

Rob Brezsnys's Astrology Newsletter

November 18, 2015

+

See a pretty version of this newsletter: <http://bit.ly/1N7ZdIF>

+

I mourn the bad news, and also offer a lot of good news:
<http://bit.ly/muchgoodnews>

+

My book **PRONOIA IS THE ANTIDOTE FOR PARANOIA**
is available at Amazon: <http://bit.ly/Pronoia>
or Powells: <http://bit.ly/PronoiaPowells>

Below are excerpts.

LIBERATE YOUR IMAGINATION

The fundamentalist takes everything way too seriously and way too personally and way too literally. He divides the world into two camps, those who agree with him and those who don't. There is only one right way to interpret the world, and a million wrong ways. Correct belief is the only virtue.

To the fundamentalist, the liberated imagination is a sinful taboo. He not only enslaves his own imagination to his ideology, but wants to enslave our imaginations, too.

And who are the fundamentalists? Let's not remain under the delusion that they are only the usual suspects -- the religious fanatics of Islam and Christianity and Judaism and Hinduism.

There are many other kinds of fundamentalists, and some of them have gotten away with practicing their tragic magic in a stealth mode. Among the most successful are those who believe in what Robert Anton Wilson calls fundamentalist materialism. This is the faith-based dogma that swears physical matter is the only reality and that nothing exists unless it can be detected by our five senses or by technologies that humans have made.

Life has no transcendent meaning or purpose, the fundamentalist materialists proclaim. There is no such thing as a divine intelligence. The universe is a dumb accidental machine that grinds on endlessly out of blind necessity.

I see spread out before me in every direction a staggeringly sublime miracle lovingly crafted by a supernal consciousness that oversees the evolution of 500 billion galaxies, yet is also available as an intimate companion and daily advisor to every one of us. But to the fundamentalist materialists, my perceptions are indisputably wrong and idiotic.

Many other varieties of fundamentalism thrive and propagate. Every ideology, even some of the ones I like, has its share of true believers -- fanatics who judge all other ideologies as inferior, flawed, and foolish.

I know astrologers who insist there's only one way to do astrology right. I know Buddhists who adamantly decree that the inherent nature of life on Earth is suffering.

I know progressive activists who sincerely believe that every single Republican is either stupid or evil or both. I know college administrators who would excommunicate any psychology professor who dared to discuss the teachings of Carl Jung, who was in my opinion one of the greatest minds of the 20th century. I know pagans who refuse to consider any other version of Jesus Christ beyond the sick parody the Christian right has fabricated.

None of the true believers like to hear that there are at least three sides to every story. They don't want to consider the hypothesis that everyone has a piece of the truth.

And here's the really bad news: We all have our own share of the

fundamentalist virus. Each of us is fanatical, rigid, and intolerant about products of the imagination that we don't like. We wish that certain people would not imagine the things they do, and we allow ourselves to beam hateful, war-like thoughts in their direction.

We even wage war against our own imaginations, commanding ourselves, sometimes half-consciously, to ignore possibilities that don't fit into our neatly_constructed theories. Each of us sets aside certain precious beliefs and symbols that we give ourselves permission to take very seriously and personally and literally.

Our fundamentalism, yours and mine, may not be as dangerous to the collective welfare as, say, the fundamentalism of Islamic terrorists and right-wing Christian politicians. It may not be as destructive as that of the CEOs who worship financial profit as the supreme measure of value, and the scientists who ignore and deny every mystery that can't be measured, and the journalists, filmmakers, novelists, musicians, and pundits who relentlessly generate rotten visions of the human condition.

But still: We are all infected, you and I. We are fueling the war against the imagination. What's your version of the virus?

How might we start curing ourselves of the fundamentalist virus and move in the direction of becoming more festive and relentless champions of the liberated imagination?

For starters, we can take everything less seriously and less personally and less literally.

We can laugh at ourselves at least as much as we laugh at other people. We can blaspheme our own gods and burn our own flags and mock our own hypocrisy and satirize our own fads and fixations.

And we can enjoy and share the tonic pleasures of healing mischief, friendly shocks, compassionate tricks, irreverent devotion, holy pranks, playful experiments, and crazy wisdom.

