Ted Kaczynski FAQ

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0. What works has Theodore John 'Ted' Kaczynski authored?

What is commonly referred to as his manifesto, 'Industrial Society and Its Future' (ISAIF) was first published in 1995. 'Technological Slavery: The Collected Writings of Theodore J. Kaczynski, A.k.a. 'The Unabomber'' was published in 2010. 'Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How' (ATR) was first published in 2016, with a new second edition made available in 2020. There are also several interviews and letters written by Ted available online.

Additionaly, a very short essay that serves as an excellent introduction to the ideas of Ted is 'The System's Neatest Trick'.

1. Ted Got caught instantly - he did it for attention - after all, he did eventually get his manifesto 'Industrial Society and Its Future' (ISAIF) published in the New York Times and Washington Post.

Fact: Ted Kaczynski was the subject of the longest and most expensive investigation in the history of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

2. What impact did Ted have on society?

During the time of their publication his writings were widely debated. Today, Ted Kaczynski and his ideas have never been more relevant than in the Coronavirus-ridden world of 2020. Technology continues progressing and now we have things like Clearview AI. We are rapidly approaching Panopticon. Unlike most thinkers, Ted's body of work has the magic of only increasing its relevance with time.

His impact should not be measured as murdering and maiming people; true, very horrific and impactful to those individuals and their families, but his real impact was and continues to be his ideas and their dissemination.

To this, some may object that the 'impact' in question should be a large-scale impact, like technological stagnation or destruction; it can be countered that this in fact remains to be seen.

3. Ted's mind was deeply damaged as a result of being subjected to CIA-run experiments with LSD under their MKULTRA porgram; he was insane.

Regarding the charge of having been an MKULTRA victim, Ted himself states that there was only one unpleasant experience associated with the study (which consisted of interviews and filling out pencil-and-paper personality tests), and that this experience lasted about half an hour and could not reasonably be described as 'traumatic'. Ted also points out that the CIA was in fact not involved in the study.

The whole 'MKULTRA' situation as related to Ted and his ideas is a clear example of the power of propaganda when utilized to discredit the ideas put forth by one man through a typical ad-hominem attack. Even if there may be some grains of superficial truth contained in such attacks, appeals to morality and such, they do not it any way invalidate the ideas themselves; on the contrary, if one is able to get past the propaganda and study the ideas themselves, the truth contained in them becomes apparent and even self-explanatory.

4. Industrial society can not truly collapse! Everything will be back to modernity soon after.

Many anons -including Ted with his superb discernment and intelligence- believe there won't be enough 'steam left in the engine' to jumpstart industrial society ever again. There is an intuitive truth in this: fossil fuel consumption and utilization requires much technical knowledge and a reverence for efficiency, logistics and high-organization which will be very hard indeed to find if technological civilization does in fact collapse.

Machines will rust and decay; whomever is leftover -including the occasional technician here and there- after collapse will be too busy eating grubs while trying to get their garden going to even worry about lighting, central heating, etc., much less bringing the decaying dams, electric plants and other generators of energy up and running again.

Now here is the rub: even if all these psychological/sociological/anthropological difficulties were to be ovecome, Ted -and others- posit that there will literally not be enough raw material (fossil fuels) left to bring another Industrial Revolution about. Furthermore, Ted clearly makes the case in ISAIF that we can only concern ourselves with our present era and possibilities; what humans may choose to do or attempt to do 100, 500 or 1000 years down the line is beyond the control of anyone alive today.

5. Our problem is International Jewry/Zionism, blacks, diversity and Multiculturalism.

Nobody is denying that things like 'Jews','Blacks', diversity and Muliculturalism are a net negative for our societies. However, these grave problems are dwarfed when compared to industrial society and its consequences.

International Judaism, as powerful and influential as it might be, is merely just another self-propagating system competing for power amongst all other self-propagating systems and their subsystems.

