

# Marriage advice from the Unabomber

Ted Kaczynski

# Contents

1. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (19 <sup>th</sup> August, 2001) . . . . .	3
2. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (November 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2001) . . . . .	4
3. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2002) . . . . .	5
4. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (29 <sup>th</sup> July, 2002) . . . . .	6
5. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (6 <sup>th</sup> June, 2003) . . . . .	7
6. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (14 <sup>th</sup> December, 2003) . . . . .	8
7. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (15 <sup>th</sup> September, 2004) . . . . .	9
8. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2005) . . . . .	11

In 2001, a South African man wrote Kaczynski to complain about a technology-related problem: his wife wouldn't have sex with him because of "battery-powered devices." Kaczynski couldn't help but respond.

## 1. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (19<sup>th</sup> August, 2001)

Theodore Kaczynski  
00475-046  
Admin Maximum Facility  
PO Box 8500  
Florence, CO 81226  
USA

[RETURN ADDRESS REDACTED]  
19 August, 2001

Dear Mr Kaczynski,

It has been three years since a judge sentenced you to four consecutive life terms for killing three people and maiming dozens of others. I expect for you, it feels a lot longer.

As I understand it, your hatred of technology drove you to send letter bombs to people who were, in your eyes, the enemy.

I think there is a little Unabomber in all of us. Just the other day my cellphone started ringing for no apparent reason. I flew into a rage and hurled it across the room, but it went through an open window and struck a passing motorcyclist in the face. He lost control and ploughed into a delivery van owned by a computer shop. As it turned out, the biker worked for a company that manufactures automated filing systems that will one day make thousands of [REDACTED LAST WORD IS POSSIBLY "redundant"]. So I never lost any sleep over it.

I have also had unpleasant incidents involving my CD player (settled with a baseball bat), my digital satellite dish (shotgun) and my wife (Brenda) who refuses to cook or have sex with me. In this regard, I suspect that I have been replaced by one of two battery-operated appliances. Needless to say, I have a team of lawyers standing by in case of emergencies.

I must congratulate you on having succeeded in getting several influential American newspapers to publish your manifesto in the mid-1990s. Sure, you had to threaten to blow up New York to get them to do it, but it worked. For one brief moment, you controlled the media. And by extension, the world.

A world rapidly being destroyed by industrialisation. British textile workers had the right idea in the early 1800s. For five glorious years, they smashed machinery in the belief that mechanization would lead to unemployment. And yet none of them were called paranoid schizophrenics and thrown into jail for the rest of their lives. You are

simply a modern-day Luddite who used more sophisticated methods to achieve the same aims.

Come and visit me when you get out.

Yours truly,  
[REDACTED]

## 2. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001)

Ted Kaczynski  
to  
[REDACTED]

November 5, 2001

Dear Mr. [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of August 19. I have been unable to answer it until now because I have been occupied in preparing a petition to the Supreme Court of the United States. From this you can infer that my legal process has not yet been concluded.

Since you seem to assume that I actually am the Unabomber, I have to explain that my guilty plea to the Unabomb charges was the result of coercion, and that I am currently attempting to have my conviction overturned as invalid. People sometimes plead guilty without being so simply because that may represent their least undesirable alternative in a given legal situation. But I will say no more on this subject, since lawyers have advised me to avoid discussing these matters with anyone until my legal process has been concluded.

To come to the point of this letter, in your letter to me you complained that your wife was refusing to have sex with you, and you expressed a suspicion that in that regard you had been replaced by “one or two battery-operated appliances.” I am happy to inform you that you need not despair. Where technology creates a problem it also offers a solution.

Scientists tell us that some day we will all be able, in effect, to turn ourselves into machines. We will be able “down-load” our brains into the electronic brains of machines so that our consciousness — say the scientists (and who can doubt the word of scientists?) — will live on in the machines. To ordinary mortals like you<sup>1</sup> and me this may sound like a lunatic fantasy, but it is actually proposed in all seriousness by distinguished scientists. See, for example, an article by Marvin Minsky in *Scientific American* magazine — October 1994, if I remember correctly.

