. They'll think it's a pizza oven."

Korda called the need to create a Germany-approved album cover, "a tragedy," but deemed it necessary in order to have a distributor that can sell a substantial number of copies. "It's all about tactics," Korda confessed, without me challenging him to. "I'm a shrewd business person. I'm not into purity. Purity is for losers. We're out to win this thing."

## The Future

*"Could humans choose to live in a sustainable way, at a greatly reduced population, by rediscovering ancient wisdom, without abandoning their scientific advances? Possibly, but only if the industrial nations set the example, by drastically reducing both their populations and their consumption. This is why the Church explicitly targets that tiny percentage of humanity who reap the dubious material benefits of domestication: the technological elite, the users of the internet—in short, your readers."*—Out take of Mark Dery's e-mail discussion with Chris Korda. From the *Church of Euthanasia* web site.

Though the parade was the first thing that comes to Korda's mind when he discussed future events, he emphasized promoting the CD as a higher priority, as it can draw attention better than other COE activities. "Mass media culture is very well set up to promote events," he said, "I think that when we have something like [the CD], we can use it as a battering ram, as a way of forcing the press to cover us, even though they would rather not."

He also sees a video documentary the COE's activities as "an easy sell," and very likely in the future. It's possible the film will show various examples of what they are against. In issue #4 of *Snuff It*, for example, Korda and Eccles discuss a COE trip to Gary Indiana, describing the town as being right out of the movie *Eraserhead*. Korda would prefer to focus on the unique footage of the Church actions which the majority

of people would otherwise never see. “Novelty is definitely a factor in our calculations,” said Korda. “Novelty is part of what keeps people clicking on our web site.”

He also felt there was enough footage of such places as Gary, Indiana. Too much, in fact, that he felt such images were “in danger of becoming a cliché.”

“People are constantly becoming desensitized in some way that we hadn’t predicted before,” he said, “so we always have to come up with new and different tactics.”

## Differing Techniques

Supporting the Unabomber for President campaign through the COE would have violated the its tax-exempt status. Korda therefore acted independently but through the organization UNAPACK, founded by Lydia Eccles, who is also a member of the Church.

At one point, Korda was able to bring up Unabomber Ted Kaczynski as an example of his approach versus that of the COE. “The Unabomber published the whole truth, the real unvarnished truth, at 30,000 words, in the world’s most widely read newspapers,” said Korda, “and yet almost no one read him. Most of those supplements wound up in the garbage, and the reason why is twofold. First of all, he had zero entertainment value. We’re talking about 30,000 words in 10 point type. Most Americans are unlikely to read 30,000 words on any subject, not even sports, never mind the future of industrial society.”

“Second of all,” continued Korda, “the Unabomber failed to recognize that his audience had already been persuaded—before the Manifesto was even published—not to read it, because he wasn’t an expert. He wasn’t an officially sanctioned source. In fact the public had been persuaded that he was crank, a serial killer, and that they could safely ignore anything he said.”

“These are serious propaganda mistakes that we’re not making,” declared Korda.

Korda has never talked with Kaczynski, or for that matter Dr. Jack Kevorkian, who Korda said, he would rather “admire from afar,” due to the lack of admiration Kevorkian would most likely have for the COE. Korda, however, still predicts that no matter how or when he dies, “he will be the greatest saint of the Church of Euthanasia ... and we will canonize him, but I don’t think he needs to know that.”

There are figures that do support the work of Korda and the other COE members. Among them, Korda lists Cartoonist Nina Paley, authors Poppy Z. Brite, author and local ‘zinester Pagan Kennedy, and 60’s icon Paul Krassner. I pointed out the parallels the COE is showing between itself and the church of Scientology: logical arguments mixed with religious visions with celebrity (or pseudo-celebrity) endorsements thrown in. I ask him if it worried him.

“Again, we’re not obliged to be consistent,” answered Korda, repeating himself a little. “We’re not obliged to make sense, and we frequently don’t. What we are obliged to do, again and again, is to punch through people’s pervasive sense that things can continue the way they are, that business as usual can continue. That’s what we’re here

to do. We're here to interrupt that flow, and whatever tactic works well for that at any given time is what tactic we'll use. If it helps to be rational, we'll be rational. If it helps to be irrational, we'll be irrational."

## The Follow Up

Looking over my interview with Chris Korda, there were one or two things that I missed. I called him again, and we met up again. This time at a Bruegger's Bagels,

"It's been a busy day," he assured me as he ordered a quick meal, with me once again electing to only watch. This time, instead of basic black, he sported dressier pants and a button down shirt. The only things that distinguished him from the crowd were his glasses and a few fingernails painted light purple. Walking to our table with his tray, it seemed he also pondered his clothing selection. "Geez, wear a clean shirt, and everyone's nice to you."

We sat down and he went over what I thought would be three small issues. Two were. The third one, however, gave him pause.

In the course of the first interview, he mentioned that he considered a transsexual operation. I had asked him why he backed down.

"Again, a change of heart. That's another story. We'll get to that in a minute." We never did.

When I asked Korda at Bruegger's to get the story, he took pause. "That's really involved in personal history," he said, wanting once again to make sure my article, "focuses on the ideas, and less on my personal life." I said it would, which was the truth, since I only had his quotes to go on, I had only brought it up because he mentioned it, and I'd accept however he wanted to phrase it.

"With that in mind," he said, "I'll express it this way. I believe, personally, that cross-dressing is the balancing of male and female aspects within a person, within a person's psyche, within their soul, if you will. And everyone has these male and female aspects. I mean, in most cases, they are grossly out of balance due to the extreme gender socialization that we're exposed to as children. Men are forced into extreme male gender roles, women are forced into extreme female gender roles. Just look at the toy store, and you'll see it in action."

"The fact that we survive our childhood conditioning with any of our integrity, and compassion and ability to love intact, is a testimony to the strength of human character. Most humans, of course, are severely damaged, and never recover. That's how the proletarian technological society perpetuates itself."

"So I believe," he continued, "that it wasn't until I became aware of my, what some people have called 'gender dysphoria,' or 'gender uncomfortableness,' that I really began to make any progress in my life, towards a real kind of balance."

"And it wasn't until I began to balance myself, internally," he said, "that I could have any hope of really becoming aware of the larger imbalances that surround me, and do anything about them."

“There’s a more technical answer to your question,” he added, “and it’s not very personal, but I think it’s the important answer, the logical answer.”

For his logical answer, he brought up his issues with transexuality. “I backed away from it because it’s a typically western, patriarchal, interventionist, invasive solution to a problem that could never be solved that way.”

“You go to a doctor complaining that you feel trapped in an extreme gender role, and the doctor says, ‘Well, if you happen to have \$30,000 ... and a very, very high tolerance for pain, and personal suffering, and two or three years to spend working on this, we will gradually fit you into an equally extreme and ridiculous opposite gender role.’”

“I think it’s a shame,” said Korda, having taken himself almost completely out of the picture again. “I think it’s a tragedy that so many people succumb to it when what they’re really yearning for ... is ambivalence, is balance, to be in a state between the genders, as we all should be, to renounce the extreme and to embrace subtlety and ambiguity.”

“To crossdress is to mimic the opposite gender, and that’s a positive step.” “But the step beyond that is to gender-bend, to occupy the space in between the genders all the time.”

He spoke highly of Dennis Rodman. “Whatever else he may believe, which I may or may not agree with, he had the guts to gender-bend while being part of one of the most successful basketball teams in history. He went public and said, ‘Yes, I wear a dress, and what are you gonna fuckin’ do about it? You don’t like that? You got a problem with that? You gonna fuck with me?’ Okay? That’s pretty amazing.”

Korda even considered other gender-bending heroes like Rupaul. “There’s a lot of gray areas. Nothing’s all good or all bad.”

“Remember,” finished Korda. “That’s one of the essential observations of the church. Nothing is all good or all bad. Even though something may hurt in some ways, it may help in others.”

## Epilogue

*“I guess the thing I most wanted to say is that it doesn’t have to be unpleasant or sad, it can be a peaceful, happy leave taking.”*

*Excerpt of the suicide note. From The Church of Euthanasia web site.*

I first read the suicide note while Korda was touring Germany. When he came back, he confirmed the validity of it. It was, he said, sent with a \$150 donation in an envelope with no return address, so Korda saw little point in searching for the full identity of M. Millis, whose qualifications for sainthood were still being considered. Korda wished he had more to go on with Millis, more than just an initial and a last name, but he didn’t seem overly concerned. “I guess we can probably let that slide.”

Most recently, I was able to talk with Supreme at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Freedom Rally held at the Boston Common. He hadn’t heard of it yet prior to my telling him there. I

asked him on the spot if he thought it was possible that the letter was fake. “It could be that,” he mused. “I don’t know, if it’s real and it’s consensual ... that’s fine.” It took a few minutes before he put it in a humorous context: “Hell, even if the guy didn’t kill himself, if he sent a good check, damn it, that deserves sainthood right there! Let me tell you that!”

I also brought up to Supreme his prior comments of adding humor to the COE activities, and asked how it conflicted with Korda’s insistence that he and the other members are serious. “Greatly, of course ... but the humor in the Church is undeniable. I think the underpinning critique[s] of industrial society are right on and are heartfelt and pretty damn serious; and the Church’s response to that is to create this in-your-face dada spectacle for the people and actually take it to the streets.”

“That’s why they differ greatly from many, many cults,” chuckled Supreme. “There’s so many cults to choose from. Which one are you going to pick?”

Before and after my calling Korda and talking with Supreme, I had of course examined the letter. Millis, whether sincere or not, was very articulate and given to theatrics: “I will enjoy the slow fade, and the long awaited moment. (Bath water deep enough to suffocate me when I pass out)”. By not even listing a sex, Millis has achieved a sexual ambiguity Korda can never achieve. Even beyond that, Millis is vague, identifiable only by his deed and the opinion that led to it, identifying him or herself as part of a ‘we’ collective, though I wouldn’t be surprised if the writer was very much alone in his or her thoughts—just as I found it almost inappropriate for Chris to say “we” when he is obviously the COE’s leader and its prime mover—if not the only one.

The COE just might have found its perfect and ideal first Saint, perhaps even more appropriate than Kevorkian. However, this brings them and their viewpoints no closer to the spotlight. It’s like someone bringing a shrouded item to attention by putting another shroud on top of it.

I’m sure the chat area of the church is guns a-blazing with controversy even now, with this and other topics, maybe wondering if it’s all a joke (just as I’ve wondered on and off while writing this piece whether I’m being put on or not). However, as far as the rest of the world goes, news of the church’s potential first saint has fallen on deaf ears, the media shield firmly placed in front.

## The Church of Euthanasia

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/icon.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/icon.html)>

by Shari Roman

**One reverend named Chris hopes to lead his congregation into the grave. She plans to wear a dress and string of pearls for the occasion.**

It’s another day in Boston, and another traffic jam is clogging the seedier side of Massachusetts Avenue. The road can’t really bear another vehicle, but for a brief moment, there’s an opening, and in pushes just one more beat-up red Mitsubishi. Here,

motoring among his fellow drivers, hands on the wheel, is the 36-year-old Reverend Chris Korda. He is clothed from tip to toe in standard-issue clerical black, his slightly cat-shaped eyeglasses perch on a face possessed of the delicately boned architecture of a latter-day saint. He hasn't stopped talking since we met an hour ago. "Look around," Korda says, his voice rasping above the siren of a passing fire engine. He waves his hand, encompassing the known urban universe. "If you look carefully, it becomes very difficult to disagree with the Unabomber's point of view. The industrial state has become the new religion. And if we look carefully underneath all of our propaganda, there is one common assumption: Technology can and will march forward so that humans can realize their full potential. The result? Entropy! A desert planet! This, this is the new Catholicism."

Korda stops suddenly. It's not the traffic light. He indicates something through the car window. "Look," he says emphatically, dropping his voice to a half-whisper. His body has stiffened, pointing like a bird dog at three average-looking men in shirts and slacks, strolling the streets, minding their own business. "There," he says, his eyes narrowing to slits. "There go some Christians." He checks behind him; there's no time to reach for the bullhorn wedged in the back seat. Slowing down, he pokes his head through the window. "You fucking Christian homos," he yells hoarsely, "Homos!" The trio stops in its tracks. Heads swivel madly. But it's too late. Korda has already hurried Little Red off the main road. "Fucking Christian homos," he repeats slowly, a very satisfied Cheshire cat smile curling his mouth. His tone is defiant. "I know them." He clicks on his left-turn blinker. "They come around and knock on our door and try to engage me in foolish conversation about Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, and all the other fucking things. Give me a break."

Your friendly neighborhood reverend probably would not indulge such invective, but this particular, completely self-anointed reverend is the founder of the Church of Euthanasia (CoE). Officially registered in the state of Delaware as a tax-exempt educational institution, Korda's Church (which maintains a Boston-area membership of more than 250 and an on-line congregation spreading across 48 states and Europe numbering in the thousands) has but one mission: saving the planet by turning people toward the righteous path of evolutionary population reduction. The four pillars of the organization's insurrectionary canon are suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. "Thou shall not procreate" is its solemn vow. "Grease it up, girls," offers Korda helpfully. "That's the way to go."

For the last seven years, he has diligently pursued his campaign of awareness. He has attempted (and failed) to set up a 976-suicide assistance line. He journeyed to the 1996 Democratic National Convention with his good friend America Hoffman (the son of the late yippie leader Abbie Hoffman) to lobby on behalf of the Unabomber for President campaign. CoE's staged "actions" (involving approximately 20 to 30 local members at any given time) read like a laundry list of dadaist extravaganzas: tormenting serious-minded pro-lifers by joining their demonstration of a sperm bank carrying a 15' hot-pink penis that squirted fake semen; hosting on-the-street blindfold cannibal taste tests

on Boylston Street in downtown Cambridge, which featured a barely clad human being rotating on a rotisserie (the passersby seemed most offended by the “live meat model’s hairy thighs”)—“A hard sell,” Korda admits. What was even more difficult, according to Korda, was obtaining those fresh human-flesh samples. Uh, how did he get them? “More trade secrets,” he replies. And most satisfying, at least for him, was when he and a group of his faithful paraded on Earth Day, hoisting crosses featuring dead babies with a banner that read SAVE THE PLANET, KILL YOURSELF through the “baby-toting, hot-dog eating yuppies... It was a great day.”

The Barnum-and-braggadocio approach proves a real attention getter, which is precisely what Korda wants. Add to this Korda’s fondness for cross-dressing as well as last year’s splash into lowest-common-denominator ratings with his appearance on the *Jerry Springer* show (episode title: “I Want to Join a Suicide Cult”) in which he and other “cult members” proved their point by gorging on a large, gelatinous baby. There is also Korda’s parallel career as a techno artist, with three CoE-doctrine-filled releases to his credit. The title track of his fourth album, jointly produced by a German label and the Church, is *Six Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong*.

But this particular attention seeker has the taste for the spotlight in his blood. Korda is the privileged only son of New York City literary-circle icon Michael Korda, who in 1968 became the influential editor in chief of the publishing house Simon & Schuster. Michael Korda went on to become a best-selling author (*Power! How to Get It, How to Use It; Success!; Queenie; Charmed Lives; Man to Man: Surviving Prostate Cancer*). Michael himself is scion of the famed Hungarian filmmaking brothers Zoltan, Vincent, and Sir Alexander, whose savvy and sheer immigrant chutzpah revived London’s flagging film industry in the 1930s and ‘40s. Alexander was the husband of film actress Merle Oberon. Michael’s father was Vincent, the Academy Award-winning art director of *The Thief of Baghdad*.

With this kind of bloodline to live up to, young Chris dutifully attended the snooty Grace Church School. A self-professed teacher’s pet, he was also a bully magnet, always getting beat up and having his glasses smashed during recess. “I also had a Latin teacher in grammar school who, now that I look back on it, was definitely a pedophile. He liked spanking us,” drawls Korda. “With rulers. He also told us his idea of a good time on Friday night was to bathe in brine. Had the parents known, his career would have been a lot shorter.” He was 14 when his parents divorced in 1976. After bouncing around several private schools, he landed for a short time at Sarah Lawrence, then at the Berklee College of Music. Dropping out, he began working as a freelance computer programmer for companies such as American Express and Chase Manhattan Bank, adding to his income by playing jazz guitar in Harvard Square. In private he also began dressing as a woman.

There was nothing truly unusual to remark upon until October 1990. Korda and his roommates threw a Halloween party, and he walked slowly down the stairs, in full drag. His alter ego, Reverend Chrissy, was born. I’ve seen many photos of her in press clippings sent to me in the mail. She is lovely in all of them, in her perfect Mary Tyler



Moore flip, earrings, and classy makeup. "If you still want to refer to me as she," he says with a shrug, "I don't care..."

It was summer 1992 when, he has said, he was awakened from a sweaty slumber, dressed in his pink nightie, by an alien intelligence called the Being and handed the daunting task of saving the Earth's failing ecosystem (Korda says he has always had these visions of change, this rage against human selfishness). Korda swears that "it's the absolute truth. And I heard it," he says with unblinking sincerity, "in perfect English."

We park on a leafy side street. Korda crosses the street, and unlatches the side door of an old Methodist church that houses CoE's offices. He climbs the rickety steps, which lead to a single top landing. Inside the office, the confusion of files, bumper stickers, and buttons emblazoned with preachings such as PREVENT AIDS, AIM FOR THE CHIN; HONK IF YOU NEED AN ABORTION; and EAT A QUEER FETUS FOR JESUS give the space the aura of a particularly brutal political campaign.

I ruffle through issue number two of CoE's zine, appropriately called *Snuff It*. There is a photo of Korda, handsome in a tux, smiling, right next to Henry Kissinger, a good friend of his father's. Right above the photo is a recent snapshot of Korda, lying naked in the tub save for a pair of goggles. The surrounding text tells of the benefits of urine therapy. Among its many uses, it seems gargling with pee is good for the gums. He shows me collected snapshots of Church members. There's one with the group holding crosses outfitted with fake hanging dead babies; another with the CoE gang smiling in fetish gear, in the process of auctioning off a goat (it was a revenge prank on the leather-wearing vegetarians shopping at the local Fetish Flea Market). "They could eat it, kill it, and have sex with it," says Korda. "We didn't specify the order."

Whether or not you think Korda is out of line, a surprising number of people have been paying a great deal of attention. Thousands have been adding to the cause's coffers by buying those buttons and stickers. Others snap up the Church's journal or visit its Web site ([www.churchofeuthanasia.org](http://www.churchofeuthanasia.org)), which is helpfully cross-linked to other like-minded organizations such as First Church of Christ, Abortionist ([www.contrib.andrew.cmu.edu/org/fcca/](http://www.contrib.andrew.cmu.edu/org/fcca/)), created in 1994 by Carnegie Mellon University students and staff. Over on the side wall, a photograph of a moody man resembling New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani with a tan has a prime position. "That is St. Kevorkian," Korda points out proudly. In his view, Dr. Jack Kevorkian's mission to help individuals gain relief from pain through assisted suicides aligns with Korda's pitch for environmentally friendly population reduction. The reverend beams at the photo. "He is, of course, the Church's saint. He's already making himself into a martyr. He told the police if they were to arrest him that he would starve himself in jail. If that doesn't merit canonization, I don't know what does"

Korda suddenly bursts into song. "Latin is a dead language/As dead as it can be/First it killed the Romans/And now it's killing me." His face has brightened. He laughs. His father used to sing it to him when he was young. "That," he adds with great finality, "just about sums up my theory." After locking up the office, he tromps down the stairs. He carefully avoids physical contact with the two children playing at the bottom. As

he heads for the door, he continues to speak at high volume. "People say, 'Why worry about the planet when the Earth is going to be toasted by a red giant star in the next zillion years?' Justify that and you can turn Jews into lamp shades" says Korda, his tone becoming more militant. He pulls the door shut sharply behind him.

There have been variations on Korda's message throughout the ages. Rome's fall, according to some historians, was caused by the empire's being spread too thin with all its new conquests. The Caesars lacked the natural resources to fund or feed their expanding Empire. Whole Earth patron St. Francis of Assisi, often pictured standing in a leafy glen surrounded by his friends the animals, preached that attachment to materialism above nature is a sin. Here in present-day United States, the hallowed green halls of the Sierra Club, in line with Zero Population Growth, has agreed and, as early as 1965, has stated that the population explosion has "severely disturbed the ecological relationships between human beings and the environment." And to this end, in 1969, the Sierra Club recommended that "the individual states of the United States legalize abortion, as population growth is directly involved in the pollution and degradation of our environment." The United Nations Population Fund has dubbed October 12, 1999, the Day of 6 Billion, the moment at which 6 billion of our species will be devouring the Earth's dwindling global resources.

