

FS News: Team Polis Edition

Hello Friends of Fair Shake ~

This is a very scary time of year. The headlines have become more ghoulish and gruesome every day. Fear sells, and pundits are offering frightening deals in preparation for voting day on Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>.

The bi-annual blood-sport of running for office has dominated screens through the debates and advertisements. Party-puppet vampires want to suck the democracy out of our citizens! We were warned about these days by prescient authors George Orwell and his book "1984" (1949), and Aldous Huxley, with his book Brave New World. (1932) Social Critic Neil Postman said that Orwell "feared that the truth would be concealed from us" and that Aldous Huxley "feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance". He suggests that Huxley, not Orwell, was right. Who tells the truth? Anybody at all? (Omitting information is, of course, lying.) We are addressed by candidates, "astroturf" non-profits, newscasters and corporations as if we are stupid and easily manipulated by creepy, dehumanizing 'talking heads' and designer propaganda.

We could despair. We could feel like it's 'game over' and the ghouls, zombies and monsters have won. And we could, instead, remember this is just another inning and we can still turn this game around! Polis vs. Plutocrats!

We can leverage technology by 'forking' our current system to SEE our power as citizens through gizmo apps that don't track us OR manipulate us but, instead, help us hear one another, and discuss the things we want (which smooth-talking pundits promise, but consistently fail to deliver) and decide to work on projects with our most valuable resource: each other. We can shrink the frightening and domineering monsters into committed public servants by flexing our voting and vocalizing muscles to render their plute-polluted money worthless! We can push away their tricks to get the treats we've earned: the American dream where we can "free the future for the benefit of all" (quote by Audrey Tang). It's time for us to take the wraps off our eyes so we can look to one another to do the work that the zombie representatives hamper.

Before I say anything else, I want to take a moment to THANK THE VETERANS who read this newsletter: I'm grateful for your commitment, dedication and service. I may not see 'eye to eye' on the mission – or the budget – of our military, but I do see 'eye-to-eye' with human beings who care. I'm indebted to the folks who are willing to do whatever is necessary to protect me. Thank you, Veterans!

And thank you, Donors! You are committed to not only supporting Fair Shake, but you also support the other readers here, and folks who will be coming home from prisons around the country, and their supporters, and even more diverse stakeholders! Just this week, in fact, an executive contacted me to ask where they could offer a free, full-day employment preparation course for formerly incarcerated people! Donors, you facilitated that connection by making sure Fair Shake is strong so I can help them help others. Thank you! Thank you also for continuing to send in envelopes. I have been able to send out the 1-stamp packet of flyers so people will leave prison with a variety of information and a guide to using the Fair Shake website. The flyers inform the recipients that they are receiving the documents thanks to our Generous Donors! Thank you, Donors!

I'm BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN – yee-haw!

I've just returned from a 10-day trip to PA where I was able to talk with about 700 people in state and federal institutions. I took a lot of notes, which I'm excited to review and share. One exciting bit of news sticks out: I learned that there are small business loans for formerly incarcerated entrepreneurs available...for up to \$50,000! More on that in the next edition.

### JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS NETWORK

Although their "Re-entry Search Services" are not accessible to you (only service-providers) they say they are committed "to improve outcomes for justice-involved veterans." The contact page does not offer an address, so I thought I'd share the address to the national office. You might want to write to them and ask about the Veterans Reentry Programming, Barracks Behind Bars, and Veterans Reentry Court! I sent out a couple of emails asking these questions, too. We can compare notes when we hear back from them!

### JUSTICE INVOLVED VETERANS NETWORK

810 Vermont Avenue NW.

Washington, DC 20420 Ph: 844-698-2311

By the way: I copied the information from their flyer. If you would like to see it, start a new message with VETERANS INFO in the subject line, and I'll send it to you!

Please share this email address with your supporters to follow the Dept. of Ed as this rolls out.

<https://info.nicic.gov/jiv/>

### PELL GRANT NEWS

Pell Grants are coming back in about a year. Prison education program rules set standards for public, private, and non-profit institutions to implement effective prison education programs to provide incarcerated individuals with the education they need. The Education Department has announced that incarcerated individuals are also eligible for FSA's "Fresh Start" initiative, which will help borrowers with defaulted loans access low monthly payments based on their income and allow them to access Pell Grants to help them resume their educational journey. Yay!

### WHAT FEELINGS SHOULD I FOLLOW?

*"Feelings are just visitors. Let them come and go." — Mooji*

Tom Asacker has written a small reflection on directing our lives by our deepest values.

