Ted Kaczynski's Correspondence with Lily Yang

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Lily to Ted — June 22, 2021

[A COMMERCIAL CARD SHOWING A CAMPSITE AT NIGHT UNDER A STARRY SKY, WITH TEXT READING:]

You're the type of person I'd enjoy camping with if I were ever to camp.

Which I am not.

June 22, 2021

Ironic card cover photo, huh?

I am Lily Yang, a 19-year-old soon-to-be computer scientist. Undoubtedly you hate me for my chosen career path, but allow me to explain. I graduated from [REDACTED] school in [REDACTED] and I will graduate with a bachelor's degree in computer science in a few months at the end of [REDACTED]. I've read your Wikipedia (online encyclopedia) page starting from when I was a child, but I didn't consider directly contacting you until recently.

(Ignore what's on the back of this paper. I didn't have any other pieces of paper to use.)

I've read both "Industrial Society and Its Future" and Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How. Although I agree with certain parts of both works, I do not understand how you can advocate for a return to the wilderness as a viable solution to the problem of technology subjugating modern humans to the control of the technological society as a whole.

My parents, like yours, are immigrants. They came from a rural background, from the countryside of a city called [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] province of China. My father speaks of having not enough food to share between him and his eight siblings even though his parents farmed the rice paddies day after day. My grandmother recalls a famine in the village leading her to eat branches and leaves for weeks on end. Dissatisfied with rural poverty, they decided to immigrate to America and pressure their children to pursue an education to advance their socioeconomic status. I was admitted to the prestigious [REDACTED] school in [REDACTED], and I'll be graduating early from college in a few months.

Living in a first-world country does involved trading hours of your day in exchange for material goods and financial security and can invite a sense of purposelessness to life once basic needs have been met. But the dissatisfaction from an unrealized power process is surely much more preferable to poverty or dying from a lethal snake bite in a remote village with no antidote (it happened to my grandfather). The values promoted by the current technological system seem to be security, convenience, opportunity, and upward mobility at the cost of liberty, free time, and privacy. Undoubtedly, you are a smart individual, so maybe your entire manifesto has just gone over my head, but I think there are genuine merits to living in a first-world technological society.

I do think that climate change is a serious problem for my generation, though. According to an online article, you have been writing to 18-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg about this. I am curious on your input and advice for what my generation should do about this urgent issue.

Sincerely yours, Lily Yang⁽¹⁾

Ted to Lily — August 3, 2021

TED KACZYNSKI to LILY YANG [REDACTED]

August 3, 2021

Dear Ms. Yang:

- 1. Thank you for your letter dated June 22, 2021, which I received on July 30. (The prison mail system is decidedly inefficient.) You write, "Undoubtedly you hate me for my chosen career path." No, I don't hate you. On the contrary, I like you, and that's why I'm answering your letter.
- 2. Don't believe what you read about me in [sic] Wikipedia or anywhere else on the Internet, because a lot of it is bull manure. For example, contrary to what you wrote in your letter, I've never had any communication with Greta Thunberg, and my parents were not immigrants. All four of my grandparents came from Poland, but both my parents were born in the U.S.
- 3. You write that you "do not understand how [I] can advocate for a return to the wilderness" (which, by the way, is not a very accurate statement of my views), and you illustrate by mentioning the rural poverty in which your parents and grandparents lived. But what does rural China in the 20th century have to do with "wilderness"? As you know very well, China has been highly civilized for many centuries; so rural poverty there illustrates the faults of civilization, not those of "wilderness".

Anyway, has it occurred to you that if your father and his eight siblings didn't have enough food to share among them, maybe your grandparents were to blame because they had too many children?

The case of China exemplifies a common (though not universal) pattern: When preindustrial societies have come in contact with modern industrial society, they usually

⁽¹⁾ Signed, then printed.

show no interest in modernization and prefer to continue their traditional way of life — until they lose respect for their own culture when they see how weak and ineffectual it is in confrontation with the overwhelming power of modern technology. Whereupon they become avid for modernization.