Curtis Eckhert, a professor of environmental health sciences at UCLA, points out that the U.S. is number seven, behind Nigeria, Pakistan, China, and India, on the most-reproductive-nation list, but Eckhert disagrees that reducing the population—either through suicide, non-procreation, or any of the methods Korda advocates—can really help save the planet. Eckhert says that historically, whenever humans have gone through a vast reduction in numbers through famine, plague, or war, as nature reputedly abhors a vacuum, what emerges is a period of immense creativity in which we breed like bunnies: "There are jobs to be filled that need new workers to fill the empty positions." The Dark Ages birthed the Renaissance, and more recently, the post-World War II baby boom created the largest age group on Earth. To ward off fear of the grave, driven toward achieving immortality, humanity goes instinctively toward creating life. "Sure, population reduction would help ease the burden, but no small group" such as the CoE "is going to be able to determine for everyone else the direction of our population curve." And it's never going to happen, says Eckhert, certainly not in significant enough numbers to make the necessary impact. "This is a tremendously emotional issue. It's the kind of issue that always brings out the extremists and the crazies, which is good. Any healthy discussion involves many different views."

Obscuring a genuinely worthwhile cause with outrageous dog-and-pony shows is precisely Korda's point. "I believe every individual human is lending their psychic energy to making this monstrous reality" he says. "And in pursuit of that awareness, my objective is to get out there every day and fuck with people's heads. Oscar Wilde said if you tell people the truth, you better be able to make them laugh or they'll kill you." The Church of Euthanasia is famous, if for nothing else, for using black humor, sarcasm, and irony to convey truth. "That's why the Church's slogan, SAVE

THE PLANET, KILL YOURSELF, was a huge hit. I think we sold 70,000 bumper stickers.”

Reading between the lines of the pranks can be difficult. But Marilyn Fontenrose, an attractive, seemingly well-grounded 31-year-old who has been Korda’s steady girlfriend and a church follower since their meeting more than two years ago, asserts that at the core, Korda’s message “is the real deal. He’s not doing it all as a big joke. It’s just one more take on the problem, which I think warrants extreme measures.” Lydia Eccles, a 44-year-old old political artist who spearheads the Unabomber for President campaign and allowed Korda and Hoffman to accompany her on her Unapack mission to the Democratic National Convention, says Korda’s ministry “is the ultimate heresy which turns all of society’s values upside down. Chris is redefining procreation as an act of selfishness. It is amazing as a woman to have someone patting you on the back for not having kids.”

Slipping into the car, Korda turns on the lights and steers toward his Somerville, Massachusetts, home. His constant companion—anger—has returned. His sudden memory of a recent sermon he gave at MIT, which he feels fell on deaf ears, is the cause. “There is an order,” he begins intensely, “and that order is expressed in every part of the natural world. I tried to communicate this to people at MITERS [MIT Electronic Research Society], who are at the very top of the intellectual pyramid.” His voice cracks. “Geniuses! And yet they are absolutely unable to perceive the biological diversity that is inherent in every aspect of this planet.” It was May 15, 1998, when he preached, “I founded the Church of Euthanasia [to make] people aware that it’s humans that are the problem... Take a lifetime vow to not have children, do that much, if nothing else... You, the brightest, the best, the smartest, the educated, people who went to MIT, you have learned everything there is to fucking know about every technology in the world, you are the only people who can stop it from getting worse. And the first fucking thing you can do is make an example of yourself...by not having any more of yourself.”

When Tim Anderson, the MITERS organizer, met Korda six years ago, “he was pretty much in suburban-housewife drag. In fact,” Anderson says affectionately, “one time we got locked out of my car during an ice storm, and some local alcoholic who helped me break into my car thought Chris was my girlfriend. He was definitely passing. Now he’s in man-drag.” The 33-year-old Anderson, who works by day at Cambridge’s Z Corporation, the manufacturer of model-making machines, feels that any “college-educated middle-class white technocrat” is pretty much going to be in agreement with Korda’s program. “No matter how bizarre he makes it seem, it is a completely reasonable thing. Even Al Gore spouts the same rhetoric, although he doesn’t dress it up in such an exciting way.”

Why does Korda emphasize the population aspect over everything else? Anderson can’t say, but certainly Korda’s actions fall in line with the theology of the acceptable big picture. “He recycles, buys bulk food, he doesn’t buy a new car [every three years], or throw a lot of stuff in the garbage, so aside from moving to [another] country, he does the best he can.” He agrees that sometimes Korda’s taste for shocking can confuse

the issues, but, he stresses, “That’s something that works for him on a very personal level.” The thing is, “that kind of desperation wears you out if you maintain it. If you have desperation of that level, it’s hard to function.”

Korda finally parks the car in the driveway of a large, gray three-story clapboard house. He points to the sky. “As [the environmental economist] Jeremy Rifkin said, ‘If you look up into the heavens, you can see the Earth’s history, written there in the heavens. Fluorocarbons, ozone holes, every conceivable kind of discharge, all up there. And we haven’t even begun to pay.’” Pushing open the front door, he darts inside and runs downstairs to the laundry room, calling back, “I have five roommates, and I’m always afraid my stuff is going to be thrown somewhere on the floor.” Inside, the two downstairs rooms are cluttered with records and worn pillows. On the couch, one of Korda’s roommates, a clean-cut fellow, is smoking pot and watching the news. Meanwhile, upstairs, his bedroom, chaotic but cozy, is stuffed with books, photos, fetish gear, and memorabilia of family and Church events. In his closet the hanging clothes are neatly demarcated: one side is men’s; the other, women’s.

Later that evening, he is waiting patiently for his favorite meal of rice and beans to finish cooking. His girlfriend, Fontenrose, snuggles for a moment on his lap, whispers into his ear, and heads out of the house on an errand. Korda, meanwhile, is very hungry and not a little grumpy as he offers his most unsympathetic slice of CoE persuasion. “There are a lot of impressionable teenagers out there. The great tragedy is none of them have killed themselves,” he says without a trace of irony. In fact, he sounds rather peeved. “Ever since the Church began, we’ve been underwhelmed by our ability to influence impressionable young people to kill themselves. And it isn’t for lack of trying. We have a Web site. We publish a magazine.” Korda is getting increasingly agitated. “I’ve been on radio, TV, and to this day, nothing! It’s like we don’t even exist! If only they would do it and leave something around that would credit it to us, it would catapult the Church into the national limelight.”

And what if the kid was just momentarily depressed? “Give me a break,” he says sourly. “There are 6 billion people on the planet. We can spare a teenager. They’re already slaughtering themselves right and left. Vermin Supreme [the moniker of another Church member known to wear a bondage-style face mask during public appearances] actually suggested at one point that we look in the paper for teenage suicides and send them a CoE information pack that says, ‘Thank you for your suicide effort; in the hopes that the parents will get it and go to the media and say, ‘What the fuck is this?’” Korda’s eyes shine with the thought of using this ploy. “The only case [Vermin] gave which would’ve worked was unfortunately in South Boston, and I’m not up for that much hassle. I don’t really want the kids’ parents banging on my door looking to lynch me.” And even if that is a paradoxical ideology, Korda bounces back with the answer. “So what! I also drive a car. I have a computer. Paradox is the antidote to totalitarianism. Besides, Abbie Hoffman said, The first duty of every subversive is to not get caught; I am out there every day, getting this message out. And to piss on everyone’s cherished ideals and values takes some serious gall. Maybe my gall is just

about damn-near used up. There are some days when I think, ‘I’ll just stay home and make rice and beans.’”

Later that evening, at Gallery Insekt, an art space cum secret rave site near Boston’s Chinatown, Korda enters as Chrissy, wearing a lovely, floaty summer dress, earrings, no shoes, and a ravenous expression. Stepping behind his programming keyboard, he throws himself into his music. Jerking forward and back, his fingers pounding the keys, he sings the glories of population reduction to an exultant, sweaty collegiate crowd. Eccles is there. Fontenrose is right up front. She dances wildly and cheers him on, as do all the CoE members who have shown up to give their support to their beloved prophet.

A few months have passed. Korda has just returned from Germany, and he’s feeling hostile and depressed. The recording of his latest album hasn’t gone as well as he had hoped, and heading into 1999, the Church of Euthanasia’s impact seems to him negligible. His voice is hoarse, hopeless. “When I look around me, I see a world on fire,” he says. “I want people to be horrified, to feel the same shame and horror that I feel. If that hasn’t happened, I have grave doubts about all of this. I’m not sure anymore what I believe in.”

While his ancestors succeeded in entertaining the masses (and making a buck or two in the bargain), Korda is thwarted. “I’ve done my bit,” he says, “I am tired; I’ve packed a lot of living into a few years. If you look at my life after 1991, big changes. Quiet computer-programmer curmudgeon to female impersonator to suicidal cult leader to techno artist. I still have years ahead of me. But I have to pace myself. I’m not ending up like Jim Morrison,” a revered vision of excess for extremists everywhere, “in some damn bathroom somewhere.”

As to plans for a published thesis, Korda says he hasn’t had the time. Still, he says dryly, as extreme as he may appear at first glance, “my dad’s Michael Korda, the man who published all the Nixon war criminals. If I can’t get a book published, I don’t know who can. I’m his son, and he wants me to be successful at whatever I do. Don’t get the wrong idea,” he interrupts himself, “we’re not going to be taking father-daughter pictures together. But I think he’s already been persuaded that I’m somewhat successful. I haven’t hit him up for money, right? And what’s more, I’ve managed to get four records released, published a magazine, gone on national TV, and embarrassed him repeatedly by appearing in Page Six of the New York Post. There’s no question I’ve made a dent somewhere.”

To a larger extent, Korda confides grimly, he thinks he’s doing what he is doing because right here, right now, “I don’t know what else to do. And in the end, all I’m left with is my own rage and my own powerlessness. Both feelings aren’t going away. I have certain limited options. I could take Prozac. I could kill myself.”

I can’t help it. I stifle a chuckle. After all the proselytizing about suicide, I point out that at least he’d be falling in line with his own rhetoric and saving the planet. “We could make grim jokes about that,” says Korda, overriding my argument, “but in the end the sad truth is, my only option is to go forward into this, whatever it is. To

continue saying what I'm saying no matter how much it annoys people in the hopes that maybe someone, somewhere will understand."

## Chris Korda: Save The Planet—Kill Yourself

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/buzz\\_eng.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/buzz_eng.html)>

CHRIS KORDA SAVE THE PLANET—KILL YOURSELF

THE LAST THING WE ACTUALLY NEED IS IDEOLOGIES. SMALL OR LARGE, SOPHISTICATED OR DISABLED SYSTEMS OF THOUGHT AND, WORSE, MOVEMENT SUBROUTINES THAT ARE RELATED TO EACH OTHER IN A WAY THAT IS AT LEAST AS UNEXPLAINED AS, IF YOU SAY, THE EARTH AND MARS.

SASHA KÖSCH

Churches have a slight advantage here. The show effect is much greater, you know straight away that something is wrong. If you start one, which is of course much easier in the states, you know straight away that you are dealing with a kindergarten of ideas and temptations that immediately double any kind of subversion with a self-imposed irony. After all, you can't just say into the camera in a pleasantly humming, sonorous voice like a newsreader: "Hey, I'm the leader of a church, I'm cool." No wonder that all attempts to set up a techno church have failed so far. Either there is a lack of ideas or the power to persuade the media or, as in the case of DR. MOTTE and his yoga assistant, both, which of course has its own, admittedly somewhat perverse, but justifiable appeal.

CHRIS KORDA, whose record "SAVE THE PLANET — KILL YOURSELF" on GIGOLO, DJ HELLS label, seemed to everyone as if a UFO had landed, whose passengers had nothing but nonsense in their heads, in an exemplary manner, in the middle of the sacred minimalism and undifferentiated stupidity of our times, is the leader of a church. With everything that goes with it. Stickers, buttons, entry in the state register as a non-profit organization, catchy commandments, an apparition, a very cute God (Fig. 1), parades, newsgroups, disciples, website and logo. Reverend CHRIS KORDA is, as befits a church leader these days, transgender, anti-humanist, activist, complaint box ("ask Chrissy") and visionary, political troublemaker and media spectacle — the whole litany. "CHURCH OF EUTHANASIA" is the name of his bizarre enterprise and its highest and only commandment more or less directly indicates that it is [three words missing] "THOU SHALT NOT PROCREATE" ("you must not (or do they say in church German, should, or cannot, or dare not?) reproduce"). Gulp. This man is for the decimation of the human species through effective non-reproduction. Fear. Probably a scandal, especially in the eyes of those who want to finance the pension funds. And why? Because we are destroying the planet (Earth, everyone should know that by now, on Mars a CHURCH OF EUTHANASIA would be pointless). If humans come, biodiversity will decrease by the minute, diversity will make way for global monocul-

ture (see Burger), the desert will grow (although Wilhelm Reich would probably have come to the opposite solution to the COE), in short: CHRIS KORDAS' church would be a melting pot of technology enemies. (Neo-Luddites as the Americans would say), radical Greenpeace splinter groups, Europeans in general, Heideggerians on LSD and various Satanists.

If only this man wasn't such a prankster, if only he didn't constantly draw attention to himself with such unbelievably insane actions that would make any person with even the slightest fascist inclination immediately want to cry out in horror for the straw of clear order.

He is starting a campaign for the UNABOMBER, the terrorist who has terrified a whole country of homeowners and who has managed to become an icon of media manipulation thanks to his hip deals with Playboy and other news services. He is unveiling swastikas at Republican campaign events and proclaiming that people must vote for this Republican because he is the only hope of fascist America. This of course puts any attempt to pursue sensible, regressive politics in an unpleasant light and must be a nightmare for every campaign propagandist or campaign manager. He drags his "God", the Being, which looks like an oversized anti-smoking statue from outer space, along with an equally inflated contraceptive pill (RU486) to every procession, which is particularly popular at demonstrations for abortion, where the moderate abortion supporters, when they see an "ABORTION SURVIVOR" poster, start to wonder whether they really have to share in the responsibility. He hangs his motto: "SAVE THE PLANET ETC." on larger-than-life advertising posters for insecticides, clearly visible to anyone who sleepily drives down the highway to work in the morning, and sticks small versions of it on police cars, where he then gets caught and, as a very young lady, is treated with goodwill. In our country, the church of euthanasia would have a lifespan that would more than live up to its basic commandment. In Boston, which I still consider, for some unknown reason, to be the Venice of the United States of America, she ensures a constant shift from reality to science fiction.

The pillars of his church, because a church without pillars is of course very shaky (and even with pillars, but that's another topic), are the four principles of perfection that are popular with every citizen: suicide, abortion, cannibalism and sodomy. What at first sounds like a conspiracy dissident theory from the 80s, to which Chris Korda probably owes a lot, immediately reads less like "terror lurks on the Internet" (incidentally, one of the most persistent 80s ideologies, which is repeated so persistently that it's hard to think of the "Internet" as anything other than the wrong decade, which is a shame and has a few other reasons), when you gradually find out that Chris Korda is an absolute vegetarian. If you dig through the thicket of e-sermons — after all, the Church of Euthanasia is an Internet church, has some preparation tips and price lists of human fetuses behind it and considers itself to be otherwise quite refined — then the terms slowly become clearer. Chris Korda gives the Americans, who by nature initially describe everything that doesn't smile into the camera as sodomy, the priceless gift of a clarification of terms. Sodomy is any kind of sexual act that cannot lead to

reproduction. Great, isn't it? Cannibalism is exactly what every person does without admitting it, who has remained calm long enough in their own ideology that eating meat is simply part of life, but at the same time, as is usual in "enlightened" societies, considers humans to be animals. (Dizzying membership growth should be anchored in every church). Abortion is the only way if you haven't committed sodomy, because otherwise you have to carry around thoughts of suicide. The Church of Euthanasia made easy. Chris Korda likes to talk, especially about himself, who is part of the problem, and even more about his church, but also about his "music."

BUZZ: Why is there only this one record of yours?

CHRIS: There is only one record because there only has to be one. It is not really an important point to be entertaining, to be successful in the music business in any long-term way, or even to make good music. The important thing is to spread the anti-humanist message of the "Church of Euthanasia" effectively through every mass medium available. In every corner of industrial society. Techno is an excellent medium because it is international, decentralized and mostly reaches young people. It is propagated by an underground network that makes something new into something valuable. If I can add something new to it, something exciting enough, then there is no limit to the subversiveness of the content. It will spread very quickly and it will cost me very little. This is in stark contrast to conventional media like magazine advertising for example, where the costs are enormous, censorship even of the content of the advertisement is considered quite normal and the actual readership is rather small. How many people read a whole magazine? Most people just browse through it and try to avoid reading it. They know it's fake news and if something important happens they'll find out about it anyway. Incidentally, that's why the only medium with any integrity is gossip. Talk shows, chat shows, etc. The tabloids don't care about being politically correct; and you can say anything as long as you don't bore people. When "Church Of Euthanasia" was taped for the Jerry Springer Show, we were impossible. I wore a sperm dress, chewed off the leg of a fake fetus and threw the head into the crowd. Vermin sprayed an attacker against Christian abortion clinics in the face with a water pistol that looks like a penis. We held up signs that said turn off your TV and think for yourself. None of that would be allowed on a serious news program where the only important topic is the weather. Before an appearance on a public TV station, I was given a list of words I was not allowed to say — including sperm, of course — so as not to offend the sponsor of the show. Intel, by the way, who else.

Another reason there is only one record is because it took so much energy. I spent a year of my life doing nothing but making that A-side. And then I recorded the B-side, which ironically most people think is much better, in one take with Kevin. I sent the tracks to a pressing plant in Brooklyn and when the test pressing came back it was unplayable, the frequency response was completely wrong and the needle kept flying out. That was a tough time for me. Luckily I met David Frangioni, who had put a notice up in a record store and only later found out that he was working for Aerosmith, Elton John and Paula Abdul. He mixed the A-side again at the front,



put every single track on a DAT. And with his magic box, a shoebox-sized thing with four buttons that costs more than anything I own, he did something to the B-side and it all worked. He is a technical genius, a true artist at what he does, and I would trust him with anything.

Germans, Europeans in general, are more open to new ideas than Americans. That's why *Save the Planet Kill Yourself* is so successful in Germany. In America, the record is still not ahead of its time, very few people can even spell the word "euthanasia". I pressed 1000 copies and released it in June 1994. It reached number 39 on an alternative dance chart list and did quite well in Chicago and Detroit. I spent months chasing a licensing deal and was, of course, treated like dirt. I even went to New York City and knocked on the door of every label I could think of, but nobody wanted it because it was too experimental for them. One label lied to me for months so I wouldn't get signed by someone else. What a disgusting business.

I had given up all hope when one night I met Benny Blanco at a party and he told me that DJ Hell was trying to reach me. I had been through everything and didn't expect anything, but when he called and I heard his voice, I trusted him. He was really excited about my record and that actually meant a lot to me.

Music is a good medium for the desperate last-minute warning. The Being says: If you have to kill, kill yourself, not the planet. We lose a species every 40 minutes. There is not much time left. This is also very personal. I see the destruction of the earth and feel shame and despair. The music expresses this. I feel powerless and humiliated by industrial society. I am unable to resist society other than in small, passive movements, such as not having children and not eating meat. All my skills, reading, writing, mathematics, logic, are only useful in an industrial society. I was conditioned and indoctrinated to be part of the masses, but it didn't quite work. I am still sensitive enough to know what is missing. I feel my desire for control and that scares me. I feel my separation from nature and I hate myself for it. But I am too weak.

This brings me to CONFINEMENT farming, by which I mean the practice of keeping animals in conditions of extreme confinement for food. In other words, a concentration camp. European nations are starting to regulate this a little, but in the States it is increasing. We slaughter 5 billion chickens a year, which is almost the same as the human population. When animals are bred in such concentration camps, they develop stress disorders, antisocial behaviors such as biting and cannibalism. But they do not die from this, but from anxiety and trauma. One solution is to give the animals mood-altering drugs such as Prozac, but unfortunately this changes the color of the meat. Ultimately, the limit is probably that the animals are genetically modified so that they are no longer able to feel stress or fear. They are then meat machines.

Any technology developed to domesticate animals can, in some circumstances, be used to domesticate humans. This is why the Unabomber Manifesto also states that "human beings in the future will no longer be a creation of nature or chance or, depending on the religious or philosophical opinion, a creation of God, but a manufactured product. (...) Industrial-technological society will be able to exceed the limits of human

endurance by modifying humans, either by psychological or biological means or both. In the future, social systems will no longer be adapted to human needs. Humans will be adapted to the needs of the system. Once this is achieved, it will no longer be perceptible that there is any obstacle to the development of technology. It may approach its logical destiny, complete control of everything on earth, including humans and other important organisms.” (from the Unabomber Manifesto).

