

Rants, Ravings, and Reflections:
Musings, thoughts, and ideas
by Mark A Husk

Part III: Political/Social

Political/Social

If you tell me you are a Christian, that is fine. If you tell me you are a Muslim, that is OK as well. If you tell me you are an Atheist, a Jew, Wiccan, or Buddhist, I don't have a problem with that. I will not judge you on your choice of religious beliefs. What I will judge you on is your actions. I will judge you based on how you treat me, how you treat others, and how you treat this planet on which we all live.

As human beings we all carry a tremendous power to heal and to destroy everything that we come into contact with. And it's the least of these, the fragile, the helpless, the broken and the lost, who come into our lives simply because of who they are, and who we are. The tragedy of our time here on Earth may not be one of action, but perhaps one of inaction, when we had the ability to do so much, and failed. August 18, 2013

I am a firm believer in science. Not because science proves itself right, but because it continually shows itself to be wrong. August 12, 2013

Ever notice that an 18 year old man or woman can be recruited by our military, be sent to a foreign country, can fight in combat and risk their life and limb for their country, but can't come home and walk into a V.F.W. because they're not old enough to drink? August 10, 2013

So, there's this TV program called "Strikeforce" that features MMA cage fighting. It's rated TV14 and has a "L" rating for "Adult Language". There is no mention or rating at all for violence. Go figure. July 11 2013

Poverty has been directly linked to crime, hunger and poor nutrition, poor education and lack of career choices for those living in poverty. Domestic violence, alcohol and drug problems are more prevalent in poor communities. It doesn't have to be this way in America, in the richest nation the world has ever seen. When people are given the means and the ability to rise from poverty, everybody wins. July 8 2013

Two hundred and thirty seven years ago today, this band of upstart colonies declared it's independence from the most powerful nation on earth. Today is an opportunity to declare our own personal independence--from hate, from fear, from worry, anxiety, depression, anger, and anything (or any one) else that keeps us from becoming who we are truly capable of being. What are you declaring your independence from today? July 4 2013

Some of us here in the colonies really don't mind being subjects of the King. We're really just content to live and let live, and not make unnecessary waves. Actually, some of us here think that the radicals who are shouting for independence are a bit loony. They are risking their very lives and the safety of their loved ones for a silly and unreasonable pipe dream. So the British wanted to keep the colonies under their protection and control. So what? Don't these radicals realize that if the British left, no one would be left to protect the colonies from invasion from other powers like France or Germany? Who would provide us with arms, supplies, and the needs to continue to exist in this brave new world? Who would govern us and enforce the laws? Remove the British and chaos would reign, certainly. Besides, we are just thirteen small colonies, who argue quite a bit among ourselves, and some air headed radicals think we can take on the most powerful nation the world has ever seen? Yeah...good luck with that...July 3 2013

On this Memorial Day, let us turn our thoughts to those who served, and who are serving our country in our armed forces. But just for a minute, let's also consider those who are left behind when our soldiers leave for foreign lands. These are their mothers and fathers, their husbands and wives, their children. They make sacrifices too, sometimes beyond measure, and beyond their own call of duty. For our soldier's service, a heavy price is paid by all those who know and love them, and the cost continues even when they come back home. For some, the war is never over. Never.

And this is only half the cost. For every victory won, there is a loss. For every casualty, for every death, the ripples spread out like those in a pond, and affect the entire world.

Because war comes with such a tremendous cost, let us please make sure that if we have to take that step, and send our best and brightest into harm's way, we do so without any other option at our disposal. War must be the very last resort, when every other single option has been tried, and we are left with no choice. May 26 2013

I see signs that say "Pray for America" and "Pray for Boston" and "Pray for Oklahoma" and so on... What about the rest of the planet? And why do we always end up encouraging people to pray AFTER something bad happens? What about praying beforehand? What about praying for our enemies? We all like to think that if only our enemies, or those that disagree with us would come around to our way of thinking, take on our values, worship our God, then things would be better. But the end result of that myopic view is that it stunts individuality, and the freedom to express ourselves, and to question and grow. It's only by accepting other people as they are, and accepting ourselves as who we are, that any sense of community can be made on this planet. Our prayers thus, should ask simply for Peace on Earth, and for each person to treat their neighbor as they would themselves...with respect, kindness, justice, and love. And after our prayers, we stand up and put our prayers into practice. May 24 2013

It's interesting to think that with over 7 billion people on the planet, one of the most environmentally damaging things a person can do is to have a child. May 13 2013

And as far as gay marriage is concerned... there is way too much hate and violence in this world. If two people on this planet want to celebrate their love for each other and live together in peace, I'll celebrate with them! March 26 2013