Given that the competition and cooperation between all of these systems is beyond rational human control in the long term, it's obvious that the Jews as human beings are also subject to these same semi-autonomous forces that drive civilization, even if one allows that -at least for the time being- Jewish internationalists have more apparent control over these forces than the rest of us do. No one is denying the insidious power of international Judaism, but to say that the Jews are the sole cause of all of our problems and that they control everything is a gross oversimplification that completely ignores all the other observable processes.

While it is abundantly clear that they pursue their own interests in the short-term with little to no regard for the long term consequences (just as all the other self-propagating systems do), it is also clear that a sizeable percentage of those self-propagating systems have little to do with the Jews and have not been interfered with much by them. To say that they are the sole cause of all our problems is a gross oversimplification of a fascinatingly complex amalgamation of countless different causal factors and attributing them all to a single cause.

Now, even if we achieved the Aryan White ethnostate, then what...? The mechanisms and problems of industrial society wouldn't disappear. We can't just get "the good guys" in charge and leave it at that. "Good" technology cannot be separated from "bad" technology. There is no reason to believe that the strife for technological growth would diminish, and with it the many negative and unforseen consequences.

For an in-depth analysis of self-propagating systems see Ted Kaczynski's 'Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How'.

6. We only have to separate 'good' technology from 'bad' technology. We can just reform the technological system to better serve everyone's needs, expand freedom for humanity, etc.

Modern technology is a unified system, and as such is highly coupled; the 'bad' parts of technology cannot be eliminated without at the same time harming the stability of the 'good' parts. For example, let's look at modern medicine. The progress of medical technique is based upon sustained progress in other areas such as biology, physics and chemistry; thus, it is clear that medical technique is highly coupled with other areas of study and technical development. Paradoxically, the development of so-called 'weapons of mass destruction' as well as bioweapons is also greatly dependent on the fields of biology, physics and chemistry.

It therefore becomes evident that it is not possible to pick and choose which technology to keep and which technology to reject; reform of the technological system is simply not possible.

7. If you don't like technology, fine, why don't you just stop using it? Why don't you just retreat from technological civilization and go live 'innawoods'?

While it's tempting to just retreat from society and try to live as primitive humans did, this does not entail a solution to our predicament regarding the progression of technological society. To use Ted's own life as an example:

Ted became frustrated with society and did just that, he 'went off the grid' (before ISAIF was in its final form). However, he soon realized that although he left the system alone, it would not leave him be. It was actually living 'innawoods' that drove him to get ISAIF in front of the eyes of Americans (and eventually the world).

Some might point to the Amish and see an example of a micro-society that has retreated from the system. The problem is that the Amish people only exist because the system has not yet found their existence to be incompatible with its own values. Once this happens, just as wild animals are displaced and forests are demolished for the sake of 'progress', so too will the Amish perish. This is just a matter of time.

Furthermore, no matter how far they may retreat, the Amish are still not exempt from eventual nuclear disaster, all manner of pollutants, encroachment by the State and its judicial technique, among other features of technological civilization.

8. Technology serves humanity, makes humans freer; it helps us vanquish suffering, pain and violence.

Such an assertion is silly at its face. Any given technology serves a specific purpose, and the technical complex as a whole serves its own purposes exclusively, just like any other system within nature. There is nothing that mandates that such purpose -especially at scale- will lead to 'more freedom' or less suffering. Widescale adoption of any technology has had and will continue to have forseen and unforseen widespread societal impacts, many of which will continue to prove less than desirable.

The detrimental impact on human freedom resulting from the highly organized nature of the technological system cannot be escaped. When a new technological development is introduced as an option that an individual can accept or not as he chooses, it does not necessarily remain optional. In many cases the new technology changes society in such a way that people eventually find themselves forced to use it.

