

Jamie Gehring's Letters To & From Ted Kaczynski

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1. Jamie to Ted

Theodore J. Kaczynski. 04475-046. ...

Ted, I have considered writing you for quite some time. I am sure you remember me as the little girl next door. ... My first memory of you is when you brought me a gift as a child ... painted rocks. ... I remember you vividly from that moment and through the years. ... My mother actually recalls you holding me as a baby. She remembers you as a very respectful and quiet neighbor. She was pretty shocked (as we all were) when you were arrested. ... It seems that through the years there have been consistent connections back to you ...

Summarizing my trips back home and always visiting his former property, assisting the real estate agent who sold his parcel, and the letter I had read about his buried relics, I offered, *If you send me the locations, I can help remove the items left behind.* Then moving on to a subject I knew Ted would have conflicted feelings about—my dad.

I know that you had issues with my father, Butch. But I want you to know that even when the FBI approached him, he wanted you to be treated with dignity and respect. There was a large part of him that doubted their allegations in the very beginning. ... It had to be difficult for you to live so close to a family supported by the timber industry. Although my dad believed in healthy timber management, I can only imagine it fueled your anger. ... Dad passed away nearly eight years ago. I know you didn't think much of him, but I think there is a certain amount of comradery that evolves from sharing rugged winters for so many years. ... I do apologize for his use of weed spray. I don't think he understood how detrimental it could be to humans and animals. ... I also apologize if I disturbed you with my small motorcycle. ...

After this short summary of the previous twenty-plus years and the apologies I felt needed to be expressed, I asked for answers.

Ted, I can't condone what you did nor can I pretend to understand you. But what I do know is that you were correct in some of your predictions/beliefs. Our society has become desensitized by the use of technology in many ways.

Screens dominate our existence . . .

I went on to cite our obsession with hand-held devices, social media platforms and the need for instant gratification and “likes” within younger generations, and then finally this alternate reality we have created with technology, making us numb to the natural world that surrounds us. *Could this combination have a link to modern-day atrocities, such as the rise in school shooters? Possibly the increase in behavioral and sleep issues, anxiety, depression, and impulse control due to the rewiring in developing brains caused by the prolonged use of screens in our youth?* This letter was written in the infancy of my book project, at a time in which I didn’t know if anyone beyond me would read my words. I did not mention to Ted that I was writing anything. That news would come later, in subsequent correspondence. I posed questions that I genuinely wanted him to answer. Yes, he killed in the name of revenge, but he was in fact, as the FBI would refer to him, “a twisted genius.” With his level of intelligence and years spent in prison, had he become remorseful, maybe logical? Was there still the possibility of that kernel of *good* that I desperately wanted to unearth?

Can we find a balance? Wanting to know his thoughts, I told him,

I am really interested in what you think of this. I think our society is facing some immense challenges and I don’t see a clear solution. Write if you have time. Thanks, Jamie Gehring.

2. Ted to Jamie

...

Dear Jamie,

Thanks for your letter, ...

It's always interesting to receive letters from people I've known in the past, but I can't correspond with you much, because I'm burdened with more work than I can handle. However, I think you'll find it interesting to read my books ... I invite you to write to me again after you've read them.

Merry Christmas,

Ted Kaczynski

[The piece of paper Ted used to write on the back of is an earlier draft of a chapter from his book *Anti-Tech Revolution*, where the only difference is that in this version the footnotes are simply 1 number behind the published version, showing perhaps how much time he spends re-writing in full again and again.]

TED KACZYNSKI

to

JAMIE GEHRING

GENERAL DELIVERY

December 1, 2018

DENVER CO 80202-9999

Dear Jamie,

Thanks for your letter, the first six pages of which I received on November 19. The rest of the letter was missing. No doubt it got lost somewhere in the system here. That kind of thing is what one has to expect, given the incompetence and disorganization that characterize the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

It's always interesting to receive letters from people I've known in the past, but I can't correspond with you much, because I'm burdened with more work than I can handle. However, I think you'll find it interesting to read my books Technological Slavery and Anti-Tech Revolution, both of which are available from amazon.com. I invite you to write to me again after you've read them.

Merry Christmas,

Ted Kaczynski

By and large, people are interested only in their own freedom. Undoubtedly a great many people are generous enough to want freedom for everyone, but the kind of freedom they want for everyone typically is the kind of freedom that is most important to themselves. Those for whom freedom is most closely linked with democracy are the intellectuals: The tools of the intellectual's trade are words and ideas, therefore intellectuals commonly are strong proponents of freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press.³⁹ But intellectuals generally have scant sympathy for other freedoms, e.g., economic freedom or the freedom to own weapons, when these freedoms seem to threaten the physically and economically secure environment in which intellectuals can best practice their trade. The businessman's trade is the production and accumulation of wealth, so businessmen emphasize economic freedom, property rights, and an environment conducive to the creation of wealth. But when they find that they can have these without democracy they often are willing, as we noted above, to forgo the political freedoms.

