

# Was Ted Kaczynski Right About **EVERYTHING?**

Breaking Points

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Anarcho Eco-terrorist Ted Kaczynski, whose mail bombs terrified and captivated the nation, killed himself in his jail cell over the weekend. He was 81 years old, serving out a life sentence for his numerous violent crimes.

Now the so-called Unabomber killed 3 and injured in additional 23 in a series of 16 explosions that he set between the years 1978 and 1995.

He was actually caught after arranging a deal with the New York Times and the Washington Post, who published his anti-modernity manifesto. It was titled 'Industrial Society and its Future'. Kaczynski's brother recognized Ted's writing style, and then he turned over his brother to the FBI.

# Zoomer Stans

His death, though, is of more than just historical relevance, because Ted's creed, which was published nearly three decades ago, has recently found a modern audience. Tucker Carlson and Arizona Senate candidate Blake Masters. They recently cited his ideas approvingly, seemingly reflecting an online. Of embracing Kaczynski and calling themselves Ted Pilled.

So what led to the current interest in his writings and in his ideology, while core concepts in the manifesto, they actually feel pretty familiar today. The basic ideas that technology is destroying the world and has made mankind a slave to its whims, Kaczynski argues. That "the Industrial Revolution and its consequences, have been a disaster for the human race." The system does not, and cannot exist to satisfy human needs. Instead, it is human behavior that has to be modified to fit the needs of the system. This system, he says, has turned human beings. Into quote engineered products and mere cogs in the social machine, he argues, the only hope for reversing this cataclysm is through societal collapse and revolution, which he hoped to spark through his mail bombs, or at least to call attention to his ideas. And you have to say on that count he was kind of successful.

It's easy to see how Kaczynski's ideas would land with a modern audience, especially among young people who have only ever experienced a world where the majority of their most intimate, intimate interactions are mediated through some tech platform or another. There's a whole subgenre of TikTok devoted to Kaczynski, standing where depressed zoomers pine for a return to a wilderness that frankly, they've barely ever experienced. It's filled with links to articles about microplastics, memes about suburban sprawl, and lamentations about low T levels separated by decades, from the visceral horror of the killings and the terror that ordinary Americans felt just opening up their mailboxes. You're left with the radicalism for mass consumption, after all, who among us hasn't harbored an off the grid fantasy where we toss our smartphones into a lake, swear, never sign into another God forsaken zoom, call, rescue our children from robloxia, and figure out how to make our way in the wilderness to be the masters of our own faiths, in the mold of our ancient ancestors? Sounds kind of appealing as we sit in our air conditioned room with the whole world. Every modern convenience right at our feet. Your tips?

# Apocalypse is in the air

In fact, you could easily argue that Kaczynski's analysis of the ills of modernity and threat of tech is actually at the peak of its relevance. After all, we just watched humanity be ravaged and our individual freedom further curtailed by a pandemic that was in all likelihood unleashed by an arrogant scientific establishment. Last week, the entire East Coast. Was smothered by smoke, drifting from unprecedented wildfires at a predictable consequence of the human driven climate catastro. He also writes compellingly about the dangers of AI. He wrote, quote, a society, and the problems that face it become more and more complex. And as machines become more and more intelligent, people will let machines make more and more of their decisions for them simply because machine made decisions will bring better results than man-made ones. Eventually, a stage may be reached at which the decisions necessary to keep the system running. Will be so complex that human beings will be incapable of making them intelligently at that stage the machines will be ineffective control. We already have tech which even its own architects do not understand, churning out results that they cannot predict. It's impossible to argue that tech is actually in service of humanity when we don't even know what the tech is up to underneath its shiny public facing veneer. Just last week, Apple released its Vision Pro mixed reality headset, which is intended to bring all of your screens into your immediate field of vision without even having to look down at a smartphone or TV. Or iPad or other device. Who knows whether it's ever going to reach widespread adoption, but it's one more invention designed to make us more disconnected from the environment we are actually in and the people we are actually around and become more reliant on the machines now. The niche hero worship of Kaczynski is obviously unsettling, given that he was a killer and a terrorist. His Zoomer fans feel the sting of disaffection but lack the personal or societal means to do a whole lot about it. Their self aware impotence on display as they use the new hottest tech platform to pine for the destruction of all technology and a return to the. Build Ted is admired with this group because he didn't just complain about modernity, he actually did. The thing, lived off the grid, survival, life, and with so much time removed, his violence feels distant enough to just be a useful element of an edgy, radical online persona. Ironically, it's the very story that our algorithm boosted tech of today has incentivized a generation to tell about themselves. Be edgy, be radical, be extreme to get boosted in the algorithm, the Ted stands who hate tech were cultivated by the very tech that they posture as the spy. Thing, of course, Kaczynski himself in a lot of ways is a cultural product of modernity. The boy genius with the freakish mathematical aptitude swept up at the tender age of 616, shipped off to Harvard,

where he would be fast tracked into elite society so that his market, desirable intellect could be put to use by the government and where he would be experimented on as part of the CIA's MK Ultra project. When he became a terrorist, his exploits were packaged into digestible bites from mass news media audience that was just getting a taste for the 24 hour news cycle.

# Reclaiming Power

Kaczynski argued that the unbearable weight of the current system would eventually come crashing down. Now, nothing quite so apocalyptic has happened. But post pandemic, we have certainly seen a dramatic reordering of human priorities. We've seen people move to find a quality of life which more adequately nourishes their soul and their families. We have seen workers demanding accommodations to their new lifestyles rather than just sliding back into the. Old ways in which work life was everything we've seen historic support for worker empowering labor movement and worker sparking grassroots movements to establish power and autonomy in the workplaces. These are all reformist attempts to reclaim the power that Ted argued the modern world had stripped from us. Well, we should witness those attempts and we should be encouraged because for me personally, I would like to find a way to promote human thriving and empowerment and protect the natural environment without having to give up antibiotics and air conditioning and maybe without indiscriminately murdering random people. So Ted, complicated figure.

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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