In ISAIF, Ted provides a simple but eloquent example of this, which clearly speaks to the loss of freedom that the progress of the technological system inexorably brings about. Before the development of motorized transportation, a man could go where he pleased, without having to deal with traffic regulations and other subsidiary technical support systems associated with mass motorized transportation. When motor vehicles were first introduced, they appeard to increase man's freedom; motorization was optional, if one chose to walk, one would walk, if one chose to buy a car in order to travel much faster, then one could buy a car.

However, as motorized transport became more widespread, very soon all kinds of regulations came along; the organization of cities themselves changed to accomodate motorized transportation; places of work, schools, shopping and recreational areas were no longer within walking distance, to the point where it became clear that in the end, city dwellers have no choice but to depend on and give themselves to motorized transportation.

In this example, the self-reinforcing and self-directed nature of the technological system to the detriment human freedom becomes apparent. Furthermore, in this example it is made clear that in order to grow and support motorized transportation, the abuse and rape of the planet becomes all the more imperative, given the colossal amount of natural resources needed to support and grow motorized transportation and subsidiary systems (roads, factories for the manufacture of automobiles, mining operations, drilling operations, refineries, all manner of legal technique in the form of regulations and their corresponding enforcement mechanisms, etc.).

9. Collapse of technological civilization cannot be brought about, because in order for it to be successful it must occurr simultaneously all over the world. AKA: "The Chinese are going to take over and enslave us if our industrial system collapses in the West."

History shows us that technological collapse has in fact happened on occasion; it's not like the Roman techonology vanished into thin air when that civilization slowly eroded away.A lot of it vanished as the tribal elders of groups of some one hundred people really didn't have the need, the know-how nor the resources to maintain an aqueduct capable of running water for 100.000 people.

When a civilization collapses, some of the technology is scavenged and repurposed, some is just left hanging in the air, still usable but with no one to use it, and some gets lost to the times. The Roman technique of roads was lost, their aqueducts slowly deteriorated and were not rebuilt, as did their urban sewer systems.

In his work 'Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How'(ATR), Ted addresses the seemingly insurmountable problem of successfully bringing about total global collapse. He states that -given the globalized, highly coupled and interdependent nature of the different nations- once collapse has been realized in one nation, -say, the US- this would precipitate collapse in all other nations, given the catastrophic and immediate damage and generalized disruption this initial collapse would cause to the global economic order as a whole. He also argues in ISAIF that a collapse of the system in any of the great nations would precipitate the collapse of the industrial system in all remaining nations.

10. Why would humans almost unanimously accept and even desire the never-ending progress of techecnological civilization if it were ultimately destructive to humanity?

Almost all humans sub-consciously perceive in their every-day lives only the most salient aspects of technology, and even then, the most 'positive' aspects: i.e. indoor plumbing, heating, anesthetics, medical technique in general, etc. The all too human psychological bias towards perceiving as more salient that which benefits us in the short-term vs. that which harms us in the long term is well known.

As Ted himself has observed in ISAIF, virtually all technical developments ON THEIR OWN can be construed as beneficial. However, it is the semi-autonomous complex of inextricably inter-related techniques and technologies (with all of their forseeable and unforeseeable consequences) that put long-term human existence at grave risk. We posit -as does Ted- that in this context we are slaves to technology. And as everyone knows, the most comfortable and well-fed slave is also the most subdued and obedient slave.

11. Many people choose to lead a hedonistic lifestyle, what could possibly be wrong with that? In order to counter-arrest of offset that lifestyle, human beings recycle. Don't you recycle?

If there were no industrial society, there wouldn't be any need for recycling; recycling is a function of technological civilization, nothing more, nothing less. There are at least two distinct aspects to the recycling dilemma: first, recycling as a purely technical matter - as usual implying the optimization of the system, i.e. what to do with the enormous waste-product of technological civilization, and second, recycling as a matter of propaganda and psychological/sociological manipulation.

First, as a purely technical matter, recycling is one of the clearest examples of a technical solution to a technical problem (as described by Jacques Ellul), -namely, what to do with what would otherwise rightly be perceived as just worthless waste in a heavily utilitarian civilization- as well as simultaneously constituting an optimization of technological society, in the sense of finding a use for the obvious and glaring problem within tech-civ that is waste production on unprecedented levels.