The procedure proposed by Minsky and others holds the solution to your marital problems: Some day you will be able to turn yourself into a battery-operated appliance

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<sup>1</sup> I **assume** that you are an ordinary mortal. If I am mistaken, please accept my apology.

and thereby resume having sex with your wife. I hope that this news cheers you up a bit.

Best regards,  
Ted Kaczynski

### 3. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (12<sup>th</sup> July, 2002)

Mr Ted Kaczynski  
04475-046  
U.S. Penitentiary Max  
PO Box 8500  
Florence, CO 81226-8500  
USA

[REDACTED]  
South Africa  
12 July, 2002

Dear Ted,

Thank you so much for taking the time to reply to my letter of 19 August, 2001. It's hard to believe almost an entire year has passed since then. On the other hand, a year for you probably feels like a decade.

I was appalled to learn that the Supreme Court had rejected your appeal. From what I can gather, your initial guilty plea was part of a deal to avoid being portrayed in court as mentally ill. Or was in a plea bargain to avoid the death penalty? I am a little confused on the details. In your last letter to me (November 5, 2001) you mentioned that you preferred not to discuss these matters until the legal process had been concluded. Can you talk about it now? I would be most interested to hear the real story.

You may recall me complaining about my marriage, and that a couple of battery-operated devices had rendered me virtually obsolete. Well, [REDACTED] heart remains trapped in pack ice. I suspected it might be a circulation problem and attempted to open up her veins with a rigorous slapping. Well, that certainly got her blood up, if nothing else. She retrieved my stick from where I keep it hidden and set about my lower body. She only stopped when suspected that I was enjoying it. But I can assure you that I dislike a beating as much as the next man. I admit to once striking her several times in a bid to quell an outburst of hysteria, which subsequently turned out to be hay fever. However, the symptoms are similar and one is easily mistaken.

I am from the old school and feel it is undignified to beg for sex. Dinner is another matter. I can cope with the dangerous psychological games and petty assaults that are

essential to any healthy marriage, but I am struggling to come to terms with the withdrawal of my conjugal rights. I tried approaching the Human Rights Commission for relief, but they reported me to the police. So not only do I spend every night celibate and hungry, but I also lie awake waiting for burly thugs in camouflage to kick down the door and drag me out into the street sporting an unrequited member for all the neighbours to see.

In your letter, you told me not to worry. That soon I would be able to down-load my consciousness into a battery-operated appliance and resume having sex with Brenda. For a moment, I thought you really were mad. Then I spotted your reference to “Marvelous” Marvin [REDACTED<sup>(1)</sup>] a poster boy for mental health. He talks of using “nanotechnology” to grow fields of micro-factories in the same way we grow trees. How nice. Just taking the dog for a walk through the micro-factories, dear. He rambles on about spawning “mind-children” that think a million times faster than we do. On the old question, will robots inherit the earth, Minsky says: “Yes, but they will be our children.” Do the authorities know about this man? And what has he done to George W. Bush’s brain? Like you, he is a Harvard man. Can we blame Harvard?

I have to go now. Minsky has made me afraid, and I am going to hide the electronic equipment before [REDACTED] hears about nanotechnology. Looking forward to hearing from you again.

Yours truly,  
[REDACTED]

#### 4. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (29<sup>th</sup> July, 2002)

Ted Kaczynski  
to  
Mr. [REDACTED]  
CAPE TOWN  
SOUTH AFRICA

July 29, 2002

Dear Mr. [REDACTED],

I have just received your letter of July 12, 2002, in which you ask about my legal case. I am enclosing herewith a copy of *United States versus Kaczynski*, 239 Federal Reporter 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, pages 1108–1128 (9<sup>th</sup> Circuit 2001), which will probably answer most of your questions.

Please give my regards to [REDACTED], and tell that I **especially** request that she respect your marital rights for at least **one** night, or, better, every night.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Presumably “Minsky”, then possibly “a man who makes Charles Manson look like”

Sincerely yours,  
Ted Kaczynski

## 5. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (6<sup>th</sup> June, 2003)

Mr Theodore Kaczynski  
US Penitentiary — Max  
PO Box 8500  
Florence, CO 81226–8500  
U.S.A.