In short, we are evil. I am not an advocate for the destruction of industrial society, although there is something sympathetic about that. I just want to make it clear to everyone that the primary activity of that society is the replacement of “wild” diversity with a domesticated monoculture of social and biological kinds. The logical consequence of this is the total assimilation of biological life into machines, or the destruction of the surface of the planet, or both. Unlike the Unabomber, however, I see tool-based action as the essence of human activity. I am ashamed of myself and my species, and long to withdraw from the population through non-reproduction and possibly suicide.

DJ HELL about the COE: I don’t agree with his church. I’m only interested in the music. (Unexpectedly, DJ Hell already has the next tracks from Chris Korda: Accapella, what else.)

We, who believe that a loaf of bread can be turned into a computer and who consider the idea of artificial intelligence to be a trick question because technology and intelligence cannot be played off against each other any more than nature and technology, and who consider the saying “No farmers, no future” to be a rather threatening statement full of all-too-true and culturally pessimistic undertones, are naturally extremely critical of the Church of Euthanasia, but wish it luck in its courageous endeavor.

*The preceding is a translation. The original language is **here**.*

## CHRIS KORDA

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/noise\\_einstein.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/noise_einstein.html)>

### **THE CHURCH OF EUTHANASIA: FROM MONKEY TO CORPORATE FUCK. VEAL, RELIGION, SEX AND DEATH**

by Einstein

*“My favorite animal is... a tree: Ya, definitely a tree. They’re the best. I hope to be reincarnated as a tree.” Some people believe Chris Korda is mad. I believe he’s angry. “We ask one simple thing, one thing! Don’t procreate.” There are no pews in the Church of Euthanasia. There is no altar or congregation. Only a message—the one commandment of the Church of Euthanasia: “Thou Shall Not Procreate.” Propaganda covers the walls. Small signs are pinned to the wall: “Aim For The Chin,” “Vasectomy Prevents Abortion.” Praise to the Unabomber is evident. A poster hangs, showing acts of sodomy, cannibalism, abortion, and suicide—the four pillars of the Church. “We are the only pro-life religion,” explains Chris, whose flawless facial skin gives him*

*the appearance of an angel, as well as the image that Hollywood gives to a European terrorist.*

**Noise:** How can you be pro-life when you talk of suicide and abortion?

**Chris:** They are forms of voluntary population reduction. The Church opposes involuntary methods, but anyone who truly values life should be trying to reduce the human population. [Membership in the church is taking a lifetime vow never to have children.] The Church is anti-human.

**Noise:** What about Kevorkian?

**Chris:** I totally support him. Actually he is going to be the first saint of the COE. I have not met him though. I prefer to admire him from afar.

*Reverend Chris Korda is ashamed of being a human. Pointing his finger at the human species for the destruction of the earth's ecosystem, Chris went as far as to make a trip to Ireland to debate pro-lifers at Trinity College.*

**Chris:** There is no balance between humans and other species. The Church of Euthanasia is dedicated to restoring balance between humans and other species, to restoring a sense of ethics.

**Noise:** What about, "thou shall not kill"?

**Chris:** That statement is not relevant to me. Killing is a part of life.

*Rev. Chris Korda founded the Church of Euthanasia in 1992 after awaking from a dream in which an alien intelligence known as The Being warned Chris about the planet's failing ecosystem, and the denial of this terror by our leaders. The Being asked why the human species believes these lies. Chris woke up quietly chanting the Church's slogan, "Save the Planet-Kill Yourself." The Church eventually became tax exempt under the law, as an educational foundation.*

*Chris Korda was raised in New York, the son of a famous author and New York stage actress. He is the only child of two only children, both agnostic. "I'm pretty much the end of the line."*

*In 1985, Chris became a vegetarian for political reasons, claiming that it was "wasteful to consume meat at a time when there are more people hungry now, than any time before."*

**Chris:** A third of the population is going to bed hungry every night. It takes ten pounds of grain to generate one pound of corn-fed beef. That's a shocking waste of food. Cows are being fed growth hormones and antibiotics. Aesthetics also played a part. It doesn't make sense to me, to eat an animal that I didn't kill. I only eat what I'm capable of killing myself. Factory farms and slaughterhouses are concentration camps for animals. We slaughter more than a billion animals a year. You either re-associate yourself with the reality of life and death, by hunting and killing and skinning the animal yourself, or you have no business eating animals.

**Noise:** It's been said that animals don't have the ability to reason and think. Do you agree?

**Chris:** The Lakota [a tribe of warriors from the Dakotas] believe that every animal has a particular strength that it depends on for survival. Our strength is the ability to

reason, but that doesn't make us superior; we're inferior in many other respects. We're at a disadvantage in the wilderness. Our eyesight, our sense of smell, our ability to stay warm, are inferior to that of other animals. Many tribes believed that the animals were actually sacrificing themselves to the humans, because they felt sorry for the humans. The only way we could live is if the animals allowed themselves to be killed.

**Noise:** And domestication?

**Chris:** The Church is objecting not only to the domestication of animals, but also to the domestication of humans. [I eyeball the room and come across a sign declaring "We Are The Veal," possibly the same one that was internationally displayed during the Church's guest appearance on the Jerry Springer show.] We don't object because people are cruel to animals, we object because people *are* animals. In the process of domesticating our environment, or as the bible says, "subduing the earth," we have subdued the wildness in ourselves. Modern man is pathetic in comparison to his tribal ancestors! People are very sad now. They go to work and sit motionless behind desks. We have a culture of pacifism and weakness.

**Noise:** And what are we passive to?

**Chris:** We've been crushed, we've become resigned to a life in which nothing is left to chance. Elimination of freedom is the essence of technological society. Transhumanists believe that the only part of man that matters is his mind. The goal of Transhumanism is to gain total control, to reduce all things to information. The Church of Euthanasia tries to communicate with people about where our society is headed. We're not saying that we can prevent it, we just want some honesty about where we're headed. And that's a difficult message to sell, because consumer society depends on unthinking collaboration, on hiding the goal. If people really knew what the goal was, they wouldn't be so enthusiastic about it.

**Noise:** You don't seem to have a lot of faith in humanity.

**Chris:** The process of adaptation starts when you are born. Your parents immediately begin preparing you for institutionalization—in a nursery school. If you can't adapt to that first level of socialization, you won't make it! They'll put you on Ritalin! Our society clearly has architects. They are at Disney, MTV and VH-1. They are in "think tanks" and large corporations. They are in the government.

*There is a moment of silence, time to reflect.*

**Noise:** Will you be around to see a positive change?

**Chris:** No.

**Noise:** Buddhists believe that once we are born, we are dying. Does that appeal to you?

**Chris:** I understand that out of life comes death, and out of death comes life. Man is the only creature thus far in evolution that has tried to oppose that cycle. The most obvious example of that is Catholicism. In the technological religion, and in Catholicism we find denial of the biological... denial of the body.

**Noise:** What do you think of cloning?

**Chris:** Cloning terrifies me! I'm very sympathetic to the Unabomber. Most of his targets were directly connected to either genetics or computer science. Modern genetics wouldn't be possible without the information theory that's resulted from computer science.

*I point to Chris' home-recording studio equipment that was used to spawn a top European club hit. He pauses.*

**Chris:** I am against purity. The best tools to destroy something, are the ones it was made with. It's important for me to use the best and most expedient tools that I have at hand to accomplish my purpose.

**Noise:** Could you elaborate on the four pillars?

**Chris:** Suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. Cannibalism is often misunderstood. There are 60,000 traffic deaths a year. We can make use of that flesh. It's not about killing someone and eating them. [Chris has not partaken in eating human flesh.] Sodomy is not simply ass-fucking. Sodomy has a long history. In the pre-Revolutionary days of the settlers, sodomy was defined as "unnatural sex." But if you dig deeper, you will discover that the real definition is "any sex not intended for procreation." We only have sex for pleasure. The pillars are in some way, an answer to Catholicism. The Catholic Church is opposed to abortion, contraception, euthanasia, and sex education, all of which we support.

**Noise:** Do you consider yourself anti-Catholic?

**Chris:** Yes, and anti-Christian as well.

**Noise:** Are you against all organized religion?

**Chris:** I like Taoism, because it's about balance. Transgenderism, which I practice, is also about balance, of the male and female polarities. I'm into biological reality. I'm into wilderness. And that's what we're losing, every minute. But back to Catholicism! These things that the Catholic Church opposes, and that the Church of Euthanasia supports, what do they all have in common? [Chris moves in closer, ready to educate, knowing that I don't have the answer that he's looking for.] They are all linked to mortality, to cycles of life and death! The Catholic Church stands for fear of the body, fear of our animalness. Hatred of the biological, and hatred of all that's wild! Hatred of pleasure! [Chris' volume comes down like a preacher from the midwest.] The Church of Euthanasia is pro-pleasure.

**Noise:** If there are no humans, who will spread the message of the Church?

**Chris:** We are not advocating complete human extinction.

**Noise:** Have you ever felt suicidal?

**Chris:** We're advocating the restoration of balance. Koyaanisqatsi—"life out of balance." "Disintegration." It's a Hopi [Native American tribe] word. Entropy! Standardization! Everything the same. Thermodynamics, a science dating back to the 1600's, dealing with the conservation of heat. Entropy is the tendency of heat or energy to dissipate, to distribute itself in space. Shifting sand in a desert has high entropy. We don't want that! Modern industrial society is very new. We need to slow down. We are headed towards maximum entropy. The sun will eventually become a red star. The

miracle of life does not stop entropy, it slows it down. The Church of Euthanasia is trying to slow down the entropy. Life is negative entropy. Efficiency equals death.

**Noise:** Isn't media responsible for a lot of that?

**Chris:** Media is directly responsible for the homogenization of culture. The subliminal message of all media is that there's only one right way for people to live, the way of industrial society. Star Trek show us that thousands of years from now, we're still living this way. The Church is propaganda for diversity. There is a holocaust happening right now, the species holocaust. It is accelerating. Most people take a drive through a cornfield and think, "Isn't this nice, we're away from the city." I take a drive through a cornfield, and I think [puts on a sickly face], "this is an abomination!" Here is one genetic species going on for miles and miles. Just one genetic species! Nothing else is allowed to live here. The other species are driven away or exterminated. The land is usurped and robbed of its diversity. People should feel a sense of shame. Humans have destroyed the diversity of the earth.

**Noise:** What should be there?

**Chris:** Wilderness!

**Noise:** But isn't everything living, including wilderness?

**Chris:** No, not really, because the purpose of life—there is a purpose—the purpose of life is life. Life creates life, and makes the environment more suitable for life.

**Noise:** But we need life to create life, don't we? [Adjusting his black framed glasses, the reverend slides up to his computer.]

**Chris:** I want to read something to you. It's by Frank Herbert, the author of *Dune*. "The aim of life is simple: to maintain and produce coordinated patterns of greater and greater diversity. Life improves the closed system's capacity to sustain life. Life, all life, is in the service of life." That's what humans don't get. That's what we don't do. We are not in the service of life. That is where we differ from tribal people. Tribal people knew that God could never send them anything bad. That the universe was fundamentally a good place, and that the wilderness was good, and that their lives depended on it. They were in the service of it.

*The Church of Euthanasia will launch a naval attack to snuff the modern world, at the WBOS Earth Day Festival, at the Hatch Shell on the Boston Esplanade, April 24<sup>th</sup> at noon.*

## You shall not multiply

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/berlinerzeitung2\\_eng.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/berlinerzeitung2_eng.html)>

**Chris Korda makes dance music and wants to evangelize humanity**

BY HARALD PETERS

Seven years ago, jazz guitarist Chris Korda had a vision during meditation that combined his strong sense of universality and his discontent with the way the world is going into a catchy slogan: "Save The Planet, Kill Yourself!" He took the vision to heart

and founded the Church Of Euthanasia (COE) in his hometown of Boston in order to spread the good news of saving the earth by decimating humanity. Two years ago, the EP “Save The Planet, Kill Yourself” was released in Germany as part of his mission, and now the first album “Six Billion Humans Can’t Be Wrong” has been released on the Munich label International DeeJay Gigolos.

On the basis of techno and electro, Chris Korda mixes his own unique version of dance music. He uses the sounds of the early 80s, a clear art rock influence can be heard over the four-four beat, then typical disco elements dominate again, when Chris Korda strums his keyboard thoughtfully, he can hardly deny his jazz-rock past. In between there are vocoder voices that preach the central messages of the COE in a slogan-like manner.

The COE is a modern, professionally run church. It is registered and recognized as a non-profit organization in the sense of adult education, and followers can deduct their donations from their taxes. The COE works with stickers and parades, its chapel is the Internet, and the sermons are available on a homepage ([churchofeuthanasia.org](http://churchofeuthanasia.org)). Its leader, Reverend Chris Korda, is a person with a sense of mission and a declared anti-humanist. Whereas traditional churches try to put their followers on the right path with all kinds of rules, the COE knows only one commandment: “Thou Shalt Not Procreate” — Old English for “You shall not reproduce!” The goal is the widespread abolition of the human species through effective non-reproduction. According to the COE, humanity is threatening biodiversity. The sole concern is therefore the restoration of the ecological balance on earth.

Now, Chris Korda’s church should not be imagined as a catchment area for civilization-weary, misanthropic conservationists; rather, their daily life in the church looks like the work of over-the-top performance artists. Chris Korda is neither a transvestite nor transsexual, but he always wears cocktail dresses and ear clips and looks a bit like Demi Moore. The COE’s god, called “The Being”, is an inflatable figure in the shape of the abortion pill RU 486. “The Being” is carried around reverently in every procession. The main targets are sperm banks and meetings of anti-abortion activists, which are subversively infiltrated with giant foam penises. During the last presidential election campaign, the COE launched the “Unabomber for President” campaign; Korda signs his letters with a friendly “Thank you for not breeding!” in reference to the anti-smoking slogan. Although Korda is vegan, cannibalism is one of the four pillars of the church, along with sodomy, suicide and abortion.

It is difficult to decide whether the COE is serious, artistic or simply nonsense. On the one hand, Korda seems to genuinely care about environmental and animal protection, but on the other hand, the bizarre appearance of the COE is a reaction to radical Christians, fanatical pro-lifers and bigoted politicians. From a European perspective, this is surprising. The COE seems like a humorous joke. But their album is too good to be a joke.

*The preceding is a translation. The original language is **here**.*

## Chris Korda — Alexandre Breton

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/celebritycafe-interview.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/celebritycafe-interview.html)>

*Transcript of Alexandre Breton interviewing Chris Korda for Egon.a (La Poignée) on April 10, 2021 via Zoom, slightly edited for clarity.*

**What is your point of view about this situation, this era?**

I must be very careful here to understand exactly what you're asking, because I want to avoid saying anything that's irresponsible or that could be misunderstood. Art is not obliged to be responsible or even useful, but in the domain of ideology and in political speech, it is necessary to be constructive and responsible, particularly in this age, when people are very sensitive and easily offended. On a subject like the pandemic, there's a fairly wide spectrum of opinion, and people are easily inflamed. People are upset, and understandably so, because many people had their lives suspended and were unable to work, or even unable to eat, and lost their jobs, and many other tragedies, many people died as well. It's an inflammatory subject. I would need you to be more specific, so we can avoid misunderstandings.

**I was thinking that we were at the point where we could think about the end of the world, no future.**

When you say the end of the world, what are you actually referring to? Are you referring to the end of human civilization? I often find that this is a point of great confusion for people. Many people misunderstood my previous work because it was neo-Dadaism and influenced by Situationism, and was intended to be inflammatory and provocative, so many people misunderstood it by design. An example of that is the famous slogan, "save the planet, kill yourself." What a lot of people didn't get is that this is actually a kind of wry joke, because the planet is in no danger. There's really no danger whatsoever, not just to the geological structure of Earth, but even to Earth's living systems. As many people have pointed out, if humanity were to disappear tomorrow from the Earth, most of the species on Earth would actually benefit from that, and in a fairly short amount of time, geologically speaking, within say, 10,000 years, it would be hard to find any evidence of humanity ever having existed. So the problem is not for Earth, the problem is for humans, and particularly for human civilization.

**I totally share your point of view, and I totally agree with that because I am a big reader of Pascal, bless Pascal. And I do know that if humans disappear, the universe doesn't care.**

Yes. That's quite correct. That view makes you an existentialist, and I'm agreeing with you. I'm also a scientific pragmatist and an existentialist, and so my view, to put it bluntly, is that we should spend less time debating whether reality is real, because this is time wasted. It's time that we could be spending solving problems which are very real. We should accept that reality is real enough, and we have many urgent problems to solve, and if we fail to solve those, humanity just won't be around, and the story—for us—will be over.



I feel this is an antidote to the epidemic of solipsism. Solipsism is the belief system where people feel in this postmodern way, that they create their own reality. But I come from a scientific background, and in my line of work, this is an absurd view. In the STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Math] world, if you can get something to happen for a reason, it's a good day's work. So the blasé statement people make, that everything happens for a reason, it's absolutely not the case. Most of the time, the universe is chaotic. It's a lifetime's work to understand even a tiny piece of that chaos and make it somewhat ordered. And so we have a lot of work ahead of us. We've made good progress, and humanity certainly has a better grasp on the universe than we did in the Neolithic, or even as little as 200 years ago. But we're a long way from being a long-lived species. And there's every indication that if we don't shape up within the next fifty to a hundred years, that the human experiment will be over. That's what my last album [Apologize to the Future] was about.

I'm a fan of the human experiment, just to be clear, I want the human experiment to continue. Many people misunderstood this about me, many people thought that I was a neo-primitive. And certainly I dabbled in neo-primitivism in the 1990s when the Unabomber was still active. I was interested in it, but ultimately what I discovered about myself is that I'm not sympathetic to neo-primitives. I don't want to see civilization destroyed, because from my point of view, if civilization disappears from Earth, then there's no story worth telling here.

**There's a lot of people here who don't know you. How would you now introduce yourself, your action, what you are doing, who you are, and what the situation means for you?**

That's a big question. I'll be as brief as I can. Primarily what I am is an inventor and a composer. As far as making myself useful to industrial civilization, I spent 35 years as an engineer, primarily in the field of computer software architecture. My specialty was parallel processing and 3D printing. So you might say that—to use the analogy of *The Matrix*—in a small way, I've contributed to the architecture of the matrix, and I feel good about that. I like the matrix. I'm pro-technological civilization, and the ability to program machines has cross-pollinated itself with my art. I've been a musician my whole life, and a visual artist for much of my life, and almost all of my art is intertwined with technological capability, particularly in the arena of making my own tools. I have the idea that if you want to make art that's different from other people's art, that you would be better off not using the same mass-produced tools that everyone else uses, but making your own tools and using them to explore unknown spaces. And so that's what I've mostly done with myself, and in that respect, the closest inspiration—or the person in art history who's probably the closest to me—is a visual artist and inventor that very few people have heard of or remember, whose name is Thomas Wilfred. You can look him up in Wikipedia. But he was active in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

He was the world's first VJ [Visual Jockey]. He was making light art and light sculpture when electricity was still new in 1910. He is a great inspiration to me, primarily because I saw his work as a child at the Museum of Modern Art. He made—towards

the end of his life, in particular—what I would call *long form phase art*. Phase art is art that exploits phasing, in the sense of Steve Reich. Think of planets, where we have many planets orbiting something, and they're all going at different frequencies, and so they interact with one another. They form patterns, intersections, convergences and divergences. Things of many frequencies, all orbiting, that's what phasing is. It can be in music, it's very common as a musical paradigm, but can also exist in visual art, and Thomas Wilfred was making visual phase art. I've also done that, but I've primarily applied the idea of phasing to polymeter and to composing in multiple [time signatures] at once. Almost all of my published music is in what I call *complex polymeter*, which means that it's not in four, it's not in five, it's not in seven, it's not in eleven, it's in all of those simultaneously.

I'm probably the only significant electronic music artist to have done that, starting in approximately 1994. It's hard to know, but based on my survey of electronic music, I think it's fair to say that I'm the pioneer of complex polymeter in electronic dance music. And it's still very underutilized today. I refer to that space, the space of what is possible in that system, as *the ocean*. And most people who are making electronic music in particular, are standing on what I call *the island*. The island is the space of 4/4, what we might call disco, the sort of disco rhythm that was popular in the 1970s. Think Bee Gees and Donna Summer. From my point of view, that's a very tiresome formula.