Second, -and perhaps more important as far as our ongoing analysis of technological civilization goes- as a matter of pure propaganda. In the subject-matter of recycling we can clearly see the heavily underestimated human technique of propaganda at work, as usual serving the needs of tech-civ and not those of the human species. Many anons may be familiar with the habitual tepid criticism of recycling: that it serves the purpose of allowing humans to lessen the feelings of guilt and anxiety produced by active participation in mass consumption/consumerism.

If the appropriate tailor-made propaganda hadn't 'saved the day' by producing in humans the belief in the moral good of recycling, technological civilizations's very existence would have been put in jeopardy by the growing realization that producing tons of waste every minute would eventually destroy our habitat.

In short, the subject-matter of recycling as a whole constitutes an elegant metaphor that encompasses the most salient aspects of technological civilization, namely the supremacy of the technological system over wild nature and human society, as well as

the system's need for production, dissemination and individual-level adoption of pro-system and anxiety-alleviating propaganda, which in turn serves to perpetuate and perfect the growth of technological civilization.

12. In some sense we are "more free" with technology. In some sense, less.

It is hard to disagree with a hedged position. We would argue that the ways in which we are "more free" might be slightly exaggerated; and analyzed within the context of the self-serving nature of the technological system as a whole, it becomes clear that human freedom is not well served at all.

13. Ted is nothing more than a murderer. He killed three people and maimed many others.

Yes, he did. No, he should not have.
However, one thing is the writer, another is the text.
One thing is the director, another is the film.
One thing is the artist, another is his canvas.
Proofs:

- When a writer dies, his work does not. Take Shakespeare for example. He is long, long dead, yet his works have been published, translated and reinterpreted countless times. This is a clear example of the absolute independence between a text and its writer, even in death.

- Anonymous writers: there are many examples of excellent anonymously-generated texts. By definition, we know nothing about their authors, their virtues on mis-deeds, yet their texts are nonetheless valuable to us.

Furthermore, we NEVER know EVERYTHING there is to know about non-anonymous writers; nonetheless we are still able to enjoy and appreciate their works when perhaps our ignorance-impaired morality would otherwise not allow us to do so. For example, take the case of Ernest Hemingway. It came out some years ago that during WWII he took the 'liberty' of executing German POW's. During all those decades in between the moment of the executions and their actually coming to light, millions of readers enjoyed his works, never knowing he was a cold-blooded opportunistic thrill killer.

Our knowledge -or ignorance- of dark facts about a writer that only come out many years later and sometimes even posthumously do not change the works themselves. After all, these facts about Hemingway could very well have never come out, and people would have still enjoyed his works, never knowing he had murdered unarmed men for fun.

One thing is Ted Kaczynski and his grave misdeeds, another thing are the ideas put forth in his body of work.

14. If you are so strongly against technological civilization why are you even using a computer?

It would be hopeless to try to attack the industrial system without using modern technology, while at the same time attempting to forgo the use of this or that technology.

If one thing is made clear through Ted's works, it is the fact that one cannot pick and choose which technology to use and which technology to ignore within contemporary technological civilization. If nothing else, anti-tech revolutionaries must use the communications media to spread their message.

However, it must be clearly understood that they should use modern technology for one sole purpose: to attack the technological system.

15. What about the 50% infant mortality rate in pre-industrial society? Surely it represents an important downside to leaving the technological system behind?

Does the current fortuitous and temporary decline in infant mortality justify all future -and current- suffering of ALL creatures under technological civilization...? Does it justify the unrelenting rape of the planet and its utimate demise? You can't have it both ways: there is certainly a price to be paid for escaping the evils of industrial society.