Maybe one day being straight or gay will be a real non-issue, and people will accept it as just a part of being human. Then perhaps we can join together to focus on issues like stopping war and ending poverty. March 26 2013

This massive blizzard is going to hit some very densely populated areas. It's disturbing to me to think that there are some people alive right now that won't survive this storm. More than likely they will be the aged, the infirm, the poor and homeless. However, they are also someone's son, daughter, perhaps father or mother, brother or sister. Life is frighteningly fragile, and the only way I've found to face this fact is through gratitude for who and what I have, and to offer care and support to my fellow inhabitants on this earth. February 8 2013

Tomorrow is the 21st. According to the Mayan Calendar, it's the end of an age, and the beginning of a new one. Change is never easy, nor without struggle, but the struggle is necessary. A caterpillar dies to itself inside the cocoon, and is reborn as a completely different creature. The struggle for the new butterfly is breaking free of the cage that holds it. Without this struggle, the wings do not get the strength they need to be able to fly.

And so it is with us. Our struggles continue, and even though we wish it weren't so, it is necessary for us to change who we are. Sometimes slowly, sometimes with a burst of energy and speed, sometimes retreating to change direction, we continue to move, and change and grow. We as an American society have come a long ways in the 200+ years of our struggle. We have come a long ways even in one simple lifetime. Many aspects of our lives are better, and in the coming years, they will continue to improve as we work for them.

However, there is still much to do, so many issues to resolve, so many debates to have. As we grow and change, there will be more trials and more pain. Life will go on, and we who are fortunate enough will be able to raise our voice as our consciousness guides us, to help create the world we wish to live in. And the struggle for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness goes on. December 20 2012

Peace is not that hard, folks. We all have to just decide that oil and property is just not worth killing another human being over, and refuse to fight. October 3 2012

So, if a woman can be "legitimately raped" then the rapist can be "legitimately shot". Don't worry...the rapist will be fine. The rapist's body has a way to deal with those things. The body will shut down and reject the bullets, keeping him from being killed. August 21 2012

Friends, I know there are those of you who hold very strong, and radically different views and beliefs than I do. You worship a God that may go by a different name. You go to a different church, synagogue, mosque or temple. You practice your

religion as you see fit, and perhaps your religion does not agree at all with what I believe. To me, that is OK. I accept that.

There are however, deeper, more urgent issues that we face than theological debates and arguments. We are all called, in my belief, to serve and love one another. That is a commandment that we all can believe in and must act upon. How can we argue amongst ourselves about who is going to Heaven and who is sinning when there are so many people on this planet who don't have enough to eat? Who have no place to call home? Who are destitute, poor, broken, sick and without the simple things that will sustain their very lives?

We have so much more to do, so much work to be done. So let us put aside our prejudices, our judgmental attitudes, our self-righteousness, and work together to help those who cannot help themselves. Salvation of the soul is nice, but we cannot put that above simple acts of love for our fellow human beings. August 7 2012

No child wants to grow up to be a drug addict, or a prisoner, impoverished, or filled with hate and madness. Sometimes when I look at these people whose lives are in ruins, I try to think of them when they were children playing in a street or park, and I wonder what went so terribly wrong in their lives for them to end up where they are. June 20 2012

In most of the offshoots of Christianity, Sunday is a holy day. For the Seventh Day Adventists, it's Saturday. For Islam, it's Friday. Why not treat every day as a holy day? June 10 2012

Complacency is one of the greatest traps ever devised. We learn to accept things just as they are, without much complaint, without action, without growth. It supports poverty, injustice, violence, neglect and abuse on an individual and global scale simply by convincing those who are capable of making a difference to sit back and do nothing. And we are all capable of making a difference. June 5 2012

I don't care who you are, what color of skin you have, whether you are male or female, what religion you practice or don't practice, or what you believe. If you are on the side of peace, love, and cooperation, I celebrate you. May 31 2012

And another thing...Let us remember on this Memorial Day other things we have lost besides the life of a human being: Limbs, minds, innocence, families, sanity, love, peace, identity, and the list can go on and on. It's time to not only honor the fallen, but to honor all that we have lost in the name of war. May 28 2012

On this Memorial Day, may our thoughts turn to not only the soldiers who fought for our country, but also to the innocent victims of war. The mothers and fathers who lost their children, the husbands and wives who lost their spouses, the children who lost their parents. May we do everything in our power to make sure this never happens again. May 28 2012

It's always amazed me that we can send people to the moon, we can communicate instantly with anyone anywhere in the world, we can find cures for horrible diseases, but we still can't stop killing our fellow human beings. May 23 2012