For the common people--the working class--democracy

3. Jamie to Ted

Hi Ted, I hope you are well, it's been some time since we corresponded. I wanted to let you know that I'm writing a book about my childhood in Lincoln and coming to terms with living next to the infamous Unabomber.

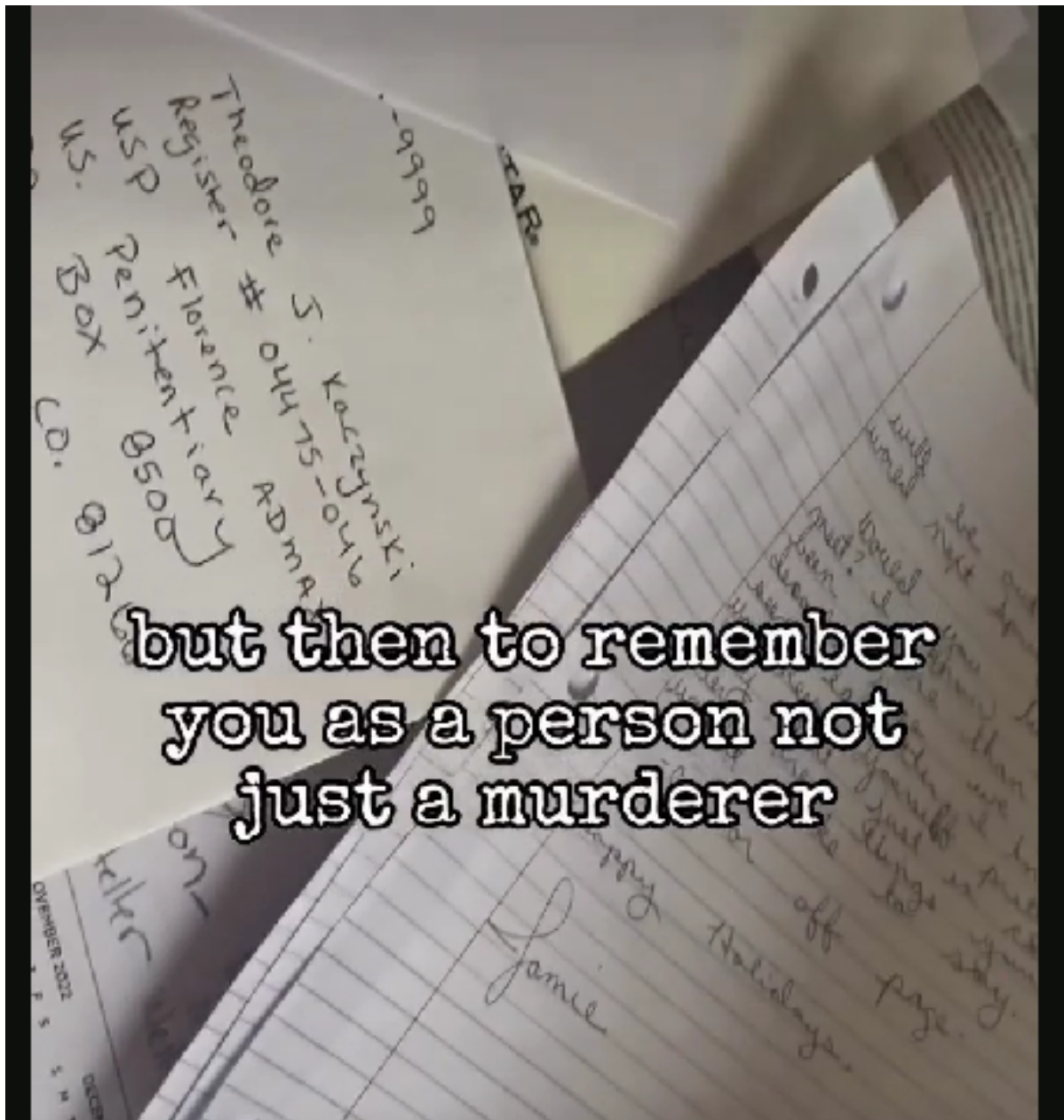
The book explores my childhood, your history and our connection. I've referenced your autobiography, various writings of yours apprehended by the FBI at the time of your arrest, and I have conducted numerous interviews.

This book isn't a recreation of history, although it definitely has historical elements. It's my memoir braided with your story, a journey to understanding you and what is meant to not only share a backyard, but then to remember you as a person not just a murderer.

... or off page.

Happy Holidays,

Jamie



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you as a person not
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The Ted K Archive

Jamie Gehring's Letters To & From Ted Kaczynski
Madman in the Woods & Jamie Gehring's Instagram
www.thetedkarchive.com