

FS News: BANNED BY THE BOP!

Final edition: Will Work for Freedom

Q3 2025

Hi Friends!

I hope your Fourth was good...perhaps, at least, a day off with decent food? It sounds like fireworks are becoming a(nother) thing of the past. We continue to have fireworks in my small town, but across the nation drones are replacing the noisy, risky and messy – although emotionally appealing – annual fireworks display. (This is happening globally, for New Year's Eve, too.) As a side note, most of the fireworks used in the US are made in China...where they originated in the 2nd century.

Today, the 5th of July, it is hot in western Wisconsin. A friend of 20 years called and asked me if I'd been outside yet. He said the air was extremely humid. I reminded him that I don't have central air conditioning, so I don't need to go outside to know this. This type of question happens frequently to me...regarding TV, microwaves and dishwashers, too... none of which I possess. How can people who have known me for a long time forget? Not having central air keeps me aware of what everyone endured until 80 years ago, and what many people around the world continue to endure today. I believe that remembering suffering is critical to reducing suffering and it's very easy to not remember the suffering of others.

"Think occasionally of the suffering of which you spare yourself the sight." - Albert Schweitzer

I wondered: What bias is this that causes people to not consider the experiences of others? I started to search for an answer using AI since a lot of folks have told me how great it is. (Please remember, AI is neither artificial nor intelligent. It is just a language model, loaded with information, intentionally configured to provide controlled responses to queries.) Unsurprisingly, I did not find it to be helpful; it was often more confused than I was.

So I took the old-fashioned route and looked at the Cognitive Biases Codex on the Fair Shake website. I looked up several biases, and I looked up words in the dictionary. I spent more than an hour searching to find a word or phrase for this very familiar phenomenon. I found that the medical industry, uses the word 'apathy' as a treatable condition (ker-ching!), and the psychology folks call this an 'egocentric bias,' where we only consider our perspective or experience. But I believe the problem lies in our conditioning.

We are conditioned to accept things without question. Like the news. Like the search engine that says it is 'thinking'. And like the simulated voices that people allow to 'tell them' how to get from point A to point B. I remind people that the fake voice (Siri, et al) is not a 'he' or a 'she' and they roll their eyes, even though they just said that it was. Slowly, and without resistance, we become conditioned.

Searching for the bias or fallacy for "not regarding the experience of others" told me that this is an area that "AI" doesn't want me to explore. I'm used to it, though. I run into walls like this all the time. When you use AI, which will be ubiquitous very soon, don't be discouraged! Just don't trust it. Consider it to be one opinionated perspective (it is not neutral). If you want to learn about something using the internet, be sure to check at least 3 sources before making your decision. Even then, remember that what you found is still not all the info there

is on a topic; it's simply the information you accept. It might be a good idea to make at least one search that includes the term you're looking for and add the word 'controversy.' When you do that, you can at least find out about critiques on the topic, which can be very helpful!

As always, I want to make a loud shout out to the Fair Shake donors. Thank you so much for making Fair Shake possible! And to those who share their reflections about the newsletter and those who ask for more information...you are all guides to help me keep digging for information that we can all use.

As for people who don't care about the conditions others must endure, this is an ongoing challenge that we will have to work together to address. As life gets weirder – and that Big Bill is going to do just that – we'll have to continue to educate others – including our representatives! - on the importance of knowing about all aspects of our society.

Speaking of our representatives: In March, at a 'town hall' meeting, I asked a Wisconsin representative to tell me what was going on within the BOP. I was hearing so many awful things, I thought Congress would be up in arms! After I reminded him of several issues that made national news, he replied: "I'm not on that committee." I'm not kidding. He knew what was going on in the big El Salvador prison but he did not know – or care – what was going on in the prisons that he is directly responsible for.

This is not the first time I've heard this response. All of our legislators are directly responsible for your care. Clearly, they need to hear from us! Now I write to my representatives every day. If you want the mailing information for your state representatives, let me know and I'll be happy to send it. They need to hear from you!

You can tell them how you feel about this:

The FCC will allow prison phone price gouging through 2027

The reason? The FCC commissioner claims that prison administrators would simply stop allowing incarcerated people to use the phone if they can't make commissions. I know I don't have to tell you that prisons can make a lot of money on phone services. Up to 50% of the money incarcerated people spend on telephone calls is routed back to the government, or the privately-held company, that operates the prison. By the way, did you know that the GEO Group made the maximum contribution to the Trump campaign, and the day after the election, their stocks doubled in value? In the recent past Atty. General Pam Bondi was a lobbyist for GEO and Tom Homan, Trump's "border czar," was a consultant.