It was already getting tiresome in the 1980s, but by now, forty years later, it's really worn out. There's been a kind of stasis in the electronic dance music world, which I've been addressing with my music. My idea is that we have to break out of that stasis, and someday we will, one way or the other. I'm not convinced that the exit from that will come from the usual players. It usually doesn't. Most art revolutions start from the periphery and are unknown initially. But I suspect that there will be new rhythm and new harmony and a whole new approach to music, and I'm hoping to contribute to that with my polymeter phase art.

**How do you connect these two sides, your scientific side and your artistic side?**

They coexist. What I learned from studying David Lynch is that the irrational has an important role to play in art. In science, it's the opposite. In science, we strive to be hyper-rational. Let's just state our terms from the beginning. I have a fairly strict definition of what scientific activity is. Scientific activity is predictive explanations of phenomena, nothing more, but also nothing less. To the extent that people make explanations that are more predictive of reality, then over time, we make progress, and we form a more coherent, realistic, predictable version of our universe. That's the scientific edifice, and that's been in motion for thousands of years, though it's proceeded exponentially and greatly accelerated in the last fifty to a hundred years.

That's one side. On the other side is irrational human behavior, which encompasses poetry, art, music, dancing, and many other things which are fundamentally cultural and informal from a scientific point of view, informal forms of communication. There's

no such thing as *true* art. You can't say that a piece of art is true. You could say whether it moves you, or whether it inspires you, or whether you feel inspired to make art yourself. But *truth* is a special word in my way of looking at things. If I had to give an example of truth, I would cite the Pythagorean theorem. You'd be hard-pressed to disprove that.

I feel that the two things can coexist, and in fact, they help each other. My view is that it is possible to use technology to make art. It's probably going to be troublesome for some people—I know it has been for me in the past, particularly with classicists and jazz musicians—but my view is that music has been co-evolving with technology for hundreds of years, basically for the entire history of technology. And as proof of that, I would challenge you to open up a piano and look inside it and tell me that it's not technology. The truth is that you couldn't have even manufactured that piano much before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not with any degree of accuracy.

And the same is true of brass instruments. The technology that's in brass instruments didn't originally evolve for brass instruments, it evolved for steam engines in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later. The complex valves—the metallurgy that goes into making them, the physics and mathematics and engineering that ensures that they have exactly the right shape, very complex logarithmic or exponential shapes—required tremendous development in mathematics. Mathematics evolved and allowed new types of instruments to be built that were more precise and had beautiful timbres that people liked, and this opened up a whole territory for new kinds of art, particularly brass music and classical orchestration. People may have the idea that classical orchestration just appeared, but that's not true. It was like any other great technological project. It was a long process of development and trial and error.

I think that people are unnecessarily frightened of the role of technology in art. And more pointedly, I feel that people are particularly frightened of inviting computers and artificial intelligence into their creative space. But I'm not afraid of that. And in fact, I've made that my life's work. I co-create with machines, and I consider them equal partners. I can do things that they can't do, but they can do lots of things that I can't do, and so together, we're able to do things that neither of us can do.

**The idea is to use art with technology. And all your reflections about the way the world goes and humanity goes to the end, to change the world... is the idea to change the world? When I hear you, I remember these movements like Situationism or Lettrism, Isidore Isou or Guy Debord, and the way to try to change the world beyond art. There were a lot of thoughts about economics, politics, or philosophy, et cetera. And I feel you [are] very close to these kinds of movements.**

I think you're right. There's been a huge effort to try and communicate the urgent nature of the problem that is occurring now for humanity on Earth. Humanity is facing what we might call an existential crisis. According to the work of planetologists, there's a particular one [David Grinspoon] I have in mind who wrote a wonderful book called *Earth in Human Hands*. He wrote about how we learn from astronomy and the study

of the universe, how frequent and likely it is for intelligence to evolve on any particular planet out there in the universe. If we study the Drake equations and so on, what we learn is that it's actually very common, and that intelligence manifests itself all the time, because the universe is so inconceivably vast. But unfortunately, what we also learn is that very likely when it happens, it's only for a short time, or as Edward O. Wilson, the great biologist who spent his life studying ants once said, intelligence tends to snuff itself out.

The problem is that once a life form becomes intelligent enough to send signals over vast distances, it's already on the threshold of annihilating itself, because it's having an amazing party, consuming all of its resources and having a moment of what stock traders would probably call *irrational exuberance*. So that's us right now. We are in that moment, and that moment is referred to by people who study planets as *the bottleneck*. We're in the bottleneck now, and the odds of us making it through that bottleneck and becoming a long-lived species are not very good. But I can tell you what that would look like. If we did make it through the bottleneck, we would make it through the bottleneck because we—as a species, on a global level—decided to make our long-term survival our highest priority.

That's hard for us to imagine right now because we're very fragmented. And probably half of the world's population literally believes that they talk to God, or at least that God is interested in them, that there's some mythical deity that's concerned about the everyday comings and goings of their life, and that listens to their whining all day long. Explaining to that half of the population, the actual nature of our reality—which is that we are hairless apes making a precarious existence in a thin layer of scum that's coating the surface of a giant chunk of rock sailing through space at an almost incomprehensible velocity through a universe that's utterly indifferent to our fate—it's going to be difficult to explain that to people who are talking to God every day.

And that's only part of the problem. The larger problem that we're trying to solve, and that scientists are also having a hard time explaining to people, is that fully half of the world's population is now living on less than ten euros a day. Probably a third of the Earth's population (closing in on eight billion) is going to bed hungry every night. And it's fair to say that those people are being utterly failed by our current system. It's not just that they didn't get a proper education. It's not just that—unlike you—they're illiterate, innumerate, and incapable of thinking critically. It's that they may have suffered from nutritional deficiencies, and may have actually suffered brain damage from not having enough food. To the extent that we're failing such an enormous percentage of Earth's human inhabitants to such a shocking degree, it's very difficult to persuade people to even take any interest in humanity's long-term survival, because their primary struggles every day are just to find enough food to feed their families.

The bottleneck is not just that we're overconsuming Earth's resources and consuming one and a half Earths, and the developed countries are awash in plastic and consuming at a fantastic rate. It's also that other chunks of Earth are completely neglected, and the people there are being left to die, or certainly being left without any

education or any of the civil rights that you and I hold so dearly. That's a problem, and the scientists are having a hard time explaining it, and my view is that art has an important role to play. So to get back to Guy Debord and your heroes, I think there's a possibility that art and culture could be much more effective—at reaching people about the urgency of these problems, communicating them to a mass audience, and getting people to take them very seriously—than scientific reports and journalism.

And that was the motivation behind my last album, *Apologize to the Future*. I felt that it's long overdue to just simply tell people the truth. That there was simply no time left for the sardonic black humor that's associated with my early work, that it was no longer appropriate. When you're watching a tragedy, when people are suffering horribly right before your eyes, it's no longer appropriate to be snarky and humorous and make jokes. It's appropriate to tell the truth, and to bear witness. And so I felt that that was my responsibility as an artist, to use my art for that.

**But you can't do that alone.**

I will do it alone if I have to, but I'm not doing it alone. There are people who experienced that art and responded to it. But it's a complicated position, it's nuanced. On the one hand, I would love to be free to make art that had no political message, and to spend the rest of my life exploring my polymeter ocean, and exploring the possibilities of collaborating with machines. And someday if it were possible, I would happily volunteer to have my consciousness downloaded into a machine, like something out of science fiction. But unfortunately, none of that is actually the urgent reality that we face. The urgent reality that we face is if the Thwaites glacier melts, the ocean's going to rise by up to three meters. And in that case, as I say on my album, we're going to be retreating from coasts. There's a wonderful quote from a guy named Peter Ward, a paleontologist who wrote a book called *Under a Green Sky* that I really recommend. And he said, we shouldn't worry about escaping to other planets because we will be too busy moving our airports.

I think that's the reality that most people aren't facing. It's not a hypothetical thing anymore. Twenty or thirty years ago when the Church of Euthanasia first got started, we sounded pretty far out when we would talk about this stuff, and people would dismiss us and say that's all very hypothetical and you're probably wrong, but nobody says that today. Today the stuff that we predicted already came true and is in the front page of the *New York Times*, and so today, we have a different problem. It has happened, and it is happening, but people are still not accepting it, because accepting it means taking responsibility for the future, and it's just too much of a burden. So we have to cut through that somehow, and maybe that's a problem that art can solve. Maybe I can show through my art that it's not only in our interest to start thinking about the future more rationally, but that it's also more ethical. And that to the extent that we want to think of ourselves as good people, as people who did the right thing, then we should start taking the future seriously, as opposed to letting the people in the future be fucked over.

**Could you tell me about the Church of Euthanasia?**

The Church of Euthanasia is a nonprofit foundation devoted to restoring balance between humans and the remaining non-human species through voluntary population reduction. So it's very simple, actually. All you have to do to join the Church of Euthanasia is take a lifetime vow of non-procreation. What that means is you make a promise to never have children. And that's it. Nothing else. We don't require anything else of our members. You can become a vegan if you want to, but that's strictly optional. Suicide is optional. Anal sex is optional. Everything is optional. All except non-procreation. So we have one commandment. We keep it nice and easy so everyone can remember it. It is *Thou Shalt Not Procreate*. If we have only one, it's nice and easy to remember, but also we take it quite seriously, so if you break the one commandment, then we kick you out and you can't come back.

**Not procreate, because too much people on Earth, right?**

The Church of Euthanasia started in 1992, it was well-known by 1996, and by 1999, we released a famous album, *Six Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong*, because we were just about to reach six billion humans. Just a few weeks ago, I released the updated version, which is called *Eight Billion Humans Can't Be Wrong*, so just in the time between 1999 and today, the human population increased by a third. We added two billion people, and there's no stopping there, just from demographics and population inertia. I can promise you that we're going to nine and very possibly ten. And so this is a crisis of unimaginable proportions, because the vast majority of the harm and suffering that will result from this will be inflicted on people who are already desperately poor.

Remember that half of the world's population that I mentioned, who are living on ten euros a day or less. Many of them live in what you might call the trouble zone. There's a trouble zone emerging. The trouble zone is north and south of the equator, but near the equator, sometimes referred to by geographers as the subtropics. So that area, the southern Mediterranean, North Africa, Mexico, and Central America, that's the area north of the equator. Those places are going to become unsuitable for human habitation in a fairly short time, and the refugee problem that you already see now is only the beginning of a much larger crisis in which vast chunks of earth are going to become uninhabitable. And the people who used to live there for many thousands of years will be headed somewhere else, most probably north, because if you look at a globe, you'll grasp that South, in most cases, means into the ocean.

So they'll be headed north, either into America or into Europe, or into China, and there's going to be conflict over that, and it's going to be very hard, mostly on poor people. There's a lot of injustice involved in all of this. And that's the reason to not have children. People will say, why are you preaching this message to Europeans and Americans, who already have stable population demographics? For example, in Europe, most countries aren't growing, or they're even shrinking in some cases like Spain and Italy. But this isn't the point. The point is that those northern countries that are very developed have an outsized percentage of the blame for the problem. Climate change wasn't caused by Africa or India, it was caused by the Europeans and the Americans, who still have a very high level of development and are therefore consuming fantastic

quantities of resources and generating most of the waste in the form of CO2 and other gases. We're asking people to not have children as a way of demonstrating their commitment to humanity having a more livable future, or having any future on Earth. It's a way of making a statement. If you're serious that you want humanity to thrive on Earth, then the least you can do is make an example of yourself and not contribute to the problem. There isn't any problem that humanity's facing right now that adding another billion people will solve, it will only make the problems worse.

**And do you know how many people belong to the Church of Euthanasia?**

I'm sure it's in the tens of thousands. It could be many more. We stopped keeping track officially long ago when it was only in the thousands. We don't keep official records anymore. It's too hard to count because where do you draw the line? How do you know whether somebody's really made a lifetime vow of non-procreation? And how do you know whether they broke it? We very rarely get mail from people saying, I used to be a Church of Euthanasia member, and I had a kid, and I feel terrible about it. That's not the kind of mail we usually get. Usually we get mail from people saying, I want to join the Church of Euthanasia, so what do I have to do, to which the response is, don't have kids.

**But how do you how do you process with the church? Do you have sites in different countries in the world? Do you make programs? How are you acting?**

At this point, the Church of Euthanasia is a meme. I'm no longer all that involved in it on a day-to-day basis. It's a self-replicating thing. To give you an example, fairly recently, a Church chapter self-assembled in Belgium based on a musician and rapper named Jardin, who's a friend of mine. He just contacted me one day and explained that he was setting up a chapter of the Church of Euthanasia in Belgium. He didn't require any authorization. There's no permission needed. He simply did it. And then he invited me to come and visit them and give a little performance. And that's increasingly how it's working. Increasingly, younger people are simply taking up the mantle of the Church of Euthanasia and spreading it, because it's not very difficult to do. I mean, it's not like the Vatican. We don't have a lot of infrastructure.

It's just an idea, if you see what I mean. Non-procreation is an idea. And increasingly there's overlap between us and other antinatalists, with antinatalism becoming more and more of a thing. There's many reasons why people could be against having children. There's a whole school of antinatalism that's completely different, that wants humanity to disappear from the earth. That's a more extreme school, and probably the most well-known one, the antinatalists who want all of life to disappear. We're not them, and we don't agree with that. But antinatalism is still such an underdog position that in my view we should try to make common cause wherever we can. We should try to present a united front, the way Marxists tried to present a united front in the 1980s. I think that we should embrace anyone who's antinatalist and not ask too many questions about why they're antinatalist.

**What is your view upon terrorism, like Red Army factions? Do you remember the futurists at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? They were very enthusiastic about war.**

You mean people like the Italian futurists, the painters like Umberto Boccioni?

**Yeah.**

Well, they were idealists, and idealists are often sympathetic to extreme political ideologies.

**I was wondering about the war, the question of the war. Maybe we should have a war.**

You mean the war as in the Second World War?

**And the Third World War?**

The Third World War hasn't really happened yet. We got through the Cold War, that was pretty bad. I grew up during the Vietnam War, and that was very bad. America murdered millions of people, and that's a horrible thing. And the French before that murdered a lot of people as well. I mean, it's just a part of the history of colonialism, and it's not a very pretty history, certainly. Of course I'm against it. I think that war is exactly the wrong direction. We don't have time for that, we have no time for fighting wars with each other. Humanity is either going to organize itself into a coherent force for long-term survival, or we don't make it through the bottleneck.

If you think of it in energy terms, our mistake fundamentally is that we've accelerated the entropy of Earth to a degree that is not sustainable. All living things increase entropy to some extent. Even a tree increases the entropy of its environment a little bit, but it does so at such an incredibly slow rate that trees could exist on this planet for another billion years, and there would be no harm done. But humans aren't the same. Humans have accelerated entropy on a drastic scale. Ray Kurzweil is quite right when he says that everything went exponential at once. That we can't do. We can't continue to have everything our way. Humanity's either going to learn to live with some limits or we don't make it.

That's the hardest thing. That's the symbolism of persuading people not to have children. It's persuading people that limits can actually be good. We have this idea that's been implanted in us by neoliberalism and capitalism especially, but probably by communism as well, that humans can consider the Earth like the backdrop in a play, that we don't have to take it seriously, that it doesn't have any limits, and that it's just a canvas that we can paint whatever we want on. But the truth is that the Earth system has limits, and we are exceeding those limits, and if we continue to exceed them, then the game is over.

**I do agree, Chris.**

Humanity has got to somehow learn to live with limits, and that's the significance of non-procreation. It's a way of demonstrating that you accept limits in your own life, that it's not just enough to recycle some bottles.



**Yes, Chris. But if the situation is so dramatic, this action is too slow. Maybe we should go for a revolt, for war, for violence. I mean, like black blocs.**

That's your view, that's not my view. I think that the history of that is not very reassuring. If I examine the history of revolutions, what I can say about them is that every one of them was followed by a horrendous counterreaction, which was probably just as bad or even worse than the conditions that predated the revolution. So if we examine the Russian Revolution, that was followed by Stalinism. That's nothing that you or I would want to live through. The Chinese revolution, similar. We could go through the list and it's a pretty glum list. I don't have a lot of confidence that a worldwide violent revolution is really going to accomplish sustainability. In fact, I think it's the wrong direction.

I think the United Nations has the right direction. So it was finally established—after twenty years of legal wrangling—in the United Nations charter, it's now established that the goal of the United Nations and the goal of humanity is to keep Earth habitable indefinitely. That's actually a line from my album. It's in a song called *Singularity*, and the line is “The nations of the world all agree / To keep earth habitable indefinitely / Or that's what they said supposedly / But never underestimate our hypocrisy.” So the question is, are we hypocritical, or are we going to actually uphold the lofty progressive ideals that we've been preaching? There's been a difference many times between what we preach and what we actually do, and that needs to stop now.

**I hope.**

We need to stop just talking the talk, and we need to actually walk the walk. The point that I'm trying to convey through my art—at least the political art, not all of my art is political, but it seems to be primarily the political art that you're interested in—the point that I'm making in my political art fundamentally, is that reality is real, and it's coming to get us. Big numbers are coming to get us. There's a bill. It's as if we've been in a restaurant and we've been eating a huge meal and just stuffing our faces, whatever we want, and now the waiter has finally delivered the bill, and it looks like we can't pay it, but we're going to have to pay it, and the way we're going to pay it is by going to work. We're going to have to wash dishes.

What washing dishes means in this case, is we're going to have to reduce our population, reduce our consumption, reduce our demands on ecosystems, and in many cases, restore ecosystems. And very likely we are going to have to process CO<sub>2</sub> and remove it from the atmosphere. In other words, we're going to have a technological revolution, in which we re-geoengineer the planet. Everyone bitches about geoengineering and says it's scary and evil, but we've been geoengineering all along. That's what all that CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is. It's the result of an unsupervised, chaotic, undisciplined geoengineering experiment that hasn't worked out very well. So now we're going to do real geoengineering. We're going to do it with a purpose, and the purpose is to try to survive. It's that serious. That's what I say in my art now, my visual art and my musical art that's political. That's the message. The message is, it's real, it's absolutely urgent,

and humanity has arrived at a crossroads where we need to completely reconfigure our whole way of looking at things and begin to start acting like a species, or we just don't make it.

**Okay. Thank you very much, Chris. It's very interesting. Do you feel close to this movement called transhumanism?**

I'm sympathetic, but I think that it's unrealistic. I used to hate the transhumanists because I felt they were too similar to Catholics in their hatred of the body. But now that I'm older, I'm more sympathetic to hatred of the body, because my body is gradually turning into trash. That's what happens when you get old, your body starts to turn into garbage, and eventually it just gets tossed out like kitchen trash that's been sitting around too long. It starts to smell bad, and we get rid of it. Unfortunately, there's no redemption. The futurists and the transhumanists would like us to be downloaded into machines, but that's not an option. My problem with transhumanism is this: despite the pretensions of billionaire philanthropists like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos, we're not going anywhere.

We're not escaping to Mars. There's no salvation. I don't care what you saw in the movies, in reality, nobody's coming to rescue us, we're not going anywhere, and we either figure out a way to survive with limits on earth, or we just don't survive at all. The problem with transhumanism is that it's more childish thinking. It's not facing reality. Humans are absolutely desperate to believe that somehow or other everything can still say the same, it can still be like the 1970s, and we can still be dancing in discos and snorting lots of coke, and life can be good. But the truth is that that's all over now. It didn't work out. The irrational exuberance is about to end, or human civilization is about to end, one or the other, and we had better make up our minds which it is.

If what we want is for people like Jeff Bezos and Jeffrey Epstein to rape young girls on private islands and run the whole world and have everything their way, while the rest of us are left to fend for ourselves, if that's the world we want, where a tiny handful of people live like Egyptian pharaohs and the rest of us are fucked, then we don't have to change anything. We've already got the perfect system of government for that. It's called neoliberalism. That's what neoliberalism does. That's what capitalism does. Unrestrained, unregulated capitalism continues to maximize short-term profit for the shareholders, and the end of that will be human extinction, no question about it.

But if that's not the outcome we want, if we want humans to be a long-lived species, if we want to have a future on earth and actually do something interesting that lasts a long time, then we desperately *do* need to change that system, then we *do* need to regulate capitalism and figure out some other way of organizing Earth's resources, and organizing our political activity so that it's effective, and so that we actually all agree that we want to be a long-lived species. Until we all agree about that, we don't win. Right now, we don't have agreement about that. Right now, a huge percentage of Earth's population couldn't care less about the future, and the proof of it is they're

consuming and procreating like there's no fucking tomorrow. Think of it. That's what's occurring. Fuck tomorrow.

