

# Ted Kaczynski, Math Tutor

Ted Kaczynski

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# Letter Series A

## Letter #1. From Ted to $\pi$ — Oct 10, 1996

Dear  $\pi$ :

I was tempted to begin this letter, “Dear 3.14159...,” but then it occurred to me that you have probably encountered that joke several times before, and are tired of it by now.

I enjoyed your letter very much. Apropos of your tale of the “priest” who needed \$28, when I was at Harvard I was approached by an “honest mechanic” (as he styled himself) who needed 50c fare to get back to his home in (I think) Scituate. He claimed he had just earned 25c by washing a car (which he pointed out) and he asked me to give him the other 25c. The only change I had in my pocket was a nickel, and I offered him that, but he refused it scornfully. Apparently he was a high-toned panhandler who wouldn't take anything as small as a nickel.

More often than not I do give something to panhandlers, if only a quarter or two, because I feel sorry for them. Not \$28, though.

You say that you don't like to have so much schoolwork that you can't grasp all of the information 100%. I always felt the same way when I was in school. But I never could keep up with all of my courses and, after my freshman year, I never was able to grasp all of the information in more than one math course at a time. So I usually ended up concentrating most of my effort on one math course and doing only what was necessary to get by in the other courses.

Like you, I found that distinguished scholars or researchers are not necessarily good teachers. They often are too absorbed in their research to spend the time that it takes to prepare good lessons.

One of the worst teachers I had at Harvard was a truly great mathematician, John G. THompson, who had just revolutionized finite-group theory by proving that group of odd order was solvable. On the first day of class he stated a tricky but essentially trivial little theorem that is always given at the beginning of every introductory course on group theory. Because he hadn't prepared himself he spent some 20 minutes fumbling around trying to prove this theorem, and in the end it was one of the students who showed the great John G. Thompson how to prove it.

Thompson, however, was a very likeable man, very helpful and encouraging to students who consulted him outside of class. And in the stuffy atmosphere of Harvard he was refreshing because of his informality and because he treated you as an equal

rather than with the subtle air of superiority that characterized most of the professors. He wasn't a regular member of the Harvard faculty but was a visiting professor from the University of Chicago...

... Since you have already appropriated  $\pi$ , I will sign myself

Euler's Constant  
(alias Ted Kaczynski)

P.S... the question of whether Euler's constant was rational or irrational was one of the famous unsolved problems of mathematics.

T.K.

# Letter Series B

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] — Sep 19, 1998

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks for the FIJA pamphlet, I think I'll have it photocopied and send a copy to my attorneys ...

If you like, you can send me Nietzsche's "On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life."

Yes, I'll write you a letter of recommendation to the Harvard Divinity School. But I would appreciate it if you would tell me more in regard to what the program is all about ...

## Letter #2. From Ted to Harvard Divinity School

Dear Dean [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] has asked me to write a letter of recommendation for him in connection with his application for admission to your Fellows Program. Why he has asked me, of all people, is best known to himself, but I have acceded to his request, and the letter of recommendation follows.

...

# Letter Series C

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted — Oct 9 1998

Dear Ted,

The purpose of this letter is to ask you for a favor ... I recently took a Trig. Exam and lost more points on a particular question than I deserved to lose ...

## Letter #2. From Ted to [REDACTED] — Oct 14, 1998

Dear [REDACTED]

... I would give you four points of seven...

Now I'm going to play a really nasty trick on your teacher. I'm going to give you a problem to give her, and if she doesn't get it right, you be sure to give her an F.

Armand, Bartholomew, and Cladius play cards, for pennies. First, Armand wins from ...

... You asked me to recommend reading material for you. I could recommend any number of things. Here are just a few: Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, *The Harmless People*; Colin Turnbull, *The Forest People*; Calvin Rustrum, *Paradise Below Zero*; Vilhjalmur Stefansson, *My Life with the Eskimo*; Warren Angus Ferris, *Life in the Rocky Mountains*; Osborn(e?) Russell, *Journal of a Trapper*; William Dampier, *Voyages*. If you want to venture into highbrow stuff, try Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, and *Autopsy of Revolution*. Maybe not so highbrow: Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution*. And here's a good one: Benvenuto Cellini, *Autobiography*. Well, I guess *that* ought to be enough to keep you busy for a while.

## Letter #3. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Feb 11, 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

Enclosed find the answer to the problem you sent me about the tank of alcohol and water...



# Letter Series D

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Unknown Date

In answer to your questions:

(1) What kind of music do I like? Classical. Mainly from Giovanni Gabrieli (ca. 1597) through Mozart and Haydn. My favorite composer is probably Vivaldi.

(2) If I started college again, what would I major in? If I had to do it all over again, I don't think I would go to college at all. I would just go to live in the mountains rather than wasting time on formal education. If I *did* go to college I wouldn't major in mathematics, but I'd probably take several math courses because they are good training in clear thinking. Say, three semesters of calculus, a semester of number theory, two semesters of modern algebra, a course in (mathematically rigorous) real analysis, a course in mathematical logic and one in axiomatic set theory. What I would major in, I don't know. Maybe computer science, but I would major in that only so that I could become a computer saboteur, i.e., one of those guys who invent destructive viruses and that sort of thing. Apart from that I'd probably take a lot of courses in the social "sciences" (note the quotation marks), especially history and cultural anthropology. The reason is that I'd like to know more about how and why societies function and develop as they do... ...