America is not a Christian nation. If America was a Christian nation, there would be no hunger, no homelessness, and healthcare would not depend on the amount of money you make. Everyone would be treated equally and war would be the very last resort, never the first. Food would be safe to eat, water safe to drink, and nuclear weapons would be unthinkable. Love, compassion and respect for everyone, including the planet on which we live, are primary Christian values. Until they become prominent in our lives, in our government, in the way we treat each other and the world, we cannot be anything like a Christian nation. Christians need to be appalled at what we are doing as a people and as a government and demand more Christ-like behavior from those who we have put in office. April 22 2012

In the Christian tradition, we read: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36 KJV). I wonder, what shall it profit any of us, if we should gain the whole world, yet lose our own soul: as individuals, as a nation, or as co-inhabitants of this planet that we all live upon? March 25 2012

If the Occupiers really want to change the world, they can start by showing kindness and respect towards themselves, towards other people, and towards the Earth. March 6 2012

Message to Congress: How about putting all the arguing about abortion, gay marriage, and deficit blaming on hold until we make sure that nobody in the US goes to bed hungry, has to sleep in the streets, or dies because they can't afford medical care. Just a suggestion. February 25 2012

I've often heard it said "There but for the grace of God go I." Well, isn't that nice. God likes you, and he doesn't like the other person? He blesses you and somehow skips over someone else? You are somehow more holy, more righteous than others? You happen to pray to the "right" God and things go right, someone else prays to the "wrong" God, or prays the wrong way and things don't go as well? How about this: The person you see, the broken, the addicted, the poor, the hurt---That IS YOU. Do something about it. February 19 2012

Gee, so California and Washington State are on their way to legalizing gay marriage. So..."Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." I have yet to see any reason why gays and lesbians cannot get married that is not also tied to religion. Religious ideas, no matter how noble and well-intentioned, cannot be enforced by the government by law. Period. In these United States, we are made up of people with differing faiths, who are free to worship and practice their religion as they choose. It's part of what makes us great, what draws oppressed people to

our shores. It's what we call Freedom. So, if Christians want to marry each other in this country, fine. If Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Wiccans, even Atheists want to marry each other in this country, fine. Christianity, nor any other religion has a lock on who should get married and who should not. If you don't like it, tough. Welcome to America. (you know, come to think of it, we had this same conversation about 50 years ago about inter-racial marriage.) February 9 2012

Let's see... We have the biggest sports event in the US, being played in a stadium called "Lucas Oil", with a military jet flyover, and sponsored by beer companies, with a half-time show by none other than Madonna. Yup. 'Merica at it's finest. February 5 2012

I don't have a problem with people wishing me Merry Christmas, or Happy Holidays, or even Happy Festivus. What matters is not the god that you call upon, or the beliefs that you hold. What really matters is that you are wishing peace and happiness to another human being. December 24 2011

I am always wary of those who tell me to be afraid, or to be alert because there may be an enemy lurking near by. This does nothing to promote trust, peace, or mutual understanding and respect. December 16 2011

Compassion supercedes religion, race, sexual orientation, age, ability, national affiliation, and creed. It is a universal force that we can tap into any time. December 16 2011

There are approximately 1.57 Billion Muslims in the world today. That makes up about 22% of the world's population. In the US, there are approximately one Million Muslims. If Islam is a "violence-promoting religion" as some would have us believe, why is it that the whole world is not in flames? Could it be that the majority of Muslims, like the majority of Christians, simply want the same thing--Peace on Earth, Good will towards men? December 16 2011

I have to confess, and come out of the closet. I am a heterosexual. I've been living a heterosexual "lifestyle" all my life. I can't remember when I decided to be heterosexual. I'm in a relationship with a woman. We're married and have been living together for over 16 years. My partner and I are happy and well adjusted, and we don't go around promoting our "lifestyle" or trying to convert anyone. I really don't think this is a "phase" I'm going through, and I don't think I can learn to be homosexual. Sorry if this upsets you, but I guess I was just born this way. November 17 2011

What does it cost to go to war? Money, materials, men, women, children, blood, brains, bones, death, destruction of lives, of futures, and the cost goes on for generations. Who decides if we should go to war? The President. Congress. Who pays the price? We do. What does it take to not go to war? Who should make that decision? November 11 2011

At the age of 18, a person can join the military, be given a gun, get sent overseas, risk life and limb for their country, kill people, yet cannot come home and walk into a VFW and drink a beer... October 29 2011

In every major religion, there is the idea that what hurts one, hurts all. We have the capacity to care, the ability and the resources. So what are we doing to ease the suffering of others? October 18 2011

If you are complaining because it's Monday and you have to go to work, shut up. You have a job.