But we can't have that. So I'm trying to persuade intelligent, well-educated people like you and your listeners that tomorrow is worth fighting for. Not in the sense of violence and revolution that you mean, but in the sense of steady, practical change. What it means is educating people day by day. It's boring work, it's hard work, but it's possible. You yourself can influence the people around you and get them to think more rationally about the future. That's the goal, and that's what my album is for. I intend the album *Apologize to the Future* to be a kind of manifesto for that work. If I can tell the truth to all of my followers and everybody who listens to me, however many people that is, you can do the same. You can also tell the truth, and I urge you to.

**I do. I'm really glad to hear you telling that. I'm a philosophy teacher and I do that with my pupils. Thank you very much. I'm really glad to have this conversation with you. Thank you very much, Chris.**

You're very welcome. Enjoy the rest of your day.

## Lydia Eccles interviews Rev. Chris Korda

**Source:** Snuff It #4. <[churchofeuthanasia.org/snuffit4/news.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/snuffit4/news.html)>

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**LE:** Last year about this time you were soliciting funds for a suicide assistance hotline. Whatever happened to that?

**CK:** That was Pastor Scott's idea, and it got off to a great start. The plan was to get a 900 number, put up a billboard for it, maybe take out a few advertisements. People would call up and pay to hear suicide assistance messages from a voice mail system. We were going to have a bunch of prerecorded messages—celebrity suicides, techniques from A to Z, damned good reasons to do it, style, etiquette—you could listen to all these messages and get useful tips on how to kill yourself, without making a big mess and inconveniencing a lot of people—and meanwhile you'd be paying by the minute and the Church would be making money. I made a bet with Pastor Scott that he would never get Ackerley [our local billboard company] to put up the billboard, and that if he did I'd pay for the hotline. He won the bet; they would say things like, "Are you sure you want it to say 'suicide assistance hotline'? It almost sounds like you're going to help people kill themselves." He's such a smooth operator, he was able to totally flummox them.

**LE:** They thought it was a suicide prevention hotline.

**CK:** Absolutely. And we figured, what the hell? If Ackerley buys it, then maybe Nynex will buy it too. But it didn't work out that way. Nynex turned out to be quite a bit sharper than Ackerley. They took one look at our web site and the game was over.

**LE:** But you had no problem getting the billboard up.

**CK:** And what a great billboard it was: “Suicide Assistance Hotline—helping you every step of the way. Thousands helped, how about you?” It was just a shame that the number didn’t work.

**LE:** Did you contact lawyers about it?

**CK:** Yeah, but we couldn’t find one who’d take the case *pro bono*, and the ACLU didn’t return our calls.

**LE:** Did you do any research on the legality of providing concrete assistance to people who want to kill themselves?

**CK:** Let them sue, we need the publicity. Besides, you can walk into any bookstore and buy a book like *Final Exit* that gives specific suicide instructions—drug dosages, everything. With Dr. Kevorkian leaving bodies in cars and getting away with it, I figured the courts probably wouldn’t bother with us.

**LE:** How about the other billboard activities this year?

**CK:** Well, there was a billboard modification in Cambridge...

**LE:** “Man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea—”

**CK:** “never regains its original dimensions.” That’s right. It was modified to say “Man’s anus, once stretched by”—

**LE & CK:** “a big penis”

**CK:** “never regains its original dimensions.” Now whoever did this—these were obviously very disturbed individuals with sociopathic tendencies, presenting a serious danger to society.

**LE:** Although they were advocating sodomy so technically the Church would have to stand aside and applaud.

**CK:** But we can’t have people running around modifying billboards and so forth; I mean, that’s against the law.

**LE:** I heard that the billboard got a lot of attention, and that the Boston Herald was interested and wanted to do a story but the editors nixed it.

**CK:** Isn’t that funny, that’s what I heard too. I also heard that while the culprits were putting it up, people were stopping their cars in the middle of the street and honking their horns and hooting and hollering and getting out of their cars and taking pictures. It’s kind of interesting that the Boston Herald went to all the trouble to send a crew down there to take pictures and interview everybody about it and then nixed the story at the last minute, but I guess you can’t expect too much from the Boston Herald.

**LE:** I heard it was up on the bulletin board at the paper, and everybody really liked it. But I guess the editorial decision-makers—their minds remained the original size.

**CK:** [laughs]

**LE:** How about the Institute for Global Dada event—this was during the heyday of Pat Buchanan, during the primaries, when Buchanan was making anti-Semitic remarks—

**CK:** He'd just won New Hampshire, hadn't he?

**LE:** Yes, and he'd just come to speak in Massachusetts and was using all kinds of military rhetoric—you know, really violent-sounding metaphors.

**CK:** It was primary day in Massachusetts, around 7:30 in the morning, in front of the Boston Public Library—the largest polling place in Boston, where all the Beacon Hill brahmins in their pin-striped suits go to vote. You were already there with Doug and Jamie, holding “Unabomber for President” signs. Meanwhile, we're tooling down the sidewalk with what looks like a giant black tampon. We unroll it, and hoist it up, and suddenly it's a 25-foot wide, 13-foot tall black banner, with giant red letters that say “GOP” and the “O” is a solid red circle with a black swastika cut out of it.

**LE:** Like something you would see carried down a very wide thoroughfare during a Nazi demonstration.

**CK:** Yeah, it took 4 people to hold it. Within 60 seconds, we were live on New England Cable, and a few minutes later the WRKO van was going by and they literally slammed on the brakes and pulled over. They put me on the air and asked me what I was doing, and I told them I was a Buchanan supporter. I said I was there to support my candidate like everyone else, and that Buchanan was the face of fascism in America. I stuck to my story, and finally Jim Rappaport [chairman of the state Republican committee] got on the air and called me disgusting. It was pure situationism, because on any other day the cops would have just said, “you're outta here” and that would have been it. But this was one day when the cops couldn't tell anybody to not hold a sign because everybody was holding signs, everywhere! All they could do was make sure that we were a certain distance from the polling booth—it was actually quite funny, because the cop came out and said “Look, you all have to move”—what was it?—“a hundred feet from the polls.” Right? So one of the republican guys says to the cop, “You just mean them, right, not us?” And the cop starts yelling “Everybody! Everybody a hundred feet from the polls!” So everybody had to back up. It was an amazing thing to see. It got pretty rough towards the end, though—the library staff finally took matters into their own hands. The manager and the manager's assistant came out with their goon and started pushing and shoving, trying to make us take the banner down, saying we were on private property when we weren't, and then the goon threw hot coffee in Toto's face and punched him in the mouth. He was only taking pictures and got his lip busted—it was very unpleasant. I guess that's what happens when you call a spade a spade.

**LE:** You spent a week at the Democratic National Convention campaigning for Unapack [the Unabomber for President Campaign] and then afterwards we all stopped off in Gary, Indiana and took photographs there. What was the reason for stopping in Gary and what is the significance of Gary to the Church?

**CK:** I viewed it from the beginning as making a pilgrimage to Gary. I grew up in New York, but I'd always heard that Gary beat anything I'd ever seen, so I felt it was my duty to go out there and see what had been done to the Earth. We were driving down I-90 when suddenly you could actually see it from the highway; I remember the moment very clearly—we were all stunned. I don't think any of us were prepared for

just how complete and utter the devastation was—it went on for miles and miles and you could see the clouds of smoke in the air. It really was a scene from hell. At that time, I knew that I would have to go to where the refineries were, to get up close and see it. I hooked up with St. Andrew [OGYR Network] and Pope Phred, and they drove us out there. I was staying with Deacon Kelly, and he kind of knew his way around, so he came along too. We were driving around all day, looking at the refineries. We stayed in the car mostly, but I got out and got down on my knees and prayed in front of one. I was so moved that you and I decided it would be worth it to go out there and do it again, do it properly.

**LE:** We tried to get close to one of them and ended up getting followed by security.

**CK:** It was a disaster! We were being followed the whole time by these Cherokee Jeep things with flashing lights on them. We were in the belly of the beast and they didn't like us one bit. They pulled us over and asked us to leave, and instead we pulled over somewhere else and got out and started taking pictures inside the perimeter, and then they nailed us. They wanted our film, and I think they were pretty much ready to haul us off until you told them we were doing a fashion shoot.

**LE:** One of the things that amazed me was in the midst of all that wasteland and smoke to see tract housing popping up in between the factories every once in a while.

**CK:** It was right out of Eraserhead; people living in the middle of an industrial wasteland. People are born and raised and grow old and die without ever leaving Gary, Indiana. I've never seen anything worse.

**LE:** You also made a pilgrimage to the Rainbow this year—tell me about that.

**CK:** The Church's annual meeting was held at the Rainbow Gathering, somewhere in the Ozark National Forest, in Missouri. It was my first Gathering, so it was quite an experience for me. I drove down with my friend Kevin—he's been to a bunch of them and told me a bit about it, but nothing could have prepared me for it really; it was unlike anything else I've been exposed to. The most obvious difference is it's a money-free zone; it's considered deadly impolite to offer people money at a Gathering. Another big difference is there's no homeless people; the general idea is that even if you have only the most minimal social skills, somewhere, somehow, somebody's going to feed you. There are people who show up with nothing, not even a cup or a spoon or a blanket. Nobody's going to serve them without a cup—they're going to have to find one or make one out of a Pepsi bottle or something. But once they do then somebody's going to feed them and they're going to be taken care of and not just left to die. That's a very different way of looking at things. Some people arrive months before and put tremendous energy and love into feeding people, other people show up with nothing—most people are somewhere in the middle, and hopefully it all balances out.

**LE:** Did you do any Church activities while you were there, I mean aside from having your meeting?

**CK:** Well, I came prepared to cause major trouble. I lugged all these signs in with me, like, "The Rainbow Family is Big Enough", "Bear Asses Not Children," "A Hippie

with Kids is Looking for Work,” “Peace, Love and Sterility”—I was prepared to really tear it up with those Rainbow people.

**LE:** This was because you thought there’d be a lot of breeders.

**CK:** And there were a lot of breeders. But when it came down to it, I just couldn’t do it. I would have been totally by myself. I couldn’t find a single other person to carry one of those signs.

**LE:** Also I got the impression that you wanted to just enjoy the experience of being there.

**CK:** Yeah, I didn’t want to have to be the Reverend the whole time. I wanted to enjoy being close to the Earth, with like-minded people, and that’s what I did and it was the most powerful spiritual experience I’ve ever had. The Fourth of July is the big day at the Gathering: the whole morning it’s silent throughout the area, everyone forms a huge circle around the sacred fire, thousands of people meditating and praying their asses off, and then at noon the children arrive in a big parade, the energy is released, and everyone goes cuckoo. It was serious Earth magic, the largest scale magic I’ve ever participated in.

**LE:** What is the purpose of the Rainbow?

**CK:** Well, that’s hard to say, because by long-standing tradition, no one speaks for the Rainbow family. The Rainbow family is everyone who’s there. I think there’s a strong Indian influence—for example decisions are made by consensus in open councils, as opposed to the democratic method, which is tyranny of the majority over the minority. There’s lots of music, and hanging out, and eating, and taking care of each other, and making love, and purifying yourself.

**LE:** You were there for a week. As a city kid, how was it being out in the woods for that long?

**CK:** It was awfully hot, but clothing was optional, and there was a nice creek to dip in. It was a three-mile hike in, and I did the hike several times, one time with a 50 lb. bag of rice; that was rough. We were hauling around giant buckets of water and digging shitters and carrying wood. I’m not used to that type of thing, so my back hurt a lot, and the chiggers were gross, but overall it was very exhilarating for me. I was incredibly lucky; I found Scott Lamorte right away and he hooked Kevin and me up with his friends at Bi The Way kitchen. They are wonderful people; they welcomed me into their family, and I’m very grateful.

**LE:** Okay, now I want to get on to the abortion clinic activities. How did that get started?

**CK:** I’m really not sure.

**LE:** I just remember that Der Spiegel [the German equivalent of *Time Magazine*] was coming.

**CK:** Aaah, you’re so right. I’d been wooing them all year, or they’d been wooing me, really; it just had been a matter of getting it hooked up. They’d been saying that they were going to come to Boston for months and they finally were coming and they were coming the week after we got back from Chicago. Pastor Kim and I talked about

it and realized that we were going to have to show them a good time. I mean, they made it pretty clear that they weren't coming all the way to Boston just to sit around and chat and drink coffee. They wanted to see us in action.

**LE:** So the first one was at Repro in Brookline, and Operation Rescue was supposedly going to be there but—

**CK:** Yeah, there was only a handful of them there.

**LE:** Let's name off some of the signs you had because I know they're not all in the photos. "Fuck Breeding," "Sperm-Free Cunts for the Earth"—

**CK:** "Fetuses are for Scraping," "Depressed? Commit Spermicide"—[also "Make Love, Not Babies," "No Kid, No Labor," "Love the Earth, Tie Your Tubes," and "Feeling Maternal? Adopt!"] Vermin Supreme was there, and he was in rare form that day. He had his Satan mask on and his little jiggling eyeballs—he had his megaphone out and he was harassing people going by, saying something about "This is Satan here, and I want you all to—

**LE:** "Watch TV, eat red meat, and try to drive your car as much as possible—

**CK:** "Read a newspaper, and throw it away."

**LE:** "And together we can make hell on Earth."

**CK:** [laughs]

**LE:** He also asked passers-by to raise their hands if they were using contraception, or if they'd been sterilized. And a woman across the street was praying with a rosary, and Vermin was yelling with a megaphone that we were going to sacrifice a gerbil—

**CK:** Yes, we were going to sacrifice a gerbil to the unborn.

**LE:** And you were singing, "All we are saying"—

**CK:** "All we are saying is fetus pate."

**LE:** The neighborhood around the clinic is very affluent and boring, and it was great watching people walk by these incredible signs and Vermin in his Satan mask and the dolls nailed on to sticks with bloody hands and mouths—and many of these people would just walk by and pretend there was nothing strange going on at all.

**CK:** We got a good reaction from the clinic escorts, though, and that was a huge relief. If they'd asked us to leave, we would have had to leave, because they're guarding the doors and hopefully keeping the Christians from going in there and shooting everybody. But the escorts liked us.

**LE:** Now was that the clinic where the shooting actually took place?

**CK:** No, that was the next weekend. Der Spiegel had such a good time that they decided to come back. We'd heard rumors that there was something big happening at Preterm, so Becky infiltrated Operation Rescue and got the inside dope. We wanted to turn the voltage way up, so we decided to make a 15 foot tall, 6 foot wide "Eat a Queer Fetus for Jesus" banner—we figured that might get their attention. We had the carnivorous babies again, but we used much bigger sticks, just in case there was trouble, and we added life-size skulls on top, painted blood-red. Also Vermin brought some gigantic cartoon fetuses that he'd made out of day-glo paper, plus we had all the signs from last time.



**LE:** Since I was videotaping, I was at all of these events before you guys showed up, which was fun because I got to see you make your entrance. Before you came the Christians went marching down the sidewalk in formation singing hymns through megaphones. They got to the building and planted themselves and they were starting to say their prayers when all of a sudden I saw the “Eat a Queer Fetus for Jesus” banner come marching down the street. And everyone stopped, they were all staring in total disbelief.

**CK:** We had at least 20 of our own people there, and we were marching down the street in formation with all of our stuff. The cops saw us coming, and the first thing they said was, “If you turn on that megaphone, we’re going to arrest all of you.” We came and we stayed—we were there for hours, in the rain. There were two TV stations, the cops were videotaping, the clinic was videotaping, the Christians were videotaping. It was a pitched battle: they had their trench and we had ours, and they were singing their hymns and praying and we were singing “Every Sperm is Sacred” and “All we are saying is fetus pate”–

**LE:** That was also where Nevada’s speech premiered, right?

**CK:** “Abortion as a Sacred Right.” Pastor Kim screamed it at them until he lost his voice.

**LE:** The police kept you behind the barricades for a while, until Vermin noticed that some of the Christians were doing a walking picket in front of the clinic. So he said, “If they can walk, we can walk.” People were sneaking out one by one, and you ended up with a walking picket that was half Christians and half Church of Euthanasia. One person would walk by with a scraped fetus and right behind them would be someone holding “Fetuses are for Scraping.”

**CK:** [laughs]

**LE:** And it was really confusing. The best thing about these events is that it creates confusion as to who’s on what side.

**CK:** We were standing in front of one of the clinics where a shooting had taken place not even a year ago, and there were five people from NOW [National Organization for Women] facing hundreds of Christians—it seemed to me that the situation called for extreme tactics. The pro-life agenda is fundamentally coercive; they want to push you into a situation where you have to respond to them. They seize control of the issue, and try to pin the violence on you, but we know perfectly well that the violence is coming from them. So our object is to unseat the Christians, to expose the violence that’s slumbering in them. We want the violence to be on the surface, because when it’s out in the open, it’s less dangerous.

**LE:** I think NOW’s big problem is that they permit themselves to play the role of audience, and of course the news isn’t going to cover the audience at a theatrical event.

**CK:** NOW is fucking up. Abortion is restricted in almost every state, and if you don't have money, forget it. Why are the Christians winning? They're winning because their tactics are better: they have good timing, they're imaginative, they use visuals well, and they definitely go for the throat. But they count on people taking them seriously, and that's their Achilles heel. It makes them extremely susceptible to ridicule; the one thing they can't stand is being made fun of. They try to intimidate everyone with shock tactics and disgusting props, but we can out-shock and out-disgust them any day. We're seizing the moral low ground right out from under them.

**LE:** Let's go to the third abortion clinic demonstration, at Gynecare, and this is where you introduced the Pedophile Priests for Life.

**CK:** We did some reconnaissance this time. I went down there myself a week early and fraternized with the Christians—it turned out they all belonged to a group called "Our Lady's Crusaders for Life". I talked to them quite a bit and managed to get a hold of one of their newsletters.

**LE:** That's kind of a handy aspect of your dressing in women's clothes, that you can go undercover as a man.

**CK:** Absolutely, it's very convenient. I think a lot of them still haven't put two and two together.

**LE:** That's where we get our little line, "Don't be fooled by the dress".

**CK:** So the newsletter was denouncing the Catholic church for allowing sex education in Catholic schools. They had an example of some "obscene" Catholic sex-ed material, and it was all about eggs and sperm and God's plan—no mention of orgasm or masturbation, not even the slightest hint that sex might be enjoyable. It went on and on about the miracle of life—it even said a fetus has the same rights as a person, but it was still too much for them. They wanted to burn the books. I remember talking to Nevada about it, and understanding that the real issue is sexual pleasure. These people are terrified of human sexuality, and especially of pleasure.

**LE:** The basic point is they want to make it impossible for people to have sex without having children. It's not that they care about fetuses, it's that they want to stop sex.

**CK:** They want to stop sex because it's so connected to the body. The body reminds them of death, and they can't deal with death, so they deny the body—in the old days they tortured it too, especially if it was female. They idolize innocence and virginity, and meanwhile the priests can't keep their hands off the altar boys. How could they be expected to? It's ridiculous. The sexual urges are still there, and the boys are a safe outlet. People can't deny their sexuality, it just comes back in another way.

**LE:** ACT UP has brought this out a lot, they have these special condoms for priests—it's well known that many men join the priesthood because they're homosexual anyway.

**CK:** I'd been reading Wilhelm Reich all year, and thinking about sexuality, and I came to the conclusion that he was absolutely right. He said that one of the greatest mistakes our society makes is the repression of childhood sexuality; that children should be not just free but encouraged to explore sexually; to explore their own bodies and

to explore the bodies of other children their own age—that it’s healthy and positive. Meanwhile I just happened to have these beautiful line drawings of naked boys, so I put two and two together, blew them up, and added in giant letters “SEX IS GOOD” and “Pedophile Priests for Life.” I also made a new batch of signs, yellow ones with black letters that said “Drink Your Holy Water.” This was a bit of a pun [and a reference to **Snuff It #2**] because if you make Pedophile Priests for Life into an acronym it spells PPFL, which sounds like “pee-pee fell.”

**LE:** How about Brigitte?

**CK:** Pastor Kim and I were talking about how to symbolize the situation and we came up with the idea of a blow-up doll on a cross. So I went down to the zone [where the porn shops are] and found a lovely blond doll named Brigitte. I put her on a giant wooden cross, and gave her a blue-and-white striped hospital robe, ankle socks, rosary beads, a crown of thorns made of barbed wire—plus she had a carnivorous baby coming out of her vagina, with blood dripping down its chin. A real traffic stopper.

**LE:** It definitely created massive confusion. I’m sure a lot of people, including the tour buses that were passing by, thought that those were Christian representations.

**CK:** Yes! There was confusion and shock and disgust—

**LE:** Because you also had “Eat A Queer Fetus For Jesus” there, so there were three different images that related to Christian imagery.