How is this 50% infant mortality rate any different from the infant mortality rate in other mammals in their respective environments? Why would one even expect it to be any different from -or for- other mammals? It is likely that in the past high infant mortality rate served the purpose of preserving the health of the species; today, weak and sickly babies survive to pass on their defective genes. True, an infant mortality

rate of 50% is no joke. This is one of the more difficult aspects of forgoing industrial society.

16. Why won't the gold standard or the Constitution fix everything?

The gold standard and the Constitution (and Constitutional and Parliamentary democracies in general) are little more than techniques of economics and techniques of politics and specialized management of human affairs embedded within a vast and all-encompassing technical context. As such, these techniques

do not have the potential to 'fix' anything in the long run, on the contrary, they would just serve to optimize the system and its innate anti-human and anti-freedom tendencies, thus perpetuating an absolutely self-destructive way of life.

Briefly, and just by way of example, multiculturalism and mass migration constitutes one such technical solution to technical problem, i.e. not enough workers in Europe to sustain the birth rates and the economy long-term, so immigrants must be imported and the local populations must be made to feel this is beneficial through human technique (diversity-oriented propaganda).

See Jacques Ellul's work 'The Technological Society' for an in-depth analysis of the dubious validity of 'technical solutions to technical problems'.

17. Doesn't the ideological framework of a society have a direct effect on the technological progress within a given society? Many people subscribe to a Capitalist model, many others to a Communist model, and yet others to a National Socialist model or even a Monarchist model, among other lesser models.

Surely one of these models, if only allowed to develop to its fullest extent and to reign over the economy, can -through the correct and proper administration of technological development- bring about true and lasting happiness and well-being for all humans living under that model. In other words: if we would just adopt the proper ideology, and convince -or force- others to do so, the technological system could once and for all be reformed to everyone's benefit.

Technological civilization depends on the self-directing forces of efficiency, efficacy and the primacy of 'the one best way' to reach a given goal that these forces inexorably lead to, as clearly described by Jacques Ellul. In the face of technology and its intrinsic laws of self-directed development and progress, ideological models such as Capitalism, Communism and National Socialism are little more than just slightly different social representations of technological civilization. We feel that industrialization and the economy at large do not depend exclusively on any authoritarian regime, no matter how authoritarian it may be, nor do they depend on any democratic regime, no matter how 'benevolent' it may strive to be. Technological progress is a self-directing semi-autonomous force, no matter what the purported ideological context may be.

For example, the best way to mass-produce a car is the same whether it be in a Constitutional democracy or in a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship. Another example: the problem of optimal production and distribution of wheat is on a strictly technical level the same in an Anarcho-commune as it is in a

Fascist ethnocentric white community. The keyword here is 'optimal'; anything less than optimal is just a hinderance, a hinderance which no ideological gymnastics alone can improve. Within any industrialized society, no matter what the underlying ideological tenets, only pure technical solutions will in the end address technical problems.

Point being: high-organization and efficient logistics are the same everywhere, no matter what the incidental ideological/propagandistic context may happen to be. In all cases, ideology and its propaganda will soon enough effect any necessary changes to the ideological infrastructure in order to accomodate the needs of technological progress as may be eventually required by the technological system.

Technological progress abides by its own intrinsic laws of reason and logic in a self-directed and goal-oriented manner. These 'hard-wired' characteristics of technological civilization are what leads us to state that ideology is in all cases subsidiary to the requirements of technological expansion and efficiency, and not the other way around.

18. OK, so it is clear what you are AGAINST. What are you FOR?

The positive ideal we propose is Nature; that is, Wild Nature, comprising as such all of the inner workings of the Earth not yet co-opted by mankind. Within Wild Nature we emphatically include Human Nature, or those aspects of the human species which are not and will never be subject to regulation by organized society; those aspects of humanity which are a product of random natural selection, or of the will of God, depending on what your own philosophical or religious inclinations may be.

Man cannot be expected to adapt to the relentless progress of the technological system and at the same time continue in the long-term to remain human.

The Ted K Archive