[REDACTED]  
6 June, 2003

Dear Ted:

Even though it has been almost a year since we last “spoke”, this is our third communication so I hope you will forgive the familiarity. I have followed your case with great interest and I treasure the letters that you have written to me.

It was with great sadness that I learned you had come to the end of the appeal process without being granted another hearing. No great surprise, I suppose. The odds are pretty stacked in a case like *United Status versus Kaczynski*. Not that you aren’t a formidable opponent. It’s just that when you see the outcome of cases like *United States versus Iraq*, there isn’t much chance of one man winning.

Do politics play much of a role in the American judicial process? If the Secretary General of the United Nations can be hog-tied and locked in the broom closet on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor while the Marine Corps sweeps the planet for flag-burning renegades, is there any hope for the rest of us? Even out here on the southern tip of Africa, there are those of us who live in constant fear of being crushed underfoot by the stormtroopers of democracy. We are fortunate that there is no oil in South Africa. The stuff seems to attract the worst kind of people. We have gold and diamonds. And lots of fish. But these commodities are quickly mined, killed and exported while the attention of the local populace is diverted to more important issues. Like where or not we should be made to pay for the plastic bags that are handed out at supermarkets.

[REDACTED] sends her best wishes. Well, she did until I pointed out that you had especially requested that she respect my marital rights for at least one night a week. She said us men are all the same, and then she went off to the computer to find something that might change my opinion of you. All she could come up with was a garbled story about you once wanting to have a sex change so that you could enjoy what a woman had to offer without having to buy them flowers or explain where you were until three in the morning. I told her it was a damn fine idea and we haven’t spoken since. In fact, I approached my medical aid with the suggestion but they turned me down with no coherent reasons given.

Well, Ted, I wish I could do something to get you out of there and over here. With your intellect i have no doubt that we could convince [REDACTED] to lower her guard and raise her skirt. I'm including a ten rand note and a photograph of the view from my porch. Find a corrupt guard and tell him that there's much more where this comes from if he lets you go. I'll even throw in [REDACTED] to sweeten the deal.

I hope to hear from you again. As we say out here, Vasbyt!  
[REDACTED]

## 6. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (14<sup>th</sup> December, 2003)

December 14, 2003

TED KACZYNSKI to [REDACTED]

Xmas card message  
one of [REDACTED]  
cards

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of June 6, 2003.

I have given much thought to the problem of [REDACTED]. Through deep and prolonged study of the works of Aristotle, Aquinas, Leibnitz, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and Normal Vincent Peale, I have discovered the root of the problem and am able to reveal to you the solution.

[REDACTED], where she knows it or not, is a feminist. Feminists are women who are dissatisfied with men but, because they have little insight into themselves, do not understand why they are dissatisfied.

What every woman wants is a man who is a Man, with a capital M. In other words, a man who has balls, not merely in the literal but also in the figurative sense. In Western culture, a woman's ideal has traditionally been "a knight in shining armor." Of course, the knights of the Middle Ages were preeminently Men: courage was their watchword. That is why women have long yearned after them.

But the knight in shining armor no longer exists in Europe. The samurai has disappeared from Japan. The fierce nomad no longer rides across the Eurasian steppe. No more does the African singlehandedly slay a lion or an elephant with a spear. Nor does the American Indian drive the buffalo in a wild chase over the plains or creep silently upon his enemy to steal his horses or his scalp.

And who has replaced these true Men? Behold modern man (small m): He sits all day on his fat bottom, punching keys on a computer. Terrified of losing the "job" on which he is helplessly dependent, he cringes before his boss, invents petty subterfuges and little lies to conceal his errors and his trivial misdeeds. Meanwhile his boss cringes



before a bigger boss, who cringes in turn before a still bigger boss, and so on.<sup>2</sup> There are no true Men left; or rather, such true Men as remain are in prison, for in the modern world it has been made a crime to stand up for oneself.

Is it any wonder that feminists have lost respect for men? Or that they resent men for failing to be the Men after whom (however vehemently they may deny it) their hearts yearn?