TO READ THE REST OF THIS ESSAY, GO HERE: <http://bit.ly/Liberate>

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

PRONOIA'S VILLAINS?

According to Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges, Judas was actually a more exalted hero than Jesus. He unselfishly volunteered to perform the all_important villain's role in the resurrection saga, knowing he'd be reviled forever. It was a dirty job that only a supremely egoless saint could have done. Jesus suffered, true, but enjoyed glory and adoration as a result. Let's apply this way of thinking to the task of understanding the role that seemingly bad people play in pronoia.

Interesting narratives play an essential role in the universal conspiracy to give us exactly what we need. All of us crave drama. We love to be beguiled by twists of fate that unfold the stories of our lives in unpredictable ways. Just as Judas played a key role in advancing the tale of Christ's quest, villains and con men and clowns may be crucial to the entertainment value of our personal journeys.

Try this: Imagine the people you fear and dislike as pivotal characters in a fascinating and ultimately redemptive plot that will take years or even lifetimes for the Divine Wow to elaborate.

+

There is another reason to love our enemies: They force us to become smarter. The riddles they thrust in front of us sharpen our wits and sculpt our souls.

Try this: Act as if your adversaries are great teachers. Thank them for how crucial they've been in your education.

+

Consider one more possibility: that the people who seem to slow us down and hold us back are actually preventing things from happening too fast. Imagine that the evolution of your life or our culture is like a pregnancy: It needs to reach its full term. Just as a child isn't ready to be born after five months of gestation, the New Earth we're creating has to ripen in its own time. The recalcitrant reactionaries who resist the inevitable birth are simply making sure that the far-seeing revolutionaries don't conjure the

future too suddenly. They serve the greater good.

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

A message I love, written by William Sebrans at <http://tinyurl.com/sebrans>:

"While people around the world process internally and externally their responses to the recent terror in France, Lebanon, Iraq, Cameroon, Chad, and all over the world -- doing so with all manner of goodwill, anger, political ruminations de jour, tactics, finger-pointing, judgment of each others' modes of expression, fear, silence, and noble resolve -- I remain left with two understandings:

"1. To re-commit daily to a practice of Self-realization that embodies the mystery of life, and that transcends the fierce drama and vicissitudes of human affairs -- as the Buddha and all great teachers have resolutely encouraged.

"2. To practice visible and invisible acts of kindness, forbearance, artfulness, and goodwill in the daily traffic of life.

"These practices and gestures will not generally make headlines, will not make us invulnerable to grief and shock, nor secure us the satisfying universal justice we might seek on this plane. They likely will not generate fierce debate, change policy, or get lots of likes in the Facebook lane. Nor will they pardon us from the eventual and even imminent demise of the body.

"They will, however, upgrade Life in the moment and endorse possibility in a way that marks a winged victory over the oppressive state of mind and transcends the dark illusions of our times.

"I think 'God' is indifferent, and should be, being beyond duality. But the Angels are rooting for us: That's my bias of choice."

- William Sebrans, <https://www.facebook.com/william.sebrans>

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

The Guerrilla Grafting Movement -- Secretly Grafting Fruit-Bearing Branches onto Ornamental City Trees
<http://tinyurl.com/ox35fdt>

Farmer Returns 700 Acres of California Coast to Native American Tribe
<http://tinyurl.com/nfdeyj4>

Cop and Teen Defuse Tension by Having a Dance-Off
<http://tinyurl.com/qz5bewf>

(Note: I endorse these because I like them. They are not advertisements, and I get no kickbacks.)

Please tell me your own personal nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES.