"Someone once asked me: If we have evolved to be led by our feelings, how do we know that they are trustworthy judgments? Is there a way to determine which ones are reliable guides and which ones we should simply ignore?" If you'd like to read his full document, please start a new message with FEELINGS in the subject line and I'll email it to you!

### SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO DEVELOP DEMENTIA, or DEEP FORGETFULNESS

Do you know people whose memory is fading? Stephen Post, author of Dignity for the Deeply Forgetful, offers suggestions to help to reduce feelings of anxiety and enhance feelings of 'continuation', care (including being cared about) and engagement. Post stresses the continuity of selfhood in persons (not patients, not victims, not disposable objects) experiencing the increasing challenges of cognitive decline. He argues for a deeper dignity grounded in consciousness, emotional presence, creativity, interdependence, music, and a self that is not "gone" but "differently abled."

- Develop the practice of noticing and responding to the inner person that endures underneath the chaos of Alzheimer's
- Find hope in being "open to surprises."

- Connect with deeply forgetful people through art, poetry, and music, which can be as simple as listening to one of their favorite songs.
- Help them to maintain a healthy diet and get regular exercise, preferably outside.

## BOOK CATALOGS

I want to shout out a big Thank You to everyone who sent in book catalog suggestions! A reader wrote in to find out about other book suppliers besides Edward Hamilton. Now I have a list to share with you! If you'd like to receive the list, please start a new message to me with BOOK CATALOGS in the subject line and I'll reply with the list!

## BOOK OF THE MONTH - Brave New World – Aldous Huxley

The text below is a blend of Wikipedia quotes and my comments.

A dystopian sci-fi novel written in 1932 by social critic Aldous Huxley. Set in a futuristic World State, whose citizens are engineered into an intelligence-based social hierarchy. The novel anticipates huge scientific advancements that are challenged by a single individual: a human who wants to feel human. Huxley reflected and revised insights in his prescient novel 30 years later in Brave New World Revisited (1958).

Huxley used his novel to express widely felt anxieties, particularly the fear of losing individual identity in the fast-paced world of the future which had become an intelligence-based caste system using social control. His World State was built upon the principles of Henry Ford's assembly line: mass production, homogeneity, predictability, and consumption of disposable consumer goods. He envisioned a contented, well-conditioned, pain-free society where citizens regularly ingest "soma" to suppress unwelcome emotions.

In a letter to George Orwell (1984), Huxley wrote "Whether in actual fact the policy of the boot-on-the-face can go on indefinitely seems doubtful. My belief is that the ruling oligarchy will find less arduous and wasteful ways of governing and of satisfying its lust for power. I believe that the world's rulers will discover that infant conditioning and narco-hypnosis are more efficient, as instruments of government, than clubs and prisons, and that the lust for power can be just as completely satisfied by suggesting people into loving their servitude as by flogging and kicking them into obedience."

Social critic Neil Postman contrasted the worlds of 1984 and Brave New World in the foreword of his 1985 book Amusing Ourselves to Death: "What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one. Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture....with an almost infinite appetite for distractions."

The book is a classic and may already be in the library! If you've read 1984, you might want to look at the current state of events in the world, while pondering both perspectives, to see if either - or both - apply today.

## QUOTES

"How you do anything is how you do everything." - Zen Buddhist proverb

“People are just as wonderful as sunsets if we can let them be. In fact, perhaps the reason we can truly appreciate a sunset is that we cannot control it. When I look at a sunset as I did the other evening, I don’t find myself saying, ‘Soften the orange a little on the right hand corner, and put a bit more purple along the base, and use a little more pink in the cloud color.’ I don’t do that. I don’t try to control a sunset. I watch it with awe as it unfolds. I like myself best when I can appreciate people in this same way.” - Carl Rogers

“By replacing fear of the unknown with curiosity we open ourselves up to an infinite stream of possibility. We can let fear rule our lives or we can become childlike with curiosity, pushing our boundaries, leaping out of our comfort zones, and accepting what life puts before us.” — Alan Watts

“The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them.” - George Bernard Shaw

“The purpose of knowledge is action, not knowledge.”- Aristotle

Closing Question: How can caring and better thinking become ‘cool’?

I’m looking forward to watching the polls on Tuesday! Voting, of course, is just one of the myriad ways that we can improve our life together.

To our successful transitions ~

Ubuntu! ~ sue

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As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:  
2-1-1 Fairshake.net HelpYourselfTherapy.com FindHelp.org

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.