For folks releasing to Wisconsin, get a free legal TUNE UP with LIFT!

The folks at Legal Interventions For Transforming (LIFT) have create a tool that can help you address legal issues in these areas: reinstate a driver's license, remove criminal records, remove eviction records, address debt and change child-support orders. It's a DIY that is easy to use and you will not need a lawyer, but you can contact them with questions. I used the tool and it's really easy! Plus, they do not store your information. They need your name and date of birth while you're using the tool, but when you're done, your info is erased. The tool is free for everyone...so let your family and friends know about it, too! It can be found online here: <https://liftwisconsin.org/legal-tune-up/>

VETERANS FOR PEACE

Veterans For Peace is a global organization of Military Veterans and allies whose collective efforts are to build a culture of peace by using their experiences and lifting their voices. They inform the public of the true causes of war and the enormous costs of wars, with an obligation to heal the wounds of wars. Their network is comprised of over 140 chapters worldwide whose work includes: educating the public, advocating for a dismantling of the war economy, providing services that assist veterans and victims of war, and most significantly, working to end all wars. They have a number of 'working groups', including a Veterans For Inner Peace working group and a Homeless Veterans working group, however, I didn't see a working group for Incarcerated Veterans. Perhaps they need one? If you'd like to contact this group, write to them here:

Veterans For Peace

3407 S. Jefferson Ave, #219

St. Louis MO 63118

<https://www.veteransforpeace.org/>

BOP 1st Step + 2nd Chance "Cumulative and Stackable"

Would you like to read the memo from Director Marshall that was sent out on June 17th? Let me know and I'll send it to you! Your supporters can find it here:

<https://www.bop.gov/news/pdfs/20250618-fsa-directive-and-sca.pdf>

NEW BOP DEPUTY DIRECTOR

At the turn of the century, Josh Smith served 5 years in a BOP camp in Tennessee. In 2021, he was pardoned by President Trump. And on June 5th of this year, he was appointed BOP Deputy Director. Josh founded a reentry organization called Fourth Purpose. You may be able to get info by contacting them here: Fourth Purpose P.O. Box 2372 Knoxville, TN 37902. (Your supporters can check them out here: <https://fourthpurpose.org>)

I realize this does not directly impact state institutions, but it is worthy of consideration!

Business Start-Up Solicitation

Shawn Carson reached out to Fair Shake to advertise in the newsletter. He wants to let you know about a business opportunity he's created. I do not know anything about this business, but I said I would pass on his email address and you can write to him for more information.

He has a Corrlinks account set up, and you can reach him at

allegiancebusinessgroup@gmail.com . Sorry, he did not provide a mailing address.

The Fair Shake App. is on the GED computer!!!

Some folks have found it and others have not. Some say that Education has no idea, and I just hope we can help them find it. Please let them know they can contact me directly (outreach@fairshake.net) or IT at Central Office to learn more! If they know where JSTOR is, the app where folks can look up articles and papers for their studies, then they know where Fair Shake is. It's on the same computer. You will have to register to use that computer but you do not have to be a student. I've heard from a few folks who have said it's not available where they are. I'm gathering stories to share with IT to trouble-shoot, so I hope you'll let me know about your experience.

QUOTES

"On Juneteenth, we celebrate the end of slavery, we memorialize those who offered us hope for the future and we renew our commitment to the struggle for freedom." – Angela Davis

"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free." - Frederick Douglass

"I prayed for freedom for twenty years, but received no answer until I prayed with my legs."
- Frederick Douglass

"No one is free while others are oppressed." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

"My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together." - Desmond Tutu

We are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

"When we should be most on our guard, we are the least critical, and we let in most insidious message of all: conformity." - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

What we think, or what we know, or what we believe, is in the end of little consequence. The only thing of consequence is what we do. ~ John Ruskin

"Earn degrees and brag about them! Once you earn them, NO ONE can take away your accomplishments." - Joseph R Mays

"Sometimes in life you are responsible for changing something, not because you are to blame, but because you're the only person who can. The responsibility falls to you." – Lisa Feldman-Barrett

To our successful transitions ~

Ubuntu! ~ sue

As always, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo: Fairshake.net & National Reentry Helpline (24/7): 844-916-2577
Newsletters are available to read or print at FairShake.net.
Fair Shake PO Box 63 Westby, WI 54667