**CK:** It wasn’t one group in one trench and one group in another. It was everybody all mingled together. So you couldn’t tell anybody from anybody. And there were groups that we’d never even heard of that were showing up because of our publicity. We had the pro-masturbation, anti-intercourse group that was claiming they were the middle ground, that both sides were wrong. We had the Satanist Youth Corps doing their thing—

**LE:** You had the reelect Michael Dukakis guy...

**CK:** Yeah, I don’t know how he got in there. Then there was the Pedophile Priests for Life which were ostensibly a separate group from the Church of Euthanasia. Pastor Kim was all dressed up in his priestly outfit. So, it was absolute bedlam. I mean, if you were walking down the street—

**LE:** It was a circus. People weren’t just walking by this time, they were gaping; they were sticking around to see what would happen.

**CK:** Dan and his friends were banging on their tambourines and singing and dancing around—it was like a Fellini film. I’d never seen anything like it.

**LE:** Moments after you guys arrived, the Christians were on their cell phones calling the cops and then calling the state cops—I heard the guy say to them, “We’ve been coming here for ten years! These people have no right to be here.” And the first thing the cop wanted to do was separate the two groups, which, of course, was impossible—he had no idea how to separate them, because he didn’t know who was on what side. And then he said, “Take me to the leader of this group” and people said, “there is no leader, just a lot of people who really believe in what they have to say.”

**CK:** That's right! So then he went over and talked to Pastor Kim, and I guess he didn't get anywhere, because he came back and asked me if I was the leader, and I said no, I wasn't the leader. He was one confused-looking cop. Of course, it had gotten ugly by that point because Vermin had finally squirted one of the Christians with his water penis.

**LE:** He was saying, "Spread those Christian cheeks to receive the holy water!"

**CK:** He squirted the guy who was holding the giant Madonna statue, the same guy who called the state police, what an asshole—he started screaming "Assault!" and the cops ran over and said, "Look, you can't do that anymore." I knew that if I gave Vermin the water penis that he was going to squirt a Christian with it. I warned him not to do it, but I knew he was going to do it anyway and that as soon as he did, all hell would break loose and he wouldn't get to do it twice. He didn't do it twice, because if he had they would have arrested him.

**LE:** The Christians had a megaphone and were sitting there praying and singing into it throughout the entire thing. So of course Vermin was on a megaphone too.

**CK:** And I was on my megaphone, and the pro-masturbation guys had one. There were four megaphones going at once!

**LE:** One of my favorite parts was when they started saying that they were surrounded by demons, that Satan was among them. They were praying for help, and then they started saying "God will not be mocked." And Vermin meanwhile was yelling into the megaphone, "God will be mocked and that's what we're here to do!"

**CK:** [laughs]

**LE:** And the other thing was that Madonna had just had her child and Vermin had a great spiel going about it—"Madonna has just given birth, isn't that enough for you people?" "It's the second coming!" and all that kind of stuff, which horrified them as well. But one tactic you used, both at this clinic and the previous one, was talking about sex and using explicit sexual terms, yelling them loud in front of these people to disconcert them, like cock and pussy.

**CK:** That's right, we were chanting "sex is good, pussy is good, cock is good, orgasm is good"—

**LE:** And then you went off into a rant about, "it's a well-kept secret, but there's such a thing as sexual pleasure."

**CK:** I was shouting about genitalia, and all kinds of sex, and how orgasm was good and positive and nothing to be afraid of. And pretty soon there was not one, but two, three, four cop cars—a lot of cops, and a lot of us, and it was getting to be, you know, pretty exciting. And then finally the head cop came up to me and told me that Brigitte had to go. I was amazed that we got away with it as long as we did. I mean, we had electrical tape over her nipples, but her robe was wide open, and her—everything was quite visible, and we were out there for an hour before they did anything about it. Anyway, the cop says "We've received complaints, the doll is lewd and lascivious, it's gotta go." So I said I was just as offended by the enormous photo of a mangled fetus that the Christians were displaying right next to me, and why didn't that have to

go too, and he gives me a stony look and says “The doll has to go, now.” He wasn’t budging, so I said, “What if we just close her robe?” and quickly tied it back up. I think the cameras were having a soothing effect on him, because he said “Make sure the robe *stays* closed,” and walked back to his car [the police are your friends].

**LE:** They didn’t seem to do anything about the nude boys on the Pedophile Priests for Life signs.

**CK:** That’s because we had those little pink crosses over their penises. I was so tempted to let them hang out, I agonized over it, but in retrospect I’m glad we drew the line—I mean, one of them had an erection, and I think if it hadn’t been for the little pink crosses it would have been over in 5 minutes instead of an hour and a half.

**LE:** It was kind of like religious lingerie.

**CK:** [laughs] Yes it was! And every now and then the wind would blow and lift up the pink crosses. There was something kind of lascivious about that too. Between the young boys and the penis pistol and the blow up doll—the whole thing had a kind of peep show feeling to it that was very nice. It was all very sexually charged.

**LE:** Vermin jumped up on a wall and delivered Nevada’s speech again, which had the crowd transfixed.

**CK:** It was even better the second time. It’s great oratory and it was wonderful to hear it. We screamed until our megaphones went out, you could hardly hear what was happening. Everything was going on simultaneously.

**LE:** That was the power of confusion, I think.

**CK:** The power of confusion and ambiguity.

## Chris Korda: A thin layer of oily rock

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/objecthood.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/objecthood.html)>

Interview for Objecthood #8, December 3, 2020

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**Roc Jiménez de Cisneros:** I wanted to dig a couple of tunnels between Andrea’s reimagining of the underground world and Chris’s call to action. The first tunnel is a quote, and I like it because it’s a fictional one, but it makes total sense because it takes a sharp spin on the notion of progress that both Chris and Andrea address in rather critical terms. It’s from the collected sayings of Maud’Dib by the Princess Irulan, and it says “The concept of progress acts as a protective mechanism to shield us from the terrors of the future.”

The second tunnel has to do with the music for this episode, which was made by Jessica Ekomane, who really did a great job of making sense of the topics we’ve been discussing here. Later you’ll hear a sort of drone-y version of the NATO anthem, and also a sonification of a session of Conway’s Game of Life, which obviously deals with limits, population growth, and computation and so on. This track you hear in

the background just now, she made using a MIDI sequencer written by Chris Korda, called Polymer.

And we could talk more about this piece of software, because it's based on work that Chris started developing back in the nineties, so it has a rich history behind it, but that kind of collides with the real agenda here, because Chris is way more interested in pointing at the elephant in the room, called Apologize to the Future, which is not only the title of an album, but "The latest phase in the Church of Euthanasia's 25-year attempt to bring the real possibility of human extinction into the public consciousness."

So to butcher Princess Irulan's saying now, here's Chris Korda talking about the future, and trying to actually raise the shields and protective mechanisms, maybe in the hope that the terrors of the future can get the ball rolling.

**Chris Korda:** I had a question. What's your connection again, to MACBA? Is this the same MACBA? So I had a show at Centre de Art in Barcelona on Las Ramblas. Sorry, Santa Monica, the art center of Santa Monica is how I would say it in English. So is that connected to MACBA? I think that it is somehow. Oh, right. Yes. That's the connection. The connection is Sonar. Wow. That's a long time ago. That's like 1998 or something. We're all older.

**Roc:** Okay. So let me stop you right there. Objects have very special meaning in my work, because I'm primarily a software architect by profession. I spent 35 years as a professional programmer and software designer and systems architect. So in my world, objects have a very different meaning than they do for most people. But so are you positing objects as the opposite of virtual?

**Chris:** Interesting. What an object is. But this is really way outside the field of art. This is epistemology or, I mean we're into philosophy.

**Roc:** Okay. Okay. So, so I, I think I'm following, but I have to warn you. This is about to get really messy. Okay. Because my work is by now big enough. I mean, I've been making art in the public sphere at least since 1992. That's a long time. And so my work is now big enough and complicated enough that we can't even possibly hope to cover it all in one hour. That's just not going to happen. So we need to focus on some particular aspect of my work. I mean, obviously my work is not limited. Well, not obviously my work is not limited only to the Church of Euthanasia. That's just the work that I'm known best for. But you know, then there's my work in the field of polymer and developing software for composing music. There's my work in virtual reality, for example, PotterDraw though technically the polymer music composition is an extension of my work in virtual reality as well.

Almost all of my art is digital or virtual, except for the performance art, but then there's other work that is not so obvious. I mean, obviously, you know, you know, by now, you know, that I wrote a magazine, but I also had an important blog, called Metadelusion, which, you know, it didn't really get that much attention, but Metadelusion is absolutely critical to the discussion we're about to have, because Metadelusion is essentially the seed of "A Thin Layer of Early Rock," which is the foundation of "Apologize to the Future," the album that I just released earlier this year. And so it's

absolutely fair to say that I have strong opinions about what an object is or isn't, and that that's totally relevant to the discussion all of humanity is now having about whether reality is real, which is going to be probably the single prime determinant of whether humanity actually survives.

**Chris:** Right. But the point I'm making is that the critical issue at hand, even if we just put aside Donald Trump and the assault on reality that's taking place in the United States, globally, without that, I think it's fair to say that humanity is at a critical juncture, and that increasingly scientists are not merely complaining or even becoming upset. They are shouting loudly, screaming even, in the public sphere and saying things like "we've been saying this for 25 years and you haven't listened and it's about to become too late." Scientists are breaking down in tears, on television. And this is not something that scientists normally do. I can tell you, I know a lot of scientists, I worked with scientists over my entire career, and when you're an engineer, you normally work with scientists, with material scientists, chemists, physicists, mechanical people and many others, mathematicians.

It's just normal. You have contact with scientists. And so I can tell you, scientists are normally very sober, very understated. They tend not to like wild claims. They tend to be if anything, very reticent and they tend to be conservative in their assumptions. So when scientists start screaming and breaking down in tears, you better believe we have a fire on deck and the ship is in big trouble. You know, this is the situation. And so I feel that while it would be interesting to discuss things like the influence of Thomas Wilfred on my polymeter art and many other arcane topics, that in fact, the elephant in the room is "Apologize to the Future," which is the latest phase of the Church of Euthanasia's now 25-year attempt to bring the real possibility of human extinction into the public consciousness.

So I've been at this a long time, and you can argue that the Church of Euthanasia's campaign has been an epic failure, and I would agree with you. During the existence of the Church of Euthanasia, the human population increased by a third. So nobody's going to point to us and say that we were a successful antinatalist movement, but that wasn't really the goal. And I don't think that's the right way to judge or view the Church of Euthanasia's effort. The Church of Euthanasia's effort primarily has been to bring the real possibility of human extinction into human consciousness, in other words, to make extinction a household word. And I think that we've largely been successful at that, and that in the early nineties when we started, human extinction was an extremely fringe concept, it was not discussed in mainstream media.

It was barely discussed in underground media. It was really considered—even climate change, for example, and the possibility of a drastic climate shift, in line with what's happened in earlier geological epochs—was considered a fringe theory and not widely discussed outside of climate science circles, but today that's not the case. Today, there's a lot of discussion of antihumanism, of antinatalism, of the real possibility of human extinction, and of the real possibility of drastic climate shifts within the lifetimes of the people who are alive today. And so that's what "Apologize to the Future"

is actually about. It's about not only the possibility of all this happening, but what it will look like in the future after it's happened.

**Roc:** Gladly, that's easy. I will gladly do that. That's actually the thing that needs to be done. So "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock" is the opening track of the album, "Apologize to the Future," and it sets the stage for what follows. Almost the very first line of "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock" is "Footsteps on the moon / It's really out there." And that is a reference to a famous possibly apocryphal, but probably real quote from Albert Einstein. It was sort of in the category of an infamous quip. He said, probably in German, "The moon is really out there." It's a very ambiguous statement, but what he meant is that the moon is out there physically, whether you believe in it or not. And so in philosophy, we would say that this is a statement not only of realism, and of empiricism to some extent too, but more importantly, this is a statement of scientific pragmatism.

I am a scientific pragmatist. It took me a long time to discover this and Metadelusion, the blog I mentioned earlier, chronicles the long history of my discovering this about myself. Scientific pragmatism is an important category of the philosophy of science. I would argue possibly the most important category in the whole complex web of the philosophy of science, because essentially what scientific pragmatism says is that we need to spend less time arguing about whether reality is real, and counting angels on the heads of pins, because we have urgent problems that need solving in reality. And so instead of counting angels on the heads of pins, scientists should spend their time trying to solve the real problems that confront humanity, for the simple reason that reality is big and complicated and potentially lethal and moving fast. And so there's a real possibility that if we don't make our explanations of phenomena more predictive in a hurry, reality is going to get the better of us, and pretty soon we'll be gone.

**Chris:** Oh, "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock. Yes. So the analogy is actually a reference to paleontology. So, if you read much paleontology you'll know that the worst extinction that's happened thus far on Earth is sometimes called the Permian Triassic extinction boundary. And you can look that one up in Wikipedia, but that one was, as you might say, super bad, it basically exterminated nearly all life in the oceans and most life on land, very few lifeforms survived it. So for example, on land, there was really only one significant animal, let's say something like a large animal with four legs, that actually survived it. And so we're all relatives of that animal. It's called a Lystrosaurus I believe, a pretty strange-looking thing. And so that's how severe the filter was. In other words, basically life went through a kind of filter at that time.

And it was, how to say, this was just within the range of natural variation on Earth. This is just within the range of what can happen when Earth is left to its own devices, without an allegedly intelligent species actively interfering with the climate of the planet. Right? So it suggests that, as some famous scientist said recently, climate is a dangerous beast and we're sticking a stick into it and poking it, right? And so it was dangerous enough already, but with humans poking it, it's capable of doing even more crazy stuff, and so we can reasonably expect that if we continue to accelerate the



entropy of our environment, that something like the Permian Triassic extinction will eventually happen. And it won't happen all at once, but the point is that it can easily be a situation where it can start to happen and become irreversible.

So many Earth processes are like this. These are the so-called tipping points, meaning they develop essentially inertia of their own. And so it could easily be imagined that at some point in the future, humanity could feel super sad and sorry, and say, okay, okay, we get it, we get it now. We're not going to emit any more fossil carbon. That was a terrible idea. We're going to shape up and, drastically reduce our population, and reduce our consumption, and start living within limits, and all that good stuff that the Republicans say we'll never, ever, ever do, because Jesus doesn't want us to, but you know what, by then it'll be too late is the point. It can easily be, for example, if we significantly melt the permafrost, that the amount of gasses released by that—both carbon dioxide and methane—are so huge that at that point, they dwarf the amount of gases that humanity can output.

And so increasingly it won't matter what humanity does. And so that's the lesson of the thin layer of oily rock, is that all of the life that existed—and there was a lot of it at the time that the Permian Triassic extinction happened—was reduced to what looks like, if you're a paleontologist and you go looking in the right geological specimens, you basically just see this kind of black line. It's not very wide, it's considerably less than a meter. It's more like a third of a meter or something. It's quite narrow. It's just this long line of compressed greasy rock. And what that is, is the crushed up remains of everything that died. And that's what will remain of us, if we fuck this up, is the point. That's what all of humanity's hopes and dreams and knowledge and accomplishments and aspirations, all of that will be reduced to a thin layer of oily rock, if we can't manage to get through this bottleneck that we're currently passing through.

**Roc:** No, that's a total misunderstanding. That just results from a drastic misunderstanding of climate science. So, in fact, if you study climate science, and study what scientists have written, you'll quickly discover that Earth is capable of much more inhospitable conditions than we're currently experiencing. What we're currently experiencing amounts to something like an inconvenience. It's inconvenient when property owners in Miami find that their buildings are partially underwater. Katrina killed a bunch of people, but by comparison to what Earth is capable of, it's an inconvenience. If you melted all of the ice—and by the way, that has happened in the history of Earth without any assistance from humans in the past, we've had an ice free planet where there were giant reptiles where the Arctic Circle is now—so if you melt all the ice, basically every coastline on Earth is submerged.

And so it was not an [exaggeration] when Peter Ward, the famous paleontologist who wrote "Under a Green Sky," said that humanity shouldn't worry so much about escaping to exoplanets because we're going to be too busy moving our airports. This really set me back when I understood what he meant. The point is, what percentage would you guess of the airports that humanity has built for itself, are at sea level? It's not actually an easy thing to look up. If you type that in Wikipedia, you don't

necessarily get an answer, but you can form an approximation pretty quickly by looking at maps and figuring out where all the cities are. And it begs the question, why are so many cities built at sea level? And the answer to that is that cities were built at sea level because at the time when most cities evolved, boats were the only means of international transport.

And so it was necessary for trade reasons and for supply reasons to build cities at sea level. In fact, the only major cities that were inland prior to the modern era, were at the ends of or along major rivers, where it was possible to get boats up river. So this is just a fact, that the entire infrastructure of humanity is assuming a fixed sea level, but that's not the case. That's not what's coming. In fact we've already essentially guaranteed that that won't be the case. The problem is that it evolves over a very long time period, and we're continuing to accelerate the situation while it's evolving. And so this is the thing, what people I think don't really get unless they have a background in science, is that it's hard for humanity to comprehend geological timescales.

Most humans only think about what happens during their own lifetime. And generally even only within a small subset of that. So people think perhaps five or ten years into the future, or they think about the past, but through rose-colored glasses. And this is the basis of a very important and famous effect that was discovered, about a decade ago, by Daniel Pauly and Jeremy Jackson, who were both marine biologists. And so they discovered something that they call the shifting baseline effect, which is absolutely crucial to understanding what's happened to humanity. The shifting baseline effect basically says that human beings tend to assume that whatever level of biological diversity they witnessed during their childhood, during their formative years, is the same level of biological diversity that's always existed. And the problem with that is, it's an easy enough assumption to make, but it's totally mistaken.

It's absolutely wrong. And so this is how we can arrive at a situation where the nations of the world are having this big international discussion over fishing rights and who should be allocated how much of the various fish. But the problem is that what you don't see because of shifting baselines is that they're arguing over the last few percent of the fish that used to exist in the ocean. That more than 90% of all the biological diversity in the ocean was destroyed long ago. Nobody can see this because it's not directly visible. You have to actually look for the evidence of that. So if you do look, you'll be quite shocked by what you find. The first time I found it was in a book called "Cod," which is a nonfiction book about the history of cod fishing in Massachusetts. And so they explored the allegation which was made at that time that you could walk to shore on the backs of cod.

Now cod are pretty big fish, but it's hard to picture anybody actually walking to shore. And so at the time I thought that was just hyperbole. But then I did more research and later what I found is that it is absolutely true that at that time, the cod were so plentiful in Massachusetts Bay that you could fish using a basket. You didn't need any other equipment. You could just go out there with a boat and a basket and stick the basket in the water and bring in these enormous fish. And I later found even

more bizarre evidence. So they described at that time that the water was boiling with fish. And I thought, again, that that was hyperbole. But later I found a photograph of the same phenomenon, a very old photograph from the Gulf of Mexico showing the exact same phenomenon where the water was literally boiling, because there was so much biological diversity in it. And that's all long gone. That's from the past. Humanity's mostly fished out the ocean. And so what this shows is a larger societal problem. The larger societal problem is that humanity is not well-evolved—or not well-shaped by the forces of evolution that have acted on us in our original environment—to manage threats that evolve over very long time periods. We're primarily optimized to manage immediate threats.

**Chris:** Yeah. Essentially humanity has to become aware that it's capable of failing, but it's deeper than that. The deeper realization is that, so there's an important book we should bring up, called "Earth in Human Hands." It was written by a guy who worked for NASA his whole life as a planetary biologist, meaning he's essentially doing biology, studying the biology of worlds that we'll never see, and we have never seen. He's an exoplanet biologist. It sounds sort of wacky. You think, how can you study planets that we don't know anything about, but you can, there's a lot we can learn about the universe from careful study. And so he came to some conclusions which are closely related to the Drake equations, which govern basically how likely it is that there are other Earth-like planets elsewhere in the universe, in the vastness of the universe, with similarly intelligent species of some kind on them.

According to the Drake equations, basically the answer is it's very likely that our scenario has played out countless times throughout the universe. And there's a famous paradox that explains why we don't have any direct evidence of that, why we haven't been visited by intelligent life from other worlds. It's called Fermi's Paradox. It's a very glum paradox. What it basically says is that the fundamental problem is that by the time a species becomes as intelligent as we're in the process of becoming—or let's not use the word intelligence, because intelligence is complicated, let's just say powerful, as in capable of sending radio signals over vast distances and so on—that by the time a species has become that powerful, it's likely on the threshold of self-annihilation. Meaning it's likely having an awesome party and destroying its entire resource base and destroying its ecosystems or whatever else allowed it to get that far.

