

Reflections on 'A Brave New World'

Don, my reflections on this text have helped me solidify what I believe the purpose is of an educator and trainer in all levels of education. I seem to have a bit of a different, maybe, take on the direction this text might lead us. In fact, this reading and the discussions at class may have helped me define my mission as an adult educator and what roles I might fulfill in the discipline to help skew the bell curve to the right for people in our society and world who will participate in the wealth available to all of us.

The title of the book has little meaning to me as I see each and every new day in our radically changing world as a brave new world. The pace of change is so large and the instability this change creates is so great that all of us are faced with a brave new world in an ever-evolving climate.

I believe the world that the book 'A Brave New World' is describing **is a world we are emerging from rather than going into**. This exploration of a utopian world is a reaction in my view to the repetitive work necessary to drive a mechanized society and the people necessary to thrive in this type of world. The overriding theme of the text seems to be one of driving *community-identity-stability* through *acceptance of role*. *Efficiency and stability* are critical components of this new world. Consumption for the sake of consumption to drive the production of the society are state driven, not demand driven.

There are many pieces of information, messages, and data that can be held in several ways, based on the context within which that content is held. My context is that technology is driving repetitive and mechanized work out of our society, not forcing it in. Given this, technology is creating an opportunity for those not born into privilege to share in the wealth of the world, but not without help. Given this context, I believe we need to fully understand the training and conditioning techniques that were used in the text and insure we use those techniques, if we do at all, to develop people across the world that are able to participate in the radically changing and technologically advancing world.

I believe this directly takes us away from the '*secret of happiness and virtue*' defined in the text: *Liking what you've got to do by making people like their inescapable social destiny*. I believe that technology will liberate rather than force people into an inescapable social destiny!

Some of the techniques used to support a society driven by repetitive and mechanized work that are illustrated in the text include:

- *Standardizing the inputs into the process to reduce the variability in the outcome*. Particularly in the concept of twining. Being a quality trainer, this is right out of quality 101 for an organization, reduction of variability in inputs reduces the variability of the outputs. As we are now moving into a knowledge-based work place, and more and more depends on human interaction and soft skills, this becomes less and less valid on a human level, but more and more valid on an information flow and manufacturing level. We need to drive creativity and individually into humans, not take it away. This variability may help insure the success of humanity!

- If we can *control and manipulate the inputs* into a child's environment, we can alter and or influence the behavior of the adult. In an information or knowledge-based society, this will be harder and harder to do as children all over the world will have more and more access to information reducing control of behavior. Further more, I believe where this is important is to insure access to knowledge for all children of the world and technology is key to this.
- *Negative reinforcement* is heavily used to condition. As a trainer and educator, how do we use this technique and when is it appropriate to reinforce a learning environment rather than preventing one?
- *Spaced repetition to condition* is also heavily used in the text. Again, as a trainer and educator, how do we use this technique and when is it appropriate to reinforce a learning environment rather than preventing one?
- *Don't let lower casts read as they may get ideas*. Now here is one for the books in the old society. Put the kids to work right out of school. What is that age by the way 12, 15, 18? They work better with little education. This is absolutely contrary to the worker we need in the future. We certainly do not want to reinforce this edict!
- *Moral education* is critical to this society. In the context of the book, it would be better described as immoral education. Consumption, immediate want fulfillment, and greed drive this moral education which is necessary to drive the economy. Now here I concede, we probably do have far too much of this behavior in our society but it is driven by a drive for corporate production and profits. A part of a system I am fully engaged in but uncomfortable with at the same time, I have major concerns over this.
- *Class indoctrination* is far different than being born into a class in our society. Yes there is some indication of this; however, technology can drive a huge wedge in the classes. If we are to skew the bell curve of human performance and opportunity to the right, educators will need to lead this charge! They certainly are not used to eliminate it as they do in the text!
- *If one doesn't fit the mold, one feels like an outsider*. Unfortunately this seems to be part of human nature, the creation of clicks to keep those out who are not the same. Again, I believe as educators, we can create learning environments that help reduce this and support the assimilation of people into the new knowledge-based work environments. If we learn to introduce change effectively, we can reduce this behavior.
- *One believes things because one has been conditioned to believe things*. As educators, we can have a substantial impact on helping people break the bands created by the early childhood conditioning of poverty of mind and opportunity. Technology can substantially impact our ability to do just this.

One of the last quotes in the text that was of importance to me and delivers the message that the world we are evolving into is going away from the type of world defined in the text is as follows: "Civilization has absolutely no need of nobility or heroism. These things are symptoms of political inefficiency." Nothing could be farther from the truth of what we need in our brave new world! We need people that can lead, think and innovate and in fact, we will falter and crumble without nobility and heroism! We as trainers and educators must see our roles as facilitators who have learned how to use technology to foster nobility and heroism in the people of the world. We can help crush boarders

between classes, societies, and countries as well as help drive opportunity and wealth to all of the people of the world. This is the brave new world we are driving to and exactly opposite of the one outlined in the text.

I see this course as a vehicle to create educators that will lead the world in the use of leading edge techniques and technology to close the gap between those that are able to participate in the opportunities and wealth of the world and those that can not. This must be a worldwide movement but it must start with each of us as individual educators. If we learn and then model this new knowledge, we can truly be change agents for the world driving us away from the world envisioned by Huxley, not toward a world of conditioning, classes and control.

I see my mission over the next 2 ½ years at this; to learn these concepts and move into the world and apply and model these concepts to help skew the bell curve to the right for people who are able to participate in the opportunity and wealth of the world. A brave new world? I think not! Let's work together to insure we never head back in the direction of Huxley's 'A Brave New World', a world of conditioning, classes and control.

Don, I thank you for providing the context and facilitation to help create educators that will lead this charge. It does not take much trim on the rudder of a large ship to change its course! You are providing the power to trim this rudder. Keep up the great work.