In China during the late 19th century — as you perhaps know already — there was widespread resistance to foreign influence and to the introduction of such modernizing abominations as railroads; most Chinese wanted to continue their traditional way of like, rural poverty notwithstanding. See, e.g., Michael Dillon, *China: A Modern History*, I.B. Tauris, 2017, pages 122–23; and Mary Clabaugh Wright (editor), *China in Revolution: The First Phase*, 1900–1913, Yale University Press, 1971, pages 16, 28 ("Even in the late nineteenth century, resistance to industrialization was overpowering.") But in 1900 the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion by the Western powers and Japan, followed by their looting of Beijing, decisively demonstrated China's weakness, with the result that virtually all Chinese angrily rejected their own "backwardness" and fervently embraced modernization. See M.C. Write, op. cit, pages 1–19.

- 4. For a full understanding of my position you need to read my book *Technological Slavery*, Fitch & Madison edition, Volume One. Because I like you, I'm ordering a copy for you at my own expense. You should receive it by the time you receive the present letter, or shortly thereafter.
- 5. You ask for my "input and advice for what my [sic] generation should do about this urgent issue [i.e. global warming]." I refer you to Chapter Two of Anti-Tech Revolution¹. As I've argued there, whatever is done about global warming will in all probability be too little and too late; and even if global warming can be prevented from becoming utterly disastrous, modern technology is disrupting our environment in so many other ways that the Earth will probably become uninhabitable. And even if I'm around about that, I've argued in Part V of Chapter Two that human beings will eventually be replaced by intelligent machines. Can you answer my arguments, point by point? If not, do you worry about that fact that, as a computer scientist, you may be contributing directly or indirectly to the development of artificial intelligence and therefore to the replacement of human beings by machines?

If I'm right, then the only thing that can prevent the extinction of the human race will be the total collapse of the technological system. When that happens, the vast majority of the human race will die from starvation and disease, or in fighting over scarce resources. But if the collapse occurs before the Earth has become uninhabitable there will be many survivors, and the human race will not become extinct.

It's a bitter prospect, but nothing better is possible.

Just out of curiosity — does [REDACTED] still require students to [REDACTED]? Do you know how to read and write Chinese?

 $^{^{1}}$ Did you read the first or the second edition of *Anti-Tech Revolution*? If you have the second edition, then I refer you also to Part B of Appendix Four.

Lily to Ted — August 15, 2021

August 15,2021

I originally wrote my letter on June 22, 2021 and mailed it a few days later but didn't specify the P.O. Box, so the letter bounced back and I had to resend it. That is why you received my previous letter on July 30.

Yes, all students at [REDACTED] are required to [REDACTED] if they entered in the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] if they entered in the [REDACTED]. They recently revamped their admissions system to admit more black and Latino students by prioritizing applicants from zip codes in underserved communities. When this action provoked a lawsuit from white and Asian parents, the judge ruled that the new admissions system was permission because "zip codes are not a proxy for race," which is a lie, as zip codes are clearly being used as a proxy for race, especially considering how segregated [REDACTED] in terms of its neighborhoods and the racial makeup of them. Yet, if you oppose the new system, you will be branded racist, and buzzwords like "diversity," "equity," and "progress" are used to justify the change as a good thing. I agree with Industrial Society and Its Future when it mentions that affirmative action is leftists' way of regarding blacks' existence as a social disgrace and pushing them into technoindustrial society. I attended the [REDACTED] Middle School when I was 11 years old and I was the only Asian girl on the school bus. Most students and that school were project kids and called me "chinese girl," "chinese bitch," "ching chong bakahaya,"⁽²⁾ names like that, and they had no interest in school. It's not that they couldn't succeed if they tried, it's simply that they didn't care about school. But leftists claim that their behavior is due to the circumstances they grew up in and that society oppresses them.

By the way, you are so eminent that when I posted your letter on my Snapchat (social media app for talking to friends on the smartphone), some of my friends didn't believe that it was actually real. Alumna from [REDACTED] and students at Columbia University that know me say it's surreal that you actually wrote me back, and one friend of mine called you "one of the most intelligent/mysterious/important people of the human race." Lol. A lot of people, as you know, hate you because of your bombings of innocent people. For example, Thomas Mosser, an advertising executive at Burston-Marsteller [sic] that was killed by one of your bombs, supposedly was affiliated with Burston-Marsteller, but that firm was never connected with Exxon in cleaning up the

⁽²⁾ Lily seems to write these as lower-case — no capital C on "chinese"

