

In Praise of Epoch Readers

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Stacks of The Epoch Times newspaper in New York City on July 13, 2023. Samira Bouaou/The Epoch Times



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1/10/2025 Updated: 1/10/2025

Print

Commentary

You are part of a powerful, vibrant, super-engaged, erudite, and well-educated community. It extends from coast to coast in the United States but also to Canada, Latin America, and around the world. You are deeply informed, passionate and dedicated to ideals, sophisticated

in your understanding of the world, open-minded toward facts, ready to engage in support of moral intuition and the cause of freedom. You are a mighty worldwide community even if you do not know everyone in it.

I'm newly aware of this because I've spent the last 10 hours, with many more to go, reading personal emails to me from many thousands of readers. Through a technological oversight, probably traceable to my own error, there was a stash of emails from readers that had escaped my notice. They were sent over the course of 24 months, and I'm working like crazy to get through them all. I deeply regret this but I do not regret gaining a vibrant picture of the wild upheaval of our times and how good people have dealt with it.

I'm not finished with my task but let me say: I'm absolutely blown away by the intelligence and pure fire I'm seeing in all these correspondences. And I'm deeply touched that so many of you are taking the time to dedicate yourselves to understanding and to public affairs. I can say with absolute assurance: you are changing the world. Every one of you.

You see, the readership of this paper, obviously vast and international, is of a highly special sort. You are not among the sheep or the "non-playing characters" frequently ridiculed on social media. You know what is what, how to read the surface and how to read what is under the surface, how to integrate ideas from history and from many disciplines, how to understand the relationship of the public mind and its influence on power, and so much more.

You might think you are alone but I promise that you are not. You are part of something grand, glorious, and epochal. You are the generation of change, the one that said absolutely not to the despotic trends of the last years and you have made possible what many thought was impossible, an actual shift in many sectors toward a recovery of the values that have built civilization itself.

Not only that but you know what the odds are and you have refused to be told that you cannot make a difference. You have known all along

that the only way in which that is true is if you do nothing.

Instead you have decided to do something. You might have formed a supper club, hosted reading groups, passed out articles to friends, shared thoughts and news on social media, fought back against censorship, read deeply and reflected, taught your children, cared for grandchildren, prayed, and got active in your community even against enormous social pressure.

In such times, these are acts of moral courage. Against the wind and risking so much, you decided to trust that doing the right thing will be rewarded. And you were and are right about that.

You have all had your internal struggles against loneliness and despair. You have realized that all those terrible emotions you felt were there by design. Somebody somewhere thought it would be a neat trick to make us all socially distance from each other, and then they banned funerals and weddings. They censored online groups and fed you only the information that the powers-that-be approved.

They put masks on kids and closed their schools. It was brutal, unconscionable. They said you can always buy liquor and stream movies and surely that is enough. Then they put a mask on you and told you to line up for untested shots.

You saw through it all, fought against your own personal darkness, and worked to get your life together, put new groups together, and get the lights on again.

You stood up, sometimes feeling very alone, against all the powers in the world: the whole of mainstream media, the whole of medicine (seemingly), the whole of academia and digital tech (seemingly), and the world's most influential billionaires. You looked at these mighty groups and thought back to the story of David with his slingshot against the terrifying giant. You knew that it could be done because you know the legends, the history, and the moral urgency.

And you did it. We seemed to have turned the corner. If not that, we have lived to see power blink and the media flinch. We've seen the world's most powerful people who told you what to do and what not to do gasp in astonishment that you did not believe and did not go along. You have instead used these terrible years to read, to contemplate, and to act.

You have deployed every freedom you have to win back freedoms for everyone, or at least to give freedom a fighting chance again. You posted. You hosted. You talked. You voted. You met new friends and assembled new communities that shared your pain. And you spoke openly and honestly about how you think and feel and you listened to others.

There have been times when you have done quiet service acts to help the lonely, the injured, the lost, the defamed, the cancelled. You thought to write a note of encouragement, to invite people into your homes, to show up with a loaf of bread or a meal, to make a loan, to put others in touch with other people you know. You have helped those who were afraid to ask, comforted people in more despair than you, and reached out based on a small intuition that turned out to be right, just at the right time.

You might have saved lives.

The message for years has always been: give up and submit. But you refused to do that. That is not what you were born for. You were born to live and live a good life and bring others along with you. Some elites did not think you were capable of that. Sometimes you doubted yourself. But you rallied and found sources of energy within that you didn't know were there. It felt good and the more you worked, the more you acted on your intuition, the stronger you grew and the more energy you had.

You searched hard for sources of hope. You found it in music, old books, some old movies, in the wisdom of a child's questions, in some long memory of your favorite teacher, a passing comment from Mom or Dad, or a passage from Holy Scripture. You found truth therein,

much more than you could find from following the mainstream and conventional wisdom. And, yes, you did your own research!

The expertise in this trove of emails is what amazes me the most. I write about serious topics, historical topics, economic topics, domestic topics from laundry to cooking, and throw in essays on music and the arts, while celebrating the outdoors and dinner parties and groceries and anything else. Without fail, I've received notes from Epoch readers who know more about each topic than I know. You have shared your own stories and your own wisdom.

Every reader has made himself or herself a partner with other readers, and those of us with bylines and all the many people who make this institution possible. We deeply appreciate it.

Despite the awfulness of what we have all been through together, these have been times of cleansing and inspiration, a period of learning and growth. We have all lived to tell the tale to future generations of how civilization seemed lost but gradually came back—perhaps a bit like wartime or natural disaster.

We are hardly through the darkness and still deal with the machinery that is still very much alive. But even with that, we have something else now. We have the prescription and blueprint for how to emerge in victory.

We know moral courage works because we've seen it with our own eyes. We've seen the mighty flinch, stumble back, run the other way, and sometimes even just fall. It is thrilling not because we like to see people humiliated but simply because it encourages us to know that we can make a difference.

And we can. This is the Epoch Times community: informed, intelligent, eloquent, passionate, far-seeing, and deeply engaged. The modern world has never experienced anything like this. Most of us haven't either, but we are all learning together what it means to grow, learn, and make a difference in our own lives and see how that affects others. This is the way to rebuild the world we almost lost.

What a difference it has all made. And it is the grace of my life to go through all of this with you. From the bottom of my heart: thank you!

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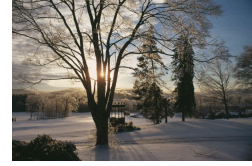
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