+++++

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week beginning November 19
Copyright 2015 by Rob Brezsny
<http://FreeWillAstrology.com>

Grammar key: Asterisks equal *italics*

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you were embarking on a 100-mile hike, would you wear new boots that you purchased the day before your trip? Of course not. They wouldn't be broken in. They'd be so stiff and unyielding that your feet would soon be in agony. Instead, you would anchor your trek with supple footwear that had already adjusted to the idiosyncrasies of your gait and anatomy. Apply a similar principle as you prepare to launch a different long-term exploit. Make yourself as comfortable as possible

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Here's how Mark Twain's novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* begins: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot." The preface I'd write for your upcoming adventures would be less

extreme, but might have a similar tone. That's because I expect you to do a lot of meandering. At times your life may seem like a shaggy dog story with no punch line in sight. Your best strategy will be to cultivate an amused patience; to stay relaxed and unflappable as you navigate your way through the enigmas, and not demand easy answers or simple lessons. If you take that approach, intricate answers and many-faceted lessons will eventually arrive.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The Confederation of African Football prohibits the use of magic by professional soccer teams. Witch doctors are forbidden to be on the field during a match, and they are not supposed to spray elixirs on the goals or bury consecrated talismans beneath the turf. But most teams work around the ban. Magic is viewed as an essential ingredient in developing a winning tradition. Given the current astrological omens, I invite you to experiment with your own personal equivalent of this approach. Don't scrimp on logical analysis, of course. Don't stint on your preparation and discipline. But also be mischievously wise enough to call on the help of some crafty mojo.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Slavery is illegal everywhere in the world. And yet there are more slaves now than at any other time in history: at least 29 million. A disproportionate percentage of them are women and children. After studying your astrological omens, I feel you are in a phase when you can bestow blessings on yourself by responding to this predicament. How? First, express gratitude for all the freedoms you have. Second, vow to take full advantage of those freedoms. Third, brainstorm about how to liberate any part of you that acts or thinks or feels like a slave. Fourth, lend your energy to an organization that helps free slaves. Start here: <http://bit.ly/liberateslaves>.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): UrbanDictionary.com defines the English word "balter" as follows: "to dance without particular skill or grace, but with extreme joy." It's related to the Danish term *baltre,* which means "to romp, tumble, roll, cavort." I nominate this activity to be one of your ruling metaphors in the coming weeks. You have a mandate to explore the frontiers of amusement and bliss, but you have no mandate to be polite and polished as you do it. To generate optimal levels of righteous fun, your experiments may have to be more than a bit rowdy.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You've arrived at a crossroads. From here, you could travel in one of four directions, including back towards where you came from. You shouldn't stay here indefinitely, but on the other hand you'll be wise to pause and linger for a while. Steep yourself in the mystery of the transition that looms. Pay special attention to the feelings that rise up as you visualize the experiences that may await you along each path. Are there any holy memories you can call on for guidance? Are you receptive to the tricky inspiration of the fertility spirits that are gathered here? Here's your motto: Trust, but verify.

+++++

LOVE YOUR LIFE! How's your fight for freedom going? Are you making progress in liberating yourself from your unconscious obsessions, bad habits, and conditioned responses? Are you turning out to be the hero of your own life?

For assistance and inspiration, tune in to my EXPANDED AUDIO HOROSCOPES.

These forecasts are different in tone and format from the written horoscopes you read here in the newsletter. They're longer and more leisurely in tone. They tend to bring out more of the patient counselor in me, and have a bit less of the poet.

To listen to your Expanded Audio Horoscope online, go to <http://RealAstrology.com>.

Register and/or log in through the main page.

You can also listen over the phone by calling 1-877-873-4888.

The cost is \$6 per sign on the Web (discounts available for bulk purchases), or \$1.99 per minute by phone. Each forecast is 4-5 minutes long.

The Expanded Audio Horoscopes work on most smart phones and tablets.

+

"Your audio horoscopes help me love myself better, and I mean that in a non-narcissistic way."

-Deva P., Indianapolis

"I'm really grateful for the way you pick up my telepathic requests and answer them in your expanded audio 'scopes."