From the wisdom of the greatest philosophers, therefore, we may distill a solution to your problem. You must demonstrate unequivocally to [REDACTED] that you are a Man, with a capital M. In your first letter to me you voiced a suspicion that the reason why [REDACTED] refused to have sex with you was that she had replaced you with one or two battery-operated devices — presumably, one or more vibrators. To prevent [REDACTED] from using a vibrator you must rigorously exclude all electricity from your home. First you must rip out all the electrical wiring. Then, whenever [REDACTED] enters the house, you must force her to submit to a strict search to verify that she is not bringing in any batteries. Of course, [REDACTED] will protest. She will have tantrums. She will scold, she will howl, she will rage. But you must remain first. If you do so, all will be well: You will have proved to [REDACTED] that you are a Man. She will love you passionately. She will **beg** you for sex.

On the other hand, if you fail to do as I say, then I can only advise [REDACTED] to go up to the Ituri and see whether it is still possible to find an Mbuti who has singlehandedly killed an elephant with a spear.

I feel inclined to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, but I will refrain. It would be a cruel mockery to wish a merry or a happy anything to a man who is stuck with a feminist for a wife.

Best regards,  
Ted

P.S. You close your letter with the word “Vasbyt”. From what language does it come and what does it mean? — TJK

## 7. Unfulfilled Husband to Ted (15<sup>th</sup> September, 2004)

PO Box 8500  
Florence CO 81226–8500  
U.S.A.

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<sup>2</sup> To paraphrase Samuel Butler,  
All the little bosses have greater bosses to smite ‘em,  
And these have greater still, and so ad infinitum.

[REDACTED]  
15 September, 2004

Dear Ted,

Several months have slipped by since I received your last letter. I would have written sooner, but it was you, after all, who suggested I read the works of Aristotle, Aquinas, Leibnitz, Descartes, Kant, Hegel and Norman Vincent Peale so that I may better understand why my wife [REDACTED] is such a cold-hearted brute. You were absolutely right when you said that feminists are so befuddled in their thinking that they blindly lash out at men who, in turn, blindly accept the abuse on some vague assumption that they probably deserve it. But as you so aptly put it, these are men, and not Men.

I took your advice and dressed up as an Mbuti warrior when [REDACTED] was at her Tupperware and Vibrator party before ripping out all the electrical wiring in the house. Had I been thinking less like an Mbuti, I might have switched off the mains first. Once the convulsions had subsided, I laid an ambush, a two-pronged affair, much like the old Zulu pincer movement which worked so well at Isandlwana on that hot summer's day in 1879 when they caught the British with their silly red pants around their ankles. Brandishing my short-handled stabbing spear, I pounced the moment she walked through the door. Subjecting a hysterical woman to a full body cavity search for any contraband designed to make me redundant is not easy, especially not when the springbok loin cloth snags on the door handle.

Moving on...

I am embarrassed to admit it, but since we last communicated I was keeping down a day job much like all the other white-collar criminals who are allowed to hold positions of power and roam the streets at will. Happily, this has now ended. One of the worst things about the Industrial Revolution is that it spawned an entirely new strain of human being whose behaviour was progressively characterised by appalling arrogance, tight-fisted rapaciousness and an unlimited capacity for treachery. Collectively, this new breed came to be known as Management. Somehow, Management skipped a link in Darwin's chain and instead of evolving, they regressed. Instead of becoming more altruistic and honorable, they began shedding all the qualities necessary for developing into well-rounded members of the species. The workers, on the other hand, became increasingly enlightened. On their way to developing a drinking problem, the proletariat developed innovative new concepts like labour unions. While the bosses spent sleepless nights wondering how to squeeze the hired hands for more work and less pay, the staff spent their nights gambling and carousing and inventing novel new ways of using up all their sick leave.

The devolution of the boss has been spectacular. There was a time when he strode the earth like a colossus, dispensing wisdom and charity in equal measure. He was the closest you could get to Plato's ideal of what constitutes a leader and about as far from the craven, venal dogs that they are today.

Anyway, that's not important. What is important is that I don't allow another rutting season to slip through my fingers. Perhaps I should simply pack a small bag and melt away while [REDACTED] dreams up fresh ways to humiliate me. I wonder if any buses are going up to the Ituri...