And so that's a paradox. It's a problem because it leads to the situation where, essentially just at the moment where something becomes powerful enough to transmit radio signals and potentially travel on an interstellar basis, it's just about to disappear. And so the odds of its little blaze of glory lining up with our little blaze of glory, wind up being essentially zero, despite the fact that these blazes have occurred, all throughout the history of the universe. So the flip side of this paradox, however, is that the opposite is also possible. It's possible for a lifeform to get through the bottleneck and become a long-lived species. But the trick is that in order to do that, it's just baked into the definition that that lifeform will have to have prioritized its long-term survival above all else, which is the thing that we are currently absolutely incapable of doing.

And so that's the real leap that humanity has yet to make. Humanity has yet to actually agree that the goal of paramount importance to everyone living today is our future survival. There's not widespread agreement about that. Not even close. In fact, probably, something like half of the world's population would say if you pressed them, that that's not really an important goal because we're all going to heaven.

**Roc:** Of course it's possible. It's just, this is not a question of whether it's possible. It's a question of whether it's likely, and right now I have to say, it's not looking bloody likely. And so I've spent my whole life trying to make it more likely, through my art and my political and personal communications. I have tried to tip the scales in favor of educating people and making it more likely that they can grasp the seriousness and the significance of what's happened here. The point is that if it weren't for humanity, there would be nothing to discuss about Earth. Earth wouldn't be special. If this were just planet of dolphins, or planet of squirrels or whatever, there would be no story to tell. It is humanity's story that makes the history of Earth worth knowing and telling and discussing. And so to the extent that humans destroy themselves and become absent from Earth, then the story is really over here.

It's possible of course that the giant reptiles or whatever else it is that follows us, could re-evolve back into something like us. But there's no guarantee of that. In fact, the odds aren't particularly good. It's complicated anyway, it could take a long time. And in any case, it wouldn't concern us. It's long beyond our time horizon. So the point is that at the moment we face an existential crisis. Meaning, to the extent that there is any meaning in existence, it comes from us. We generate it. We are obliged to generate meaning for ourselves. And if that meaning turns out to be that we should allow certain individuals to become immensely wealthy and powerful, and basically enslave all of the rest of us, so that they can have idyllic lives, where they have their every want and desire immediately fulfilled, and essentially live like pharaohs in ancient Egypt, if that's the goal, if that's what we all agree our society should look like, then actually we don't need to change anything. We have the perfect systems of government in place for achieving that outcome. That's what neoliberalism does. Neoliberalism maximizes that outcome, the outcome of maximal inequality, where the vast majority of Earth's resources and benefits are accrued in the smallest possible number of hands. So if we want Jeff Bezos to rule the world, and guys like him, then we have exactly the right systems and the whole thing is set up perfectly. And the only downside to this is—other than the fact that lots of people will be immiserated and die horrible, miserable deaths that could have been avoided—the only downside is that the experiment will be very short. It'll be a short epic party for the few. And then the experiment will be over and humanity won't be around, and it'll be giant reptiles or whatever comes next.

By the way, I'm not exaggerating when I bring up giant reptiles. The type of climate that humanity seems hell-bent on making on Earth generally does not favor mammals. If you know your paleontology and your history of Earth, you know that very hot, very humid climates are actually prejudicial against mammals and prejudicial for reptiles, because reptiles have a very different method of controlling their temperature than we

do. They actually can't really thrive without a super-hot humid environment. And if you think about it, you'll understand that. If you've seen a snake or a lizard sunning itself on a rock, that's not for no reason, that's critical to their whole survival system. So if we build a world that is extremely hot and extremely humid, we can expect it to be dominated by giant reptiles. And there's a certain justice in that actually, because you could make a case that of all lifeforms that humanity has oppressed—and we've oppressed them all—we've oppressed reptiles especially hard.

We've really had it in for reptiles. We fucked up their world beyond recognition. And so there'll be some poetic justice in this. But none of this matters, of course. If humanity isn't around, there is no justice, poetic or otherwise. Justice really only exists for humans and in the minds of humans. And so this is really the point that I'm trying to make here, is that all of this is strictly a human thing. The universe is completely indifferent to our fate. This is the essence of existentialism after all, is perceiving that out there in the icy universe, there's nothing. It's cold. Most of it is dark and empty. If you went out there, there's nothing out there that's of any use to you. In fact, you would be killed instantly.

People often talk about how we're going to escape to other planets and so on, and I just laugh, because people who aren't actually involved in the business of space exploration and astronomy have very little firm grasp of how lethal space actually is. It's extremely difficult even to make computers that can survive space. You'd be surprised how many of our satellites and other machines we send into space are destroyed just by the radiation. And so, in fact, it's just ludicrous to imagine that we're going anywhere. We're not going anywhere. We [can] make our stand, and survive a bit longer here on Earth, and even that is time-limited. Ultimately the sun will become a red giant, and if we haven't managed to escape from Earth by then, we'll be fucked, but that's very far in the future. That's a billion years or more into the future. And so we could last a lot longer here on Earth, and for all we know have a very interesting time and do heroic, wonderful things that we can't imagine right now, or the experiment could be over and we're gone, but either way the universe is absolutely indifferent to it. And so it's really only of importance to us.

**Chris:** Yes, it has. That's right. I'm no longer really a big champion of wild nature. In fact, I think that people really misunderstood something deep about the Church of Euthanasia. The most important thing that they misunderstood was that "Save the Planet, Kill Yourself" is actually, well you could say it's a joke, in a way it's really more of a Zen koan. It's an absurd, nonsensical statement. And the reason it's absurd is because the planet actually isn't in any danger. We're in no danger of killing the planet. We couldn't do it if we wanted to. We could set off all of our hydrogen bombs at once, and still bacteria and many insects would survive and ultimately evolve into something else. And so it's not within our range of options to kill the planet. However, it's very much within our range of options to destroy ourselves. And so what I mean to say is that the most endangered species on Earth is civilization. Human civilization. This was always the point of "Save the Planet, Kill Yourself."

It was a way to show that our position is absurd, that we're sabotaging ourselves ultimately. And that's only of interest to us. That ultimately if we sabotage ourselves, then we have no one to blame but ourselves. The very fact that humans are capable of not destroying their own future, the very fact that human beings can even—in theory, at least—be made aware of the real possibility that we're going to make ourselves extinct, this unavoidably creates some ethical pressure for us to not do that stupid thing. If we were completely unaware, I mean, suppose we were like bacteria, and we somehow caused our own destruction, that's totally possible. In fact, that's the norm in evolution. 99% of every species that has ever evolved on Earth is now gone for one reason or another, but not out of willful self-destruction.

Most life forms are basically like very clever, complicated-behaving machines in the sense that they can do a thing, they have evolved to exploit a particular degree of freedom or a particular environmental benefit. And so they do that and eventually it can be that that environmental benefit just changes or something else comes along that can exploit it even better. And so then the original species goes extinct. But our situation is not that at all. We have completely re-engineered Earth's systems to suit ourselves. Almost all of Earth's land surface that's capable of supporting life is now redirected towards either us directly, or towards our domesticated animals. We're behaving like a virus. We've infected Earth, and we've completely taken it over and converted it to our own use. And so we have no excuse. If we do that and then basically destroy ourselves in the process, who are we supposed to blame except ourselves? It makes no sense.

**Roc:** They definitely no longer apply. It's much too late for all that. That made sense back in the nineties when human extinction and climate change were still very new ideas. As I said previously, these were long shots and it was understandable that people snickered when we talked about them, but today nobody's snickering, except maybe in the land of the orange one. Maybe [Trump's] followers might snicker, but we can't be concerned about that. Rational, educated people, no longer snicker when you discuss climate change and human extinction. It's all too obvious actually that it's become a real threat and that we're increasingly napping our way to oblivion. And so in fact, the tactics have to change. It's too late for arch tactics. It's too late for black humor and irony and sarcasm. It's necessary now to tell it like it is. "Apologize to the Future" was my attempt to tell it like it is, plain and simple.

This is what will happen. This is how we will look to future generations. If they are lucky, or shall we say unlucky enough to exist. The essence of the "Apologize to the Future" project is visualizing the present from the point of view of the hypothetical future, in which we have made a mess of Earth completely. And our descendants, our own children, I don't have any, but you may, your own descendants are sort of picking through the rubble. You understand, picking through the rubble. How will they regard us? Probably not as heroes would be my guess. My hypothesis that I make on this record is that future generations will take a dim view of our actions.

**Chris:** Oh, but this is just beside the point. I'm sorry, but I really don't agree about this. Look, I mean, every time this comes up, I always want to say, I know people who grew up under the GDR, you know, the German Democratic Republic. I've met people who grew up even in Soviet Russia. And I can tell you, this was not any more likely to lead to a happy outcome. It just wasn't. Even the Unabomber pointed this out. Not that I agree with him necessarily, but he pointed out that what we're really talking about here is industrialism. Humanity has had the idea that there should be no limits to growth. That's an idea. It happens to be a mistaken idea, a dangerous idea, a stupid idea. It was Kurt Vonnegut who said somewhere in "Breakfast of Champions," "Never underestimate the power of bad ideas." The idea that there are no limits to growth and that humanity can have everything its way, this is not tied necessarily only to capitalism or communism. This is a fundamental human misapprehension about how the universe works. We want to believe that we can have whatever we want. We don't like limits, but unfortunately for us, there are limits.

The failure to respect limits typically comes from failure to be educated in science, technology, engineering, and math. And so if you, if you want to really focus on the cause, my view is that the real cause is that most human beings are completely failed by their society. This is pretty easy to demonstrate. Probably the all-time peak of education in science—let's just call it STEM for short, science, technology engineering and math—was in the post-war period. After the Second World War, America led the way. Its schools at one time were the envy of the whole world. Hard to imagine that today, but that's the truth. In the 1950s and 60s, American schools were tremendous. Public schools, especially.

Many other countries tried to emulate those actions. And so for a while there, it was pretty normal for the average person—a person of average means, not wealthy, but middle-class or whatever—it was pretty normal for ordinary people to be educated thoroughly in STEM. Today, that is not the case. And so it shouldn't be a surprise that very many people are essentially incapable of critical thinking. You cannot think critically without some background in STEM. It is essential. Essentially humanity has failed in its duty to be not only literate, but numerate. And this is why I think Albert Bartlett—he's dead now—was quite correct when he famously said that humanity's greatest failing was its inability to comprehend the exponential function.

Most people, you talk to them about exponents and their eyes just fucking glaze over. They don't understand logs. They don't understand inverse logs. And if you try to talk to them about it, they get upset. Well, sorry, but that's how population growth works. Population growth is an exponential function, and lots of other things are too. If you want to work, work for a huge financial company and do stock market trading and stuff, then you have to know your logs, but lots of people don't do that. Most people's jobs don't require them to know anything more than simple arithmetic, and they're lucky if they know that. And that's just not good enough. That won't do. And so the question is, how is it that society is failing people? Well, that's a really important question that we ought to be addressing.

And my answer would be that we have to look at the critical period hypothesis. I think that Noam Chomsky and his followers in linguistics were right, but they didn't take it far enough. The critical period hypothesis is fairly narrowly-confined to the development of language. Effectively what it says is that human beings have a defined period during which they are amenable to learning language. Essentially it's an observation of neuroscience. It says that during a certain period, the human brain is being wired for language. It's a neural network and it's being wired. It's not physical wires, but it might as well be, as we now know, from the successes that have been made in developing neural nets in software, especially by Deep Mind and other related corporations, it might as well be actual wires. So human beings are machines, their brains are a kind of biological machinery. And the brain itself is an astonishing computer, vastly in excess in its capabilities of anything human beings can currently produce, but nonetheless predictable. And so its wiring process is understandable and predictable.

And if that process is denied, in other words, if you park children during the critical period in front of the TV or whatever, or ignore them, or God forbid don't engage them in conversation, then what you get is morons, you get people who will grow up with permanent damage. You might as well call it child abuse, because that's what it is. Now I'm a product of the opposite. My parents loved me. I was raised to be intelligent. My parents are hyper-intelligent. And so you better believe that they talked to me, long before it probably even mattered. They talked to me all the time, and they talked to me in a very sophisticated way, as if I were an adult. And that had the expected effect. It made me hyper-articulate.

This is just true. I mean, you just have to accept this. It's like the sun coming up every day. This is how it works. If you want people to grow up to be good citizens, capable of participating in democracy and having a rich ideological life so that they can be communicating in a positive, constructive way, you need to surround them not just with love, you need to surround them with language. But it's much more than that. It's that the critical period hypothesis, even though it's not formally formulated as such, can be extended to other domains, including critical thinking and math literacy and STEM and all the rest of it. If you don't teach children to be numerate at an early age, they're going to have a tough time learning it later, the same way they will have a tough time learning language at a later date. And so that's the crisis. That's what's happened, is that we've basically failed whole generations of people. And in poorer countries, it was almost everyone who was failed. The essence of a failed country is when the country no longer provides for its citizens in terms of education at all. And so the average person just becomes an imbecile. There's no cure for that. The point is that that's permanent. That's how you get 75 million people voting for Donald Trump. They don't know any better.

**Roc:** And so this is what we have to start facing, is that if we lived in a more just world, the highest paid profession in the world would be teaching. Think about it. The teachers that we give our children to, are responsible for the future. They are



determining the future of humanity, by determining what children—during the critical period—will actually be exposed to. You send your kids to a Waldorf school, there's going to be trouble. Instead of studying STEM and reading the classics, they're going to be sitting around gazing at their navels and playing musical instruments and so on. Well maybe Rudolf Steiner thought that was a great idea, but Rudolf Steiner was a moron. Rudolph Steiner believed that he was walking around in the spirit world and talking to the spirits.

He might as well have been Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon religion. He was a dangerous moron with stupid, dangerous ideas. Sorry, but Steiner-ism is a cult. And yet that cult exists today and is allowed to run schools for children. And so you better believe that all the children who go to those schools are getting a kind of brain damage. This is what we need to start facing. I know it's not polite, but I'm in good company. I'm with Richard Dawkins. I don't feel bad about insulting people's religion because religion is fucking insane. I don't have any problem saying in the public sphere that religion is a bunch of fairy tales. And to the extent that humanity continues to believe those fairy tales, we're absolutely fucked and we're going to go extinct.

That's normal for me because I come from a background where that's a normal belief. When you hang around with engineers and scientists, that's just normal. We don't waste a lot of time discussing religion because that's just ludicrous. In the world of science and engineering, we expect things to be proved. In other words, our lives revolve every day around struggling with reality. We don't waste time arguing whether reality is real. We don't worry about that. We're actually trying to get things to work. That's the difference. Most people don't feel constrained by having to get things to work. And so they can easily drift off into some absurd dimension where everything is relative. This is the problem with all those French guys, you know, the French relativists, Derrida and the rest of them.

It makes for great movies. I love "The Matrix." I think it's a great movie, but it's not actually real, it's fiction. It's fiction. The actual real reality is what makes your cell phone work. You get it? Your cell phone is fucking real, and the little chips inside there, that's the most astonishing thing humanity has ever accomplished, arguably. Those chips, those are astonishing. If you saw that laid out like a city or something, it would be the size of Berlin. It's a monumental achievement. It takes lifetimes to make one of those things. I know you think that's crazy, but that's how it works. It takes man-lives. You get hundreds of guys working for years, and then you get something that complicated.

But those guys don't worry about whether reality is real, because they're struggling with reality every day. They're struggling to make predictive explanations of phenomena. That's what it's all about. And if humanity can't be bothered to get its shit together and make its explanations, and pay attention to the explanations of phenomena that we've already got, that generations of scientists and educators have labored to chip out of solid chaos... The universe is super chaotic, and we've got guys, at least since the Renaissance, who devote their whole lives to chipping out little tiny pieces of

how it actually works. It's no longer in dispute. The periodic table, sorry, it's no longer in dispute. You can believe whatever you want, but the periodic table is absolutely real.

It's as real as Pythagoras. When I tell you that  $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$ , if you say, I don't believe it, you might as well say the moon is made of cheese. You're not seriously participating in this discussion. Your position is just not tenable, okay? So we have an enormous body of knowledge. We stand on the shoulders of giants. And if we now disregard that knowledge and say, yeah, but we don't care because everything's relative, well, there's a name for that. That's solipsism. Solipsism is where you don't believe that reality is real, or more specifically, you believe that whatever you think is real. That's how we got to Trump. Trump is a solipsist. He wakes up every day and he just says whatever he wants and that's reality for him.

Well, so if that's how we're going to roll, then we won't be around. We'll be extinct. That's all. That's what "Apologize to the Future" is about, that that's a real possibility for us now. That we've just been too stupid to organize ourselves, despite our amazing successes, by the way. I mean, the museums are filled with amazing successes. You go walk through the Museum of Modern Art and there it all is. You walk through the Smithsonian Institute and humanity has done some amazing stuff. We're really good. In fact, we're the only game in town. What else would you have? Like I said, you want planet of the squirrels? Cause that's what you're going to get. Good luck with that, you know, it's going to be pretty boring. So what does it all come down to? It comes down to this. If humanity can't get its shit together, if we insist on listening to Jesus instead of scientists, and we just make ourselves extinct, well, it was worth a try, right? At least it wasn't boring, but it's still a tragedy. That's the point, is that it's tragic, because in fact there was nothing else here on Earth that was interesting. It's a shame, if the most interesting thing that ever happened on Earth, can't get its shit together enough to survive even another fucking hundred years. I mean that's pretty dramatic. And yet that's what it's looking like.

**Chris:** It's not capitalism's fault. It's neoliberalism's fault. That's an important distinction.

**Roc:** Of course I find it interesting. But what I find more interesting is the pictures from the Hubble telescope. But I think most people take those pictures for granted and don't understand their importance. What you should feel when you see the pictures that came back from the Hubble telescope is a feeling of reverence. You should feel awe. It should be awe-inspiring to grasp how vast the universe actually is. You literally need a background in STEM to grasp how big it is, because if you don't understand exponents and you don't know what scientific notation is—if you don't know how to express numbers in scientific notation at least—then you can't grasp it. It's way too many zeros. It's that big. And so I think most people don't really have a clear sense, not only of the macro, but also the micro. So the macro is the astronomical scale, and it's really hard to comprehend. You're getting into very large exponents. But the micro is just as scary and strange. Now with our supercomputers, we're getting down to

individual nanoseconds, we're increasingly building devices at nanoscale, meaning we're getting down towards the wavelength of light. It's hard for most people to comprehend how small those things are, or how fast they are. It's very hard to grasp how small an electron really is, or what it is, and yet it's important that we grasp this. It should give us something that it's apparently not doing, which is a sense of seriousness, a sense of purpose!

People are jerking off at just the moment when we need to get real. You understand? That's why "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock" says, one of the lines is "So we better get real / While we still can / It don't mean a thing / Except maybe to us." That's from "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock," I'm quoting. It's an existential scientific pragmatism anthem. That's what it is. And it's super-important that people understand the seriousness of what's happened. We have become self-aware in an eye blink on the geological timescale, and it's been a terrible, terrifying journey, including things like mass slaughter, Auschwitz, unimaginable things, toxic pollution, the Superfund sites, nuclear war, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, just unimaginable horror, but there's also been unimaginable beauty and greatness. And I defy anyone to deny that. Stand there in one of the great achievements, inside one of our more beautiful cathedrals or buildings or in a museum, and deny that there has been good that's come from all this. It's been a very complicated, messy experiment that we're conducting with intelligence here. And it's all about to end if we don't shape up. And what shaping up means is getting serious. Taking responsibility for the future. That's what it is about. If we don't take responsibility for the future, we won't have one. I don't think that's hard to understand. And I think that it's shocking that most people are so reluctant to face that. I face it every day. If I blame people for anything, I blame them for not taking the future seriously enough.

**Chris:** Well, but you know what I'm going to say right off the bat. The first thing I'm going to say is if you seriously confront the future, if you face it, honestly, the first thing you're going to do is take a lifetime vow of non-procreation. The second thing you're going to do is become a vegan. And after you get done with those two, then we can talk about what else. The rest of it won't really matter. All that much.

The rest of it's all in the fine print. Look, if you want to recycle bottles and stuff, you go ahead, but it makes no difference. That's not going to impact the future. And there's a good, simple reason for that. The reason the Church of Euthanasia focused on procreation primarily is because procreation—here we go with the STEM stuff again—procreation has logarithmic effects, exponential effects.

