



By [Jason Miller](#)

While it's a commonly held belief that "everyone has a nonbiological twin somewhere in the world," I wonder if we all have an antithetical "anti-twin" as well. Because I recently met someone who could easily be mine. Ironically enough, it was at the public library, one of my favorite haunts.

It'd been a particularly cold winter and the mercury had finally inched up to where it was light jacket weather, so I decided to spend a day prowling around an area called The Country Club Plaza, a Kansas City "landmark."

Picture the Plaza as a physical incarnation of the spiritual realm where all the souls of the "good" members of the bourgeoisie will transcend once they've run themselves to death in the race to acquire the most toys.

Featuring rather exotic-looking architecture styled after that of Seville, Spain; retailers who demand credit approval and notarized validation of net worth exceeding six figures prior to entry into their establishment (so as to prevent "the rabble" from invading their luxurious fiefdoms); and restaurateurs whose appetizers cost enough to feed a family of four for a month, this "shopping district" is at the nexus of what some people refer to as Kansas City's "old money." Suffice it to say that the inhabitants of the palatial estates lining nearby Ward Parkway and State Line Road enjoy extensive insulation from the current "economic downturn."

In fact, before his approval ratings fell off a cliff and he became a pariah to his own party, George Bush paid a visit to The Plaza en route to the home of Scott Ward, the local candy magnate who maintains co-controlling interest in the privately held Russell Stovers corporation, a company the "journalists" covering the business beat for the Kansas City Star (our daily corporate fish wrap) would characterize as an "engine of the local economy." Bush came that day in 2006 to raise money for Missouri's Republican candidate for US Senate. As one of the several hundred members of the "hoi polloi" who showed up to protest "all things Bush," I was actually very fortunate. Not just because I was within earshot of Bush's motorcade when I yelled profanities at that pusillanimous sociopath. But also because I had the "audacity" to step outside

the “protest zone” and scream at a cop that he was a fucking fascist protecting a war criminal, yet somehow I managed to avoid getting tasered or arrested.

I’m meandering a bit here, but I do have a point. Armed with at least a notion of The Country Club Plaza and its demographics, you now have a context into which you can place Jacob Arnst, my anti-twin and a resident of the Plaza area, whom I’m about to introduce.

Addicted as I am to reading, learning, studying, and researching, my feet naturally made their way to the Plaza branch of the Kansas City public library during the course of my wanderings. As I was perusing the well-worn book spines for names like Best, Jensen, Zerzan, Marcuse, Adorno, Mills and a host of other anti-capitalist malcontents, my eyes happened upon a rather harsh looking older man with a stocky build, squatty stature, thin and wispy gray hair that was well on its way to extinction, tanned and leathery skin that gave him a rather reptilian appearance, a well-manicured moustache contrasting sharply with a heavy five o’clock shadow, and a badly coordinated but obviously expensive outfit. His bright orange Baby Alpaca cardigan, though of exceptional quality, didn’t quite match his Agave Cowboy denims, his purple Prada distressed suede ankle boots, or his black dial Rolex Migauss. His ensemble, which also included an ostentatious gold rope chain that would have looked more at home on Kanye West, made for a very odd-looking combination. I noticed that he’d lingered in the same aisle as me for about ten minutes, so I initiated a conversation with a hello and an inquiry about his reading preferences. He didn’t seem too open to talking. Without even glancing my way he grunted a barely audible “hi” and mumbled something about finance, investment and economics. I wondered why the hell he was searching shelves lined with books by Marxists, anarchists, socialists, and anarcho-primitivists.

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