Take care, friend.<sup>(2)</sup>

[REDACTED]

P.S. "Vasbyt" is an Afrikaans word meaning "stay strong".

## 8. Ted to Unfulfilled Husband (6<sup>th</sup> February, 2005)

TED KACZYNSKI

to

[REDACTED]

06070 February 6, 2005

Dear [REDACTED],

To answer your letter of September 15, 2004, I have to begin by pointing out that your knowledge of African ethnology is defective. You say that you dressed up as an "Mbuti warrior"; however, the Mbuti were not warriors, but hunters. Though they did use spears, their favorite weapon was not a "short-handled stabbing spear"; rather, they relied principally on bows and arrows. All this information, with a detailed description of their bows, you can find in Paul Schebesta, *Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri*, II. Band, I. Teil, Institut Royal Colonial Belge, Brussels, 1941. Moreover, since the Mbuti were forest-dwellers, not plainsmen, they would be unlikely to wear a "springbok loin cloth". In fact they did not cover their private parts with animal skins at all, but with bark cloth. This again you will find in Schebesta's charming treatise.

But you don't need to feel embarrassed about any deficiency in your knowledge of African ethnology. Most Americans would see nothing amiss in a picture of an Iroquois or a Shawnee wearing a big feather head-dress, though in reality such head-dresses were worn only by the Plains Indians.

The important thing about the Mbuti, though, is that the women knew how to treat their men: "If one considers the whole domain of work within the hunting-and-gathering economy, it appears that the woman, as compared with the man, is burdened with vastly more work. This however is view — even by the woman — as an entirely normal condition, and it would never occur to her to complain of being overburdened." Schebesta, II. Band, I. Teil, Seite 18. Thus the men were left with nothing to do but hunt; and hunting, as we know, is the sport of kings. You must tell [REDACTED] how the Mbuti women took all the work upon themselves; then she will be overcome with shame at the fact that **she** doesn't do **your** work for **you**.

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<sup>(2)</sup> This and the postscript are handwritten.

But really, man, you've got to learn how to defend yourself. You say that "[REDACTED] dreams up fresh ways to humiliate" you. Well, why don't you dream up fresh ways to humiliate her? But I've got an idea for you: You should begin frequenting tough bars; mark the acquaintance of the uncouth types who can be found there; you know, men of the kind who get drunk at least once a week, get into a fight at least once a month, never speak a sentence that doesn't contain the word \_\_\_\_\_ (or its equivalent in some other language), have often been in jail for drunk and disorderly conduct; and if they've spent a few years in prison for felonious assault, so much the better. Make friends with these gentlemen, and let them know that free drinks will be available in your home whenever they care to visit. Take care that alcohol, cards, and dice are always available, and soon you will find that your house is full of these noble fellows at all hours of the day and night.

Of course, [REDACTED] won't be able to stand it very long, and she will sue you for divorce. And you should be able to get a favorable settlement, because, after all, what can [REDACTED] complain of? Only that she doesn't like your friends. I feel safe in assuming that there's nothing in South African law that prohibits a man from having friends whom his wife dislikes.

But I want to make clear that I have no objection to women being the bosses; they always have been the bosses and probably they always will be. In fact, I **have** to make this clear, because my lady friend makes me send her copies of all my letters, so of course she'll get a copy of this one, too. The problem is not in the fact that [REDACTED] is the boss; the problem is in the means by which she exercises her authority. When a woman controls her man by being cruel to him rather than by being nice, it's proof that her technique is grossly deficient. Take me, for example. Lots of times I call my lady friend on the telephone firmly resolved to put my foot down about something or other. But as soon as I hear her soft, cooing voice all my resolution melts away, I turn to a mush, and I say "yes" to anything she asks. That's how women are **supposed** to operate. Since [REDACTED] maintains her authority over you by being mean rather than nice, it's beyond any possible doubt that she is incompetent as a woman.

Best regards,  
Ted Kaczynski

[I shouldn't be wasting time on this sort of humorous correspondence, but I enjoy it, and one does need a little recreation now and then. —TJK 2/16/05]

The Ted K Archive

Ted Kaczynski  
Marriage advice from the Unabomber

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