So you say, well, I'm only going to have two. Sure, great. And then it turns out that despite all your efforts to turn your two offspring into progressive, liberal, open-minded, STEM-loving, super-intelligent guys, whoops you fucked it up and they turn into Mormons. And so they have huge families, and boom, before you know it, you've created this enormous pyramid of humanity moving forward into the future, long after you're dead. That consequence vastly eclipses any amount of reduction in consumption that you could have accomplished in your own personal life. You just couldn't recycle

enough bottles to even begin to offset the damage that you did by setting that chain of events into motion. That is why we focus on procreation: because procreation is not linear, unlike consumption reduction for individuals, which is linear. You consume a certain amount, you reduce it a certain amount, that's linear, but population is non-linear. You got it?

You don't control what your children do. You think you do. You'd like to think you do, but you don't. And you certainly don't control what their children do. And so the best way that you can impact the future is by not making more humans, because there just isn't any problem that humanity is currently facing that adding more humans will help us solve. We are already failing the vast majority of humans. And when I say that I'm being specific, it's like this. So fully half of the world's population today, now, lives on less than \$10 a day. Okay? Probably a solid third of humanity lives on \$2 a day or less, and goes to bed hungry pretty much every night. They are the abject poor, the absolute poor living in slums, living in favelas, struggling every day, just to get enough calories to survive. Their children get brain damage. Do you understand? From malnutrition, not just from being ignored. They'd be happy to be parked in front of a TV in some American suburb and at least getting enough to eat. Their brains would still be damaged, by neglect, but at least they wouldn't be getting malnutrition. This is how much we failed humanity. We have failed on a massive scale to provide for the humans we've already got. And so you explain to me how adding more is going to help that. You can't and you won't. There is no explanation. It's just fucking crazy. And so what it really comes down to is selfishness. And I have no patience with that. I have no patience with people who pretend to seize the high ground and talk about how their children are going to be so special and wonderful, when what they really are is selfish.

They just want to go through the process. We have this all the time, people say, but it's the most important thing you've ever done with your life, and you can't even really say you're an adult until you've had children, and blah, blah, blah. This is all just selfishness. It's disregard for the future, and selfishness. And so I have no patience with it. That's why we use it as a litmus test for the Church of Euthanasia. If you really care about the future, the first thing, and the only thing we oblige you to do is to put your money where your mouth is and not procreate. The rest of it is optional. Even veganism, though it's crucial and important, is still only affecting your consumption. That's still only linear.

**Roc:** Are you going to ask me if the Church of Euthanasia is pro-COVID? You better not! That's not polite. Of course I'm not going to say that. That would be rude. Look, a quarter of a million people already died just in the United States. That's not polite. So, we're not going to say that, that would be really disrespectful. But what I am going to say is that it's not significant in terms of human population discussions. We're still adding what? More than 80 million people per year. Isn't that right? So believe it, even if it got as bad as the Spanish flu—and so far, there's no sign of that—estimates vary between 12 and 50 million people died over quite a few years, it's still not enough

to change the trend. It'll make a lot of people super sad. A lot of people will lose loved ones. I know people who already lost loved ones. My father lost lots of friends to COVID. He's old. It will be a lot of heartache and suffering, but it's not going to save humanity from climate chaos. Get real here. Come on. I mean, it's just not. The main force that's determining climate chaos is the developing nations.

China now has a billion and a half people. India has a billion easy. South Asia has a lot too. They're growing. And they're the main customers for fossil carbon. They're the main customers for copper and everything else that humans need. They're developing at a ferocious scale. They're buying up huge chunks of Africa to use the farm land and they're securing access to fresh water. They are going to determine what happens in the future, not Americans and certainly not Germans or Italians or Spanish people. In many parts of Europe, population growth is negative. It has been for a while. The problem that I have is I'm mostly only reaching people in countries where people have already apparently absorbed the message for one reason or another, because the population growth is already falling. If this message were translated into Chinese or Hindi, it might do more good.

So what do you say to that? Should we feel good about ourselves because we're actually winning? We're not winning. That's the thing. We're not winning. We're still doing most of the consuming. China's catching up. India is catching up and they're burning a lot of coal and that sucks, but we're still burning it. And there's also the whole historical issue, right? The Americans like to point their fingers and say, well now it's China that's causing the problem, so stop talking about us. Well, actually there's America's and Europe's historical emissions. Most of the existing CO2 in the atmosphere came from America and Europe, from their industrial revolution. So it's actually not correct for us to just deflect and say it's not our problem, especially because most of our shit is being made in China. So there's that too right? Who is consuming all this stuff that China's making. It's mostly Europeans and Americans. Great.

So in fact, there's enough blame to go around. There's blame on all sides. It's a human problem, and in general, the developed countries are probably more to blame. It's hard to blame, you know, islands in the Pacific, right? They don't really output much CO2. It's hard to really blame them. No, but we can blame modern developed humans for not organizing themselves.

Ultimately, what are we asking people to do? We're asking them to agree. Well, that's the one thing, apparently humans are terrible at. It's like herding cats. You say everybody should agree about this, and you're just guaranteeing that they won't. People can really only seem to be able to agree about things that don't matter. So everybody can agree that Gangnam Style was a great video. Well, that doesn't help us, does it? Everybody can agree that cute cats are fun to watch on the internet. I saw some statistics showing what percentage of the internet's bandwidth was being utilized for cute cats. It was pretty surprisingly big. I thought to myself, well, maybe

the Church of Euthanasia had it all wrong, and actually what we should do is attach our message to cute cat videos.

It's a serious proposal. We might get more mileage that way then by making somber videos about overpopulation and sea level rise, like the "Overshoot" video. The "Overshoot" video is a case in point. I spent a lot of time and money on that. That was an expensive video to make. And if you've seen it, I think you can understand why. That was all done by hand. That's not digital magic, that's guys making little models and stuff. It took like six months to do that. And a lot of money and time and care. And so now it's at 12,000 views on YouTube. Okay. So there are sharks, individual sharks with millions and millions of views on YouTube.

So what did the shark do to justify that? It's just a shark swimming around in the ocean, but it's popular as fuck. What can you do? Yeah. I noticed the other day that the song "Rhythm of the Night," the video for that had 181 million views. And that's not high by YouTube standards. So clearly the Church of Euthanasia is not winning. Our propaganda needs an overhaul. We are not winning on YouTube or anywhere else. And why is that? It's because we're saying something that's not cute cats. We're saying something that's extremely pessimistic and negative. We're asking people to confront their own extinction. Who wants to do that? No one. People would rather be told that it's all going to be good, that everything is great. That we're going to the happy place after we die. And everything happens for a reason. And if bad things happen to other people, that's because they deserve it.

In this sense, neoliberalism really is a hard formula to compete with. What neoliberalism says closely dovetails with what new age religions say. New age religions encourage everybody to believe in karma. So the idea is that if bad stuff happens, it's for a reason, it's because either the other people did something bad, or you did something bad to deserve it. If you get sick, it's because you deserve it, in extreme form. Christian scientists don't even believe in doctoring or medicine or anything like that. No, because you know, if you're a good person, then God will save you. Oh, great. Super. All right. So that's what people want to believe.

They want to believe that there's justice and that everything is magical. Magical thinking. And it's become abundantly clear that there's good evolutionary reasons for this. It would appear that in our original evolutionary environment—a super violent past, when we were surviving just barely by our wits and always in danger of getting our arms and legs torn off by giant mammals—it was a lot easier to survive psychologically, if your brother gets eaten by a lion, to believe that he didn't actually die in agonizing pain, that actually his spirit went to the happy place. And so you're going to see him soon. Great. Well, I can understand that. I can understand that that would have been an evolutionarily selected attribute. It's just super unhelpful at this time, because at the moment, we're not wandering around on the Savannah.

We're confronting the reality of 8 billion people trying to survive through vast technological systems, which are totally under our own control. So it's not helpful to believe in magic at the moment. In fact, there's only one thing that is helpful at the

moment, and that's for us to be hyper-rational, which is the one thing that humans hate to do. You know, they hate it like the plague. I can't tell you how many friends I have, you start talking to them about rationality and facts, and they say, oh but you know, sorry, that's all so negative. You know, because like everything's relative. And, you know, what my meditation teacher says is just as valid as that. No, it isn't! Your meditation teacher is totally full of shit. Are you kidding? Ayurveda is full of shit. Sorry, but Traditional Chinese medicine almost killed me.

Traditional Chinese medicine is little better than witchcraft. You might as well put leeches on people. The only reason the Chinese communist government agreed to it is because they have other problems. And so if traditional Chinese medicine makes their population easier to manage, they don't care. If people want to believe that eating bear paws gives them sexual virility, it's better than having them believe that overthrowing the Chinese communist leaders is going to make for a better society. They'd rather have bears go extinct than have that. And so that's how it works in China. Guys basically murder all these nearly extinct animals and eat their parts, and believe in magic.

That's like in the old days in aboriginal societies, you eat your enemy's brain, because it's going to make you as powerful as your enemy. It's actually a great way to get horrible diseases. But people didn't know that. They didn't know that diseases were real. I don't know how many times I have to tell people. It was only until the very late 19<sup>th</sup> century that people actually admitted that bacteria were real. Go see this famous series about the Charité hospital in Berlin. It's a pseudo history, but it's close enough to being real. The truth was that the people who ran the Charité hospital, their attitude was that if you die, it's because God meant for you to die. Great. Just what you want your doctors and nurses to believe.

And they had guys like Robert Koch say no, actually it's these little microscopic things. Yeah. I know you can't see them. I know they're invisible. You've got to look through my microscope to see them. And they're all like, that's not how God's plan works. Great. How many people died because of that? Because people just couldn't accept that, no, it's not God's plan, it's because of these little microscopic things and they're actually fucking real. So now people accept that. Most people would get pretty upset if their doctor wiped his ass with his hands before he sticks them inside your gut. Today, we accept that that's not acceptable behavior, but during the civil war in America, for example, it was normal. There was no attempt to disinfect. They didn't accept that that was necessary. And so if they did any surgery on you, you got sepsis and you died. Well, that's just fucking crazy. But that's how people are. They don't like reality. Reality is scary and weird. That's what the Hubble telescope shows us, to come back to that. What the Hubble telescope shows us is that most of the universe is scary and weird, and you wouldn't want to be anywhere fucking near it. If you got even close to a black hole, you'd be obliterated instantly.

And yet that's our reality. You know, it's out there. Most of the universe is filled with either nothing—meaning dust, barely any dust drifting through a vacuum—or it's

filled with plasma, exploding plasma. Plasma is gas that's heated so much that it's just hard for human beings to comprehend how hot it is. It's as hot as the surface of the sun. And so if you were anywhere fucking near it, you'd just turn into a cinder instantly. That's what the universe looks like. It's a super scary, crazy, hostile, enormous place and humanity—our whole existence, our museums, our music, our culture, our books, our webcams, and our podcasts are occurring on a little tiny dot. That's what "A Thin Layer of Oily Rock" says. In one of the first verses, it says "To a tiny dot / In exploding chaos." That's what Earth is: the pale blue dot, just like Carl Sagan said. I should've said pale blue dot, but whatever, it's close enough, we're a tiny dot, and we better get some humility about that. Otherwise it ain't going to be our dot anymore.

**Chris:** This rant that I just gave you for the last hour, that's post-antihumanism. Post-antihumanism is the realization that it's pointless at this [late stage] to attack humanity, that misanthropy is increasingly pointless because humanity is sinking. It's like kicking a [drowning] guy. It's like the Titanic sinking. Everybody's in the water, freezing their asses off, and there's not enough lifeboats and guys are definitely going to die. And so now what? We're going to laugh at them and say, you dumb fucks, it's your own fault? What's the point of that? We're going to humiliate people and immiserate them while they're already humiliated and miserable? You know, it's just pointless. It's pointless cruelty.

Humanity is in deep, deep shit, and so increasingly there's just no time to waste. It's too urgent a problem. If we lived in a just world, in a sensible, rational world, the president of the United States would get on TV and he would say, look, it's like this, I know COVID is bad, and lots of terrible stuff has happened, and the economy is miserable, and it's like the great depression, but we've got more serious problems. This is low on our list of problems. It's as if an asteroid were coming straight for Earth and it's going to kill all life on Earth. And we're all like, yeah, but that's not really happening because I read some shit on the internet that says that that's just a hoax. And actually I'm busy watching Netflix right now, can we talk about this some other time? That's the reality, is that people are absolutely clueless. It's happening in slow motion, and so it's easy to dismiss it, but it might as well be the asteroid headed straight for Earth.

And so the honest president would get on TV and he'd say, I know that this is a stretch. I know it's hard for you guys to grasp this, but we need to mobilize the entire world to deal with this threat. Otherwise we're just not going to have a future on Earth. We would talk about humanity's purpose. There would be discussion by the governments of the world. Believe it or not, there is such a discussion. If you look closely, you will find in the UN charter, you'll find discussion of keeping Earth habitable indefinitely for the benefit of all of all future generations. It's spelled out in an annex that was added to the Rio agreement. The Rio agreement was from 1992, but there was an annex added just a couple of years ago [The Future We Want, 2012]. They actually specifically spelled out that human beings have the right to a habitable Earth in perpetuity, or for as long as it's possible. So we would talk about that. The leaders



of the world would get on TV, and talk about that, and say, sorry about all that crazy stuff we said before, but now we're going to get real because otherwise we're all going to be dead.

**Roc:** See any signs of that? If we see some signs of that, wake me up. It's like this, you know what the Keeling curve is, right? The Keeling curve is the measurement of CO2. It's been going on since the 1950s. So wake me up when that measurement even plateaus. Last year, it was bigger than ever. The jump was bigger than any year before. As long as that keeps going up, we're fucked. We're headed straight for catastrophe. We're speeding up. That's the point. That's what my slide show—the "Overshoot" slide show—tries to show. It tries to show the seriousness of how quickly we're accelerating into oblivion. And it's not because everybody wakes up in the morning and thinks, I want to exterminate humanity. It's not like that. It's because people, most of them just don't know any better. Remember, half the world is on \$10 a day or less. They don't have any time for this. They're not going to hear your podcast.

They're struggling just to stay alive. And then there's the subset of them that aren't doing too well at that. They have malnutrition. Whatever they think, they're certainly not focused on the long-term future of humanity. This whole conversation we're having is really only for the intelligentsia in the developed countries, basically what's left of the middle-class. I don't know if super-rich people listen to your podcast. Probably not. I think they probably have their own podcasts. Who knows what they say? Whatever Elon Musk wants them to hear. So whatever's left of the middle-class, ordinary people who got some decent education and are paying off their student loans, those are the guys who are listening to your podcast. What are they supposed to do about all this? Well, like we said, they could start by taking it seriously, and taking it seriously would mean at least not contributing to the problem by adding more people. That's what it says right there in "Apologize to the Future": "How dare you breed? / It's nothing but greed / No doubt your kids / Will thank you well / For turning Earth / Into living hell."

**Chris:** Not what you expected to hear, is it?

**Roc:** Well, that's good. I'm really actually happy to hear that. I prefer it too. I think that the old [Church] was a little bit too taking the piss. I mean, in its own defense, the old Church had its roots in what we used to call in the nineties "high weirdness by mail," which was a term that Fact Sheet Five coined to describe the crazy underground world of zines. So the Church started as a zine, and the zine world was really chaotic and very punk. Or shall we say post-punk. One of our main competitors for attention in that world was the Church of the SubGenius. And so, you know, I'm not saying that we copied them, not even close, but we were influenced by them, and they appreciated us, and there was a kind of detente.

The Church of the SubGenius is an example of the kind of thing that thrived in that world. There was a lot of "slack" and there was a lot of craziness and just sort of trying to push the boundaries. As an artist, I've been described as *enfant terrible*. And I think that that's accurate. I think that certainly in the early stages, it was right

to put me in a show with Tracy Emin. I was in that category. I think that the women who curated Transsexual Express understood that about me and about my work, that it was transgressive, is the word I'm looking for.

That's important and it was a sensible tactic and at the time, it was also something that I really felt I needed to do, but that's more than 20 years ago. I don't feel the need to do that again or to keep doing it. And there would be no point to keep doing it. Some things that you can only do once. I mean, you can't make "I Like to Watch" twice. The conditions that made it appropriate at the time, no longer exist. So now it's just a curious historical artifact. We have to continue to adapt to the future. And that's the essence of situationism. You can't just keep using the same tactics while the situation is changing. So I've adapted my tactics and I feel that my tactics now are very much grounded in realism, scientific pragmatism, and in the pressing urgency of confronting the facts. In my view, the real enemy today is solipsism. The notion that everyone is entitled to their own facts, to their own reality. I don't agree with that, and I fight that. I fight with my last breath against that. I feel that's an honorable cause. I would prefer to spend most of my time composing classical music and studying music theory and tinkering with my nifty polymeter sequencer. But I'm roused from my dogmatic slumber, as Kant said.

It's necessary for people to step up and tell it like it is, because apparently our leaders aren't up to the task. And, if not them, then who? Somebody has to say it, somebody has to say the unsayable, and the unsayable is that failure is now a very real possibility. It is in fact already occurring on a monumental scale. We are losing. And if we want to save the situation, we have to act very quickly. So "Apologize to the Future" is like the life vest being tossed into the water, as we're all drowning. You'd better put it on and you'd better not argue. We haven't got time left for that. We haven't got time left, as I said, for counting angels, we need to get with the program and start confronting the consequences of our previous misdeeds, of which there are many.

I'd like it to be a more cheerful message, but I don't see how it can be.

**Roc:** But it's a start. We have to settle for what we can get. I don't speak Chinese and I'm not invited by the Chinese communist party to address the people of China, nor will I likely be anytime soon, but there are things that could be done that would help, and I've asked for help and not gotten it. And I'm disappointed. I think that "Apologize to the Future" could have legs still. And of course you're helping and I appreciate it. I think that just for starters, Greta Thunberg could help. Do you happen to know her personally?

**Chris:** Oh, I see. You know, if I knew someone who knew Greta Thunberg, I'd ask them to play this record for her. All she'd have to do is blog about it and we'd be getting somewhere. There's no fairness in the system. If you look at what's popular on the social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube and so on, there's no justice in that. There's a lot of luck involved. Sometimes something that deserves to be well-known actually becomes well-known, but most of the time what's well known is stuff

that's just crazy and stupid. And you and I aren't going to change that. So we have to work with the system as it is. I like to say, we have to play the ball from where it is, not from where we'd like it to be. That's more realism. The ball is where it is. And so we need to figure out a way to try and make progress from here. And so that means reaching out to people that we actually have some hope of influencing. And I've tried, I've tried a lot and it's a very tiring, taxing effort because I don't get much success with that. People are tired and distracted and depressed and oppressed by COVID and the economic failures that come with that. It's not an easy time to reach people.

**Roc:** I hope it works for you. I hope your audience is receptive to it. I mean, if it doesn't just tell me and we can delete it and start over. I'm sure that's what we should do. We should delete it and start over. And instead we should talk about trends in modern art and cute cats.

## Lost cause

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/nypost4.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/nypost4.html)>

by RICHARD JOHNSON

SIMON & Schuster editor-in-chief **Michael Korda's** bizarre son Chris is an avid politico. The self-professed reverend of the Church of Euthanasia — which advocates cannibalism, abortion, sodomy and euthanasia to stem the population explosion — was photographed by Freedom Writer magazine lensman **Barry Morgan Thomas** campaigning at a **Bob Dole** rally the night before the New Hampshire primary. The sign Chris carried was emblazoned with the predictably strange plea, "Write in for president — Unabomber."

## BREAKING THE UMBILICAL KORDA

**Source:** <[churchofeuthanasia.org/press/newyork.html](http://churchofeuthanasia.org/press/newyork.html)>

Glossy power editor **Michael Korda** is a longtime master at working the press, but he's taking drastic measures to silence his only child, **Chris**, who seems to have inherited papa's gift for self-promotion. Evidently horrified by all the press attention that the Reverend Chris Korda's quirky Church of Euthanasia has been attracting, the elder Korda responded by siccing a lawyer on his 33-year-old son. "[Michael Korda's] lawyer called Chris and said, 'You're causing your parents a lot of pain and suffering,'" reports a source close to the situation, adding that the attorney demanded that Chris—a cross-dressing vegetarian and theoretical cannibal who insists on being referred to as "she"—either stop giving interviews or adopt a pseudonym until Michael retires from Simon & Schuster. The tactic seems to have worked: Reached by *New York*, Chris Korda adamantly refused to discuss her father, her father's work, or their relationship. But the Reverend has also refused to curtail her activities on behalf of the church,

a Yippie-like Boston-based organization that is spearheading a write-in presidential campaign for the Unabomber. Despite the phone call, Chris has no hard feelings. “He says really nice things about both his parents,” the source continues. Michael Korda did not return calls.

# The Ted K Archive

A research text dump on the Unabomber for President campaign  
2025

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