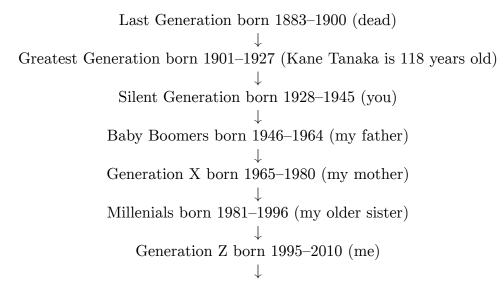
Exxon Valdez oil spill.⁽³⁾ He had a 4-year-old daughter at the time of his death. Many people argue that your hatred of technological society still does not justify the deaths of all those innocent people that were loosely connected with technoindustrial society in some way; how is being a computer store owner, as in the case of Hugh Scrutton, deserving of death?

I notice that my handwriting is getting sloppier as my letter continues. Sorry about that. Also, you asked me if I know how to read and write Chinese. I can speak enough Chinese to communicate with relatives when I visit them in Chine and I know how to write my name: [REDACTED] but other than that, I'm illiterate in Chinese characters.

Since you haven't seen the outside world since 1996, I am wondering, how much do you know about modern society? I was born in REDACTED 2001 and my first memories start around 2004, and a lot has changed since even then. I'm sure you know about the proliferation of smartphones and social media. People use smartphones to do everything nowadays, and social media acts as a way to present yourself online and keep people updated on your life, but the consequences can be ridiculous. For example, if you post a questionable or unpopular opinion on social media, people can witch hunt sic you and get your fired from your place of employment. Claira Janover posted a TikTok (video sharing social media, like YouTube but targeted toward teenagers and young people) post of herself saying, "I hate All Lives Matter. If you think all lives matter, imma [sic] stab you, then get a papercut and say my cut matters too!" For context, All Lives Matter is a slogan against the police brutality movement Black Lives Matter. Internet users were so angered by Janover's video that they found her LinkedIn (career-oriented social media) profile and go her fired from her job at Deloitte, a tax firm. This is just one example of how hyperconnectedness is problematic, as there is no privacy and everything on the Internet is forever. If you do a Google search of Claira Janover, you will see countless news articles about that incident, and it will remain that way until she gets old and dies. People have to walk on eggshells and keep a low profile nowadays so that something like that doesn't happen to them.

Maybe another modern example of how modern society has made life ridiculous is Elsagate, a controversy in which questionable so-called "kids' videos" have proliferated on YouTube (video sharing website owned by Google) and contain adult themes. The have titles like "kids nursery rhymes education learning," but the videos contain themes such as bugs, death, injections, urine, feces, pregnancy, and blood, despite the colorful cartoons that the videos are. There is speculation that bad actors are making such videos to scar young children and make a profit off the extremely popular videos, an people worry about what today's children are being exposed to as they grow up in an increasingly digital and crazy era.

 $^{^{(3)}}$ This is half-true: Burson-Marsteller has officially denied any involvement in managing the Exxon Valdez spill, but admitted to carrying out a case study for Exxon after the spill occurred.



Generation Alpha born 2010-present (today's children, who watch Elsagate YouTube videos)

In your manifesto, you predict that industrial society may break down in 40 to 1000 years, so you predict that will happen between 2035 and 2095. That means that any predicted societal breakdown will likely happen in my lifetime. I guess I will see whether your predictions are correct or not.

OK, this letter is already getting long enough, so I suppose I will end it now. I will not be able to reply until 2022 due to having to attend my last semester of college, but I will still receive any mailed reply you send me and will probably respond to it later.

Best, Lily Yang

P.S. Curious: do you think life is short of long?

P.P.S. Another friend said "There is some poetic irony in willingly accepting mail from the Unabomber."

P.P.P.S. In your letter, you feared that artificial [STRUCK OUT: development] intelligence would become so advanced that human beings would be effectively replaced by machines. Could you elaborate on what sort of decisions these machines might be making. You think they will do all our jobs for us, including computer science jobs themselves, and eventually we will all be useless. Maybe I'm naive, but this sounds like science fiction. When do you predict this will occur?

Ted to Lily — October 1, 2021

TED KACZYNSKI

to LILY YANG

October 1, 2021

Dear Ms. Yang,

Thanks for your letter of 8/15/21, which I received on 8/23/21. I have so much work to do that I can only address a few points from your letter.