-Marion H., Birmingham, AL

+++++

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): English model and TV personality Katie Price has been on the planet for just 37 years, but has already written four autobiographies. *You Only Live Once,* for instance, covers the action-packed time between 2008 and 2010, when she got divorced and then remarried in a romantic Las Vegas ceremony. I propose that we choose this talkative, self-revealing Gemini to be your spirit animal and role model. In the coming weeks, you should go almost to extremes as you express the truth about who you have been, who you are, and who you will become.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A flyer on a telephone pole caught my eye. It showed a photo of a nine-year-old male cat named Bubby, whose face was contorted in pain. A message from Bubby's owner revealed that her beloved pet desperately needed expensive dental work. She had launched a campaign at gofundme.com to raise the cash. Of course I broke into tears, as I often do when confronted so viscerally with the suffering of sentient creatures. I longed to donate to Bubby's well-being. But I thought, "Shouldn't I funnel my limited funds to a bigger cause, like the World Wildlife Fund?" Back home an hour later, I sent \$25 to Bubby. After analyzing the astrological omens for my own sign, Cancer the Crab, I realized that now is a time to adhere to the principle "Think globally, act locally" in every way imaginable.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): How well do you treat yourself? What do you do to ensure that you receive a steady flow of the nurturing you need? According to my reading of the astrological omens, you are now primed to expand and intensify your approach to self-care. If you're alert to the possibilities, you will learn an array of new life-enhancing strategies. Here are two ideas to get you started: 1. Imagine at least three acts of practical love you can bestow on yourself. 2. Give yourself three gifts that will promote your healing and stimulate your pleasure.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): To activate your full potential in the coming weeks, you don't need to scuba-dive into an underwater canyon or spelunk into the pitch blackness of a remote cave or head out on an archaeological dig to uncover the lost artifacts of an ancient civilization. But I recommend that you consider trying the metaphorical equivalent of those activities. Explore the recesses of your own psyche, as well as those of the people you love. Ponder the riddles of the past and rummage around for lost treasure and hidden truths. Penetrate to the core, the gist, the roots. The abyss is much friendlier than usual! You have a talent for delving deep into any mystery that will be important for your future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Normally I charge \$270-an-hour for the kind of advice I'm about to offer, but I'm giving it to you at no cost. For now, at least, I think you should refrain from relying on experts. Be skeptical of professional opinions and highly paid authorities. The useful information you need will come your way via chance encounters, playful explorations, and gossipy spies. Folk wisdom and street smarts will provide better guidance than elite consultants. Trust curious amateurs; avoid somber careerists.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Some athletes think it's unwise to have sex before a big game. They believe it diminishes the raw physical power they need to excel. For them, abstinence is crucial for victory. But scientific studies contradict this theory. There's evidence that boinking increases testosterone levels for both men and women. Martial artist Ronda Rousey subscribes to this view. She says she has "as much sex as possible" before a match. Her approach must be working. She has won all of her professional fights, and *Sports Illustrated* calls her "the world's most dominant athlete." As you approach your equivalent of the "big game," Scorpio, I suggest you consider Rousey's strategy.

+++++

Homework: Take a guess about what your closest ally most needs to learn in order to be happier. FreeWillAstrology.com

+++++

NEED TO CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

To join or leave the email list for this newsletter, or to change the address where you receive it, go to:
<http://www.freewillastrology.com/newsletter/>

Once you do join, check all the below points to make sure you'll actually receive the newsletter:

1. Add my address, televisionary@comcast.net, to your address book so that the newsletter won't be treated as spam and filtered out.
2. Adjust your spam filter so it doesn't treat my address as a source of spam.
3. Tell your company's IT group to allow my address to pass through any filtering software they may have set up.
4. If my newsletters don't reach your inbox, look in your "Bulk Mail" or "Junk Mail" folder.
5. The problems may not have to do with anything you do, but may originate with your email provider. It may be using a "content filter" that prevents my newsletter from ever reaching you at all. If you suspect that's the case, complain. Tell your email provider to stop blocking my newsletter from reaching you.

P.S. I totally respect your privacy. I'll never sell or give away your address to anyone.

+++++

Submissions sent to the Free Will Astrology Weekly Newsletter or in response to "homework assignments" may be published in a variety of formats at Rob Brezsný's discretion, including but not limited to newsletters, books, the Free Will Astrology column, and Free Will Astrology website. We reserve the right to edit such submissions for length, style, and content. Requests for anonymity will be honored with submissions; otherwise, reader names, screen names, or initials will be used. Please be sure to note your preference when sending to us. We are not responsible for unsolicited submission of any creative material.

Contents of the Free Will Astrology Newsletter are Copyright 2015 Rob Brezsný

+++++