If you groan from your minor aches and pains, shut up. You have your health.

If you are griping because you are stuck in traffic, shut up. You have a car.

If you have indigestion because you ate too much breakfast, shut up. You have food in your stomach.

If you can read this and you think your life sucks, shut up. You can read and you have internet access.

How can we really complain when over two-thirds of our brothers and sisters living on this planet don't have the simple things mentioned above?

September 26 2011

It doesn't matter if Troy Davis was guilty or innocent. It doesn't matter if you believe in the death penalty or not. What matters is that he was put to death by an extremely flawed justice system. Refusing to address this is an injustice to us all.

September 23 2011

Perhaps a generation from now, we will look back on the DADT law and silently shake our heads at the ignorance of it.

September 20 2011

A man is scheduled to die tomorrow. The state of Georgia has refused to grant him clemency, despite knowing that there are serious questions concerning his guilt. The US is the only "First World" nations to still have the death penalty, believing still that it represents "justice", that it deters crime. How do we justify the legal murder of a potentially innocent man?

September 20 2011

I just happened to glance up at the CNN news while sitting at a car dealership. On the screen was a picture of a man who is sentenced to be executed in a few days, despite the controversy over the legitimacy of the evidence against him. On the bottom crawl was a note where a marine was being given the medal of honor for killing other people. It made me think about how we value life.

September 15 2011

There certainly is holiness and the sense of communion with God in a church, temple, or mosque. But to me, there is a greater sense of holiness and communion in the

simple joyous activities we all engage in--birthday parties, festivals, family and community gatherings--anything that celebrates us, our human adventure, and brings us together in joy and peace, to me is as holy as any formal religious experience.

September 3 2011

Our "Representative Government" has for some time now, turned a deaf ear to the wishes of the majority of the people. What do we have to do to get our Government to listen to us?

August 29 2011

We often pray about our circumstances to see which of the choices that are before us is God's will, but we also need to check with trusted others when we hear what we think to be "God's voice" calling us to do something.

August 29 2011

Note to Christians, Muslims, and Jews...I know your beliefs are important to you, but that does not give you the right to impose those beliefs on others. To those of you who agree with this, please help make your religion more attractive by not letting the radicals of your religion get away with their threats, violence, prejudices and fear-mongering. Thanks.

August 27 2011

Everybody is up in arms over Irene and the Debt Crisis. To me, these are not nearly as threatening as what we are doing to our own health and allowing to be done to our own environment.

August 27 2011

Care for the environment and care for social justice goes hand in hand. We cannot have one without the other. What exploits and damages one, also exploits and damages the other.

August 17 2011

If the news were a TV show, it would have to be on late at night, way past primetime, and it would probably be censored a lot more.

July 26 2011

On the news it showed a bunch of gay people getting married yesterday in NY. I feel so bad for all the children who were traumatized by watching two people celebrate their love for each other.

July 26 2011

If the United States is a "Christian nation", then that automatically makes second class citizens out of people who are not Christians, and violates the very first Amendment to the Constitution.

June 28 2011

On this Memorial day, let me be bold enough to ask, What the hell do we have to do to keep our Government from sending our young men and women NEEDLESSLY into harm's way?

May 30 2011

In our search for justice, we need to come to a balance that recognizes the humanity of not only those whom we incarcerate, but also of ourselves. It is too easy to "Lock 'em up and throw away the key", and forget that what we do to others, we ultimately do to ourselves. With more people incarcerated than any nation in the world, if these people don't die in prison, they eventually will get out and move next door to us.

May 24 2011

Many major religions remind us to live in the moment, putting aside fear of the future and regret of the past. Not an easy thing to do when so much of our society seems to thrive on these very things...

May 21 2011

I find it interesting when we live in a country where millions go to bed hungry, or live in the streets, where crime and murder is rampant, where the infrastructure is crumbling, and our education and health systems are antiquated and rotting, that the issues of gun rights, abortion and gay marriage seem to be our politicians' biggest concerns.

May 11 2011

If most of the world was gay, then we would be asking ourselves what causes heterosexuality.

May 6 2011

When the Catholics elect a Pope, the Cardinals have a Conclave, where they lock themselves into a big room and don't come out until they have all reached an agreement. Think it would work for our Congress?

April 8 2011

If our representatives in government can't work together well enough to keep the United States Government from shutting down, maybe we need better representatives.

April 8 2011

Peace, Love, and Justice demand action. None of these can truly exist without the others.

March 30 2011