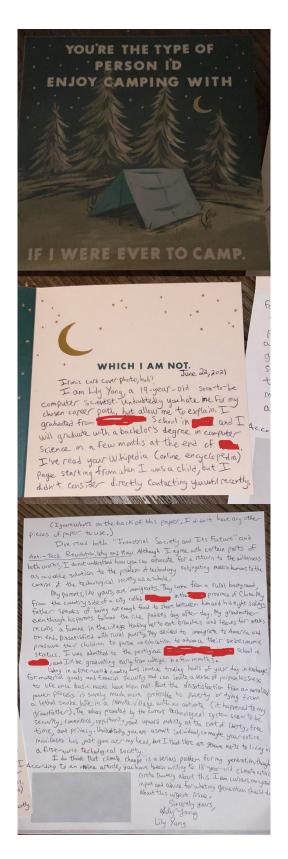
1. I'm disappointed in you. You posted my letter of 8/3/21 on the Internet. Don't you realize that that is copyright infringement? I'm not planning to sue you for it, but you should be aware that copyright infringement is a potential issue for legal action. I will appreciate it if you will delete my 8/3/21 letter and refrain from posting on the Internet any other letter of mine. Thank you. But, apart from that, I'm disappointed that — apparently — you belong to that shallow youth culture in which youngsters seek status by (among other things) posting celebrities' letters on the Internet.

All the same, I find it impossible not to like you.

- 2. Contrary to what you wrote on page 4 of your letter, I did not [STRUCK OUT: prede] predict that the system would break down within the next 40 to 100 years. Please reread paragraph 162 of ISAIF (the "manifesto"). I hope you've received the copy of *Technological Slavery* (Fitch & Madison edition) that my publisher has sent you at my expense. You should read paragraph 162 of ISAIF as it appears in *Tech Slavery*, because any version of ISAIF that you've read elsewhere may be serious inaccurate, In any case, my estimate of 40 to 100 years was only an offhand guess, and I wouldn't try to defend it.
- 3. Regarding the probably replacement of humans by intelligent machines, see Anti-Tech Revolution, Chapter Two, Part V; Technological Slavery (2019 Fitch & Madison edition) pages 201, 229–230, 277–78. The late Stephen Hawking, who has been called the greatest theoretical physicist since Einstein, maintained that artificial intelligence was the most dangerous of all threats to the survival of the human race. Possible or probable replacement of humans by intelligent machines is discussed in Bill Joy's article "Why the Future Doesn't Need Us," Wired magazine, April 2000, and in Martin Rees's book Our Final Hour, which also appeared under the title Our Final Century.
 - 4. You've studied [REDACTED] for at least three years, yet at the ...

[AT THIS POINT THE PICTURE OF TED'S LETTER CUTS OFF, WITH THE FOLLOWING NOTE:]

"The rest is just rambling about language semantics and the Spanish language."



TED KACZYNSKI ILY YANG August 3, 2021 Dear Ms. Yang: on for your letter dated June 22, 2021, which I 1) Thank you for your letter dated June 22, 2021, which I received on July 30. (The prison and system is decidedly inefactively you have no for my chosen trickent You write, "Undoutrelly you have ne for my chosen career path" No. I don't hate you On the contrary, I like you not think why I'm assured your letter.

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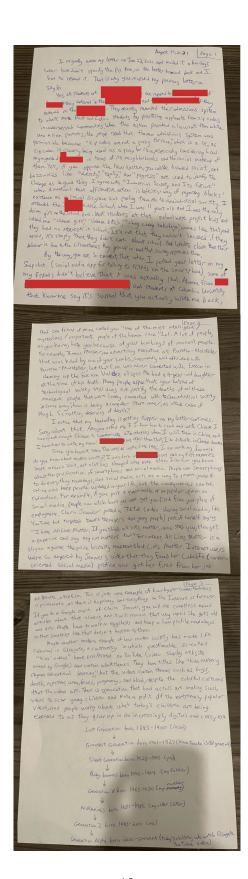
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With friendly regards. Ted Kaozynski # Did you read the first or the second edition of Anti-Tech Revolution? If you have the second edition, then I refer you also to Part B of Appendix Four.



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(a) You've studied for at least three years, yet at the "The rest is just rambling about language semantics and the Spanish language"

The Ted K Archive

Ted Kaczynski's Correspondence with Lily Yang June 22, 2021 — October 1, 2021

www.thetedkarchive.com