# Letter Series E

## Letter #1. Letter from Ted to [REDACTED] – Oct 12, 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

Today I received your letter of October 4. In my last letter I gave you a formula for rocket fuel, consisting of potassium nitrate and sucrose...

...

# Letter Series F

## Letter #1. Letter from Ted to [REDACTED] – Unknown Date

... You asked me about my own hobbies. When I was teenager I used to collect coins  
...

# Letter Series G

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Jun 27, 2001

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

You're back! It's been quite a while since I've heard from you.

You say that you're studying pharmacy...

You also write that you're not terribly interested in pharmacy. Well for a more exciting career, why don't you move up to Eugene, Oregon, and become a professional revolutionary? Anarchism is the coming thing nowadays. It's a growth industry. And the general level of ability among anarchihists is such that anyone with the samllest modicum of intelligence and self-discipline would quickly rise to the top among them. Anarchists supposedly don't accept leadership, but most of them are so disorganized mentally that they wouldn't know whether they were being led or not. If you joined the movement, I guarantee ...

...

# Letter Series H

## Letter #1. Letter from Ted to [REDACTED] – Unknown Date

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a graduat student in Mathematics at the [REDACTED].

I am writing to request your help. I have been puzzled by a math problem ...

...

## Letter #2. Letter from Ted to [REDACTED] – Oct 8, 1988

Ted Kaczynski to [REDACTED]

October 8, 1988

You can send me your probability problem if you like, but I doubt that I'll be able to do anything with it, since ...

Meanwhile, here's a problem for you. Let the unit interval be divided into  $n$  equal subintervals ...

...

# Letter Series I

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Apr 13, 1998

4/13/98

... We wanted to let you know that my Social Philosophy course this semester is reading your *Industrial Society and its Future*, along with ...

...

# Letter Series J

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Aug 24, 2001

August 24, 2001

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

I apologize for taking so long to answer your letter of March 11, 2001. During my first couple of years here at the ADX correspondence ate up most of my time, so in order to have time for other things I've had to make correspondence one of my last priorities...

...

# Letter Series K

## Letter #1. From Texas Tech University to Ted – March 25, 2002

[Someone must have sent them something in my name as a prank. — TJK 4/2/02]

Dear Teddy,

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Texas Tech University ...



# Letter Series L

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Apr 22, 1999

April 22, 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm sorry that I couldn't answer your letter before the due-date of your paper ...

I'm not going to try to answer your questions #1 and #2, because to do that subject justice I would have to write a much longer letter than I have time for. However, you might want to read an article by Marvin Minsky that appeared in Scientific American magazine in, I think, October 1994.

As for your questions concerning the Y2K problem, I have no technical expertise that would enable me to answer them intelligently. However, my *uneducated* guess is that the problem is nowhere near as serious as some people have claimed...

...

# Letter Series M

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Oct 28, 2003

October 28, 2003

Dear Mr. or Ms. [REDACTED]:

In your note of October 14 you write that you would love to receive a letter from me...

# Letter Series N

**Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Dec 14,  
2004**

12/14/04

Dear [REDACTED]

I am a junior in high school, ...

...

# Letter Series O

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Dec 20, 2004

December 20, 2004

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

In your letter of December 14, ...

# Letter Series P

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Jun 27, 2005

6/27/05

Hi my name is [REDACTED]. I would tell you my last name but my teacher told me not to. I am 8 years old and \* just wanted to say that I am sorry that you have to stay in jail, and that I dont think that they should keep you there, and that I what ever you did I think you still are a micc person! I drew you a picture. ...

# Letter Series Q

## Letter #1. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Aug 31, 2010

August 31, 2010

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

Thank you for your undated letter ...

... as a professional revolutionary you will enjoy certain special advantages. Inter alia, you will gain the honorable title of “comrade”. Just imagine how impressed girls will be when you are introduced to them as “Comrade McBurnett”. You should read Joseph Conrad’s novel *The Secret Agent*, wherein Comrade Ossipon’s success with the ladies will open your eyes to certain possibilities in this direction...

# Letter Series R

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Feb 19, 2011

2/19/2011

Dear Mr. Kaczynski,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am currently a student at Harvard ...

## Letter #2. From Ted to [REDACTED] – Feb 28, 2011

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

When I first received your letter I was uncertain whether it was written in Sumerian, Chaldean, or one of the Paleo-Siberian languages. Examining the letter under strong magnification, however, I began to perceive certain figures that seemed faintly to resemble letters of the cursive form of the Roman alphabet. Some of these letters appeared in combinations that could be speculatively interpreted as words of the English language. Proceeding, then, upon the hypothesis that your letter represented an attempt to write English, I spent several hours dilligently applying the methods that Michael Ventris had used with Cretan Linear B, and –incredibly– I actually succeeded in deciphering your letter, or most of it. This is a feat that surpasses even the cracking of the Japanese code during World War II. I'm so proud of myself that now I'm thinking of undertaking the decipherment of Linear A.

I do think however, that it's time for Harvard to begin requiring all students to take a course in penmanship...

# Letter Series S

## Letter #1. From [REDACTED] to Ted – Mar 13, 2013

March 13, 2013

Dear Mr. Kaczynski,

I assume that you will not write back ...



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Ted Kaczynski, Math Tutor

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