

Creative Leadership in a Prison?

The seminal work of Dr. E. Paul Torrance has been defining those processes and attitudes for all the many years of his research and publications until his recent death. In his later years he initiated the term "Beyonders" to describe highly creative persons who "do their very best, going beyond where they have been before and going beyond where others have gone." Ed Poindexter's achievement is typical of Beyonders.

Some time during the almost forty years of my educational action and leadership in the Discipline of Creativity, it began to be very clear that the creativity force could have a powerful role, not only in individual lives, but also, by extension, in all of society, including the troubled social and international scenes. The purpose of this article is to report an example of creative leadership in a prison.

At the Lino Lakes Correctional Institution in Minnesota there is an unusual and socially significant creative enterprise. It is a program titled "EsteemQuest," designed and directed by a prison inmate serving a life sentence. The creator is Ed Poindexter who has been in prison for thirty-three years. He is the one best qualified to describe his work's history and its purpose.

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Why Not?

by Berenice Bleedorn

by Russ Barnes



ACA Names PIXAR Lifetime Creative Achievement Award Recipient

ACA has tapped Pixar Animation Studios of Emeryville, California, to receive the annual Lifetime Creative Achievement Award at ACA's April 1-3 conference, *THINK TANK 2004*, in Houston. Pixar, an animation film company, is creator of a number of the most beloved animated films of all time including *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*, *Monsters, Inc.*, and *Finding Nemo*.

ACA's Lifetime Creative Achievement Award seeks each year to honor a person or organization that has made a contribution to the field of creativity—or has benefited society in a creative way. These innovative and beneficial contributions may include an invention, a discovery, an artistic work or performance, a research study, an educational program, or a community service.

"Pixar fulfills many of our award criteria in one fell swoop," explains Marilyn Schoeman Dow, ACA's awards committee chairperson.

"Our selection of Pixar for this year's award is, of course, driven by the artistry of its creative film productions. But Pixar is also an innovative software developer, and encourages a creative corporate culture—what I like to call an *animated corporate culture*."

Pixar's creative teams have developed several software systems: *Marionette* for modeling, animating, and lighting; *Ringmaster* for production management; and *Render Man II* for high quality, photorealistic image synthesis.

For more information on the conference and the award, log on to the ACA website at www.amcreativityassoc.org. Please let your friends, colleagues, and customers know about the ACA conference and its ACA Lifetime Creative Achievement Award to Pixar. ACA is unique because it is a global network of creative professionals in disciplines ranging from business and industry to education and the arts. This cross-discipline and cross-cultural approach has made ACA the primary resource for learning and applying creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and ideation theory, tools, and techniques for more than a decade.



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* Former ACA president



President's Column

by Tara G. Coste

recreating Creativity



This time finds us in high gear for our ACA gathering in Houston, *Think Tank 2004: Recreating Creativity*. Conference Chair Rolf Smith has developed an exciting program that will take us on a fascinating three-day adventure into the realms of effective problem-solving and innovation with impact.

Thursday will highlight best practices in creative business & leadership;

Friday will explore the latest in creativity tools & techniques;

Saturday will examine how to optimize creative thinking and learning.

Over the course of our time in Houston, we will hear from:

♦ **John Lienhard**, voice of the critically acclaimed radio broadcast *The Engines of Our Ingenuity*, who will share his unique perspective on the way inventive minds work

♦ **Mark Young**, former FBI Special Agent and behavioral sciences expert, who will share the knowledge he has developed from three decades of working complex behavioral problems

♦ **Anthony Le Storti**, author of *When You're Asked to Do the Impossible*, who will share the lessons learned from over 20 years of examining how leadership and other human dynamics influence high-performance teams

♦ **Marci Segal**, an internationally recognized creativity author, speaker, and coach, who will share her expertise in strategic creativity and innovation practices

As we move forward into the 21st century, we continue to build increasing diversity into our offerings. Our international program has recruited presenters from across the globe who will reveal innovations from a wide range of cultures. Our corporate partnership program has led to new relationships with Pixar; Kellogg, Brown & Root; EDS; Texas A&M University; National Instruments; the MD Anderson Cancer Center; Houston ISD; Pizza Hut; and Barnes & Noble—all of whom will contribute to ACA's efforts in 2004.

Think Tank 2004

is promising to be an intense three days of full immersion into the art, science, and application of creativity. We look forward to seeing you all in Houston!

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The EsteemQuest Class for Inmates at Lino Lakes Minnesota State Correctional Institution

Lifer Ed Poindexter longs for a life outside

by Doug Grow

Excerpts from
STAR TRIBUNE
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Minnesota
January 15, 2004



Poindexter is one of those characters you come across whose words, attitudes and presence stick. Handed a life sentence for a cop killing in Omaha nearly 33 years ago, Poindexter, 59, has managed to make a meaningful life for himself inside prison walls.

In that time, he's written an entire curriculum on self-esteem, which he believes would help keep troubled youngsters out of prison and help keep current inmates from being recidivists. He teaches. He writes. He does his job as a clerk in the Lino Lakes Prison.

And he still hopes that someday...

"This cannot be treated as a vast wasteland," Poindexter said. "We have to get inside people and heal whatever's going on. It's like a patient in a hospital. You don't send people out of the hospital and back to work until they're healed."

While he waits for the day that may never come, he seeks meaning and peace.

"I can't allow myself to wake up with negativity on my mind," he said. "When I wake up each day, I try to visualize something positive."

EsteemQuest is a holistic educational/motivational class, born and housed at the Minnesota Correctional Facility at Lino Lakes, Minnesota. It is the brainchild of inmate Ed Poindexter, a lifer who has facilitated the class since 1990. The twelve-hour class is now available as a one-year pilot project for implementation in the community.

Living and working among a group of "sociopaths" and trying to figure them out may seem a daunting task to some, but what makes us tick is the same stuff that makes everyone else tick. I became increasingly aware of the disturbing trend of inmates returning to prison in record number after they had been out for less than a few months—in many cases, only weeks—so I set out to find out why. It didn't take long to learn that these men had a critically deficient self-concept, namely low self-esteem, low self-confidence, self-worth and self-love, and a poor self-image.

What does it take to make them want to use their minds for something other than a battering ram? To build and create? To consider the possibilities instead of the limitations? To believe in themselves, and never again say, "I can't"?

After circulating hundreds of questionnaires and speaking with many of the inmates, I developed EsteemQuest, a one-hour class, to address the problem of what could help them to remain drug and alcohol free, to live pro-social, productive lives, to stop murdering themselves piecemeal, and to pursue prosperity and ultimate happiness.

The beauty of EsteemQuest is that it's designed as an educational and motivational class; that it's nonconfrontational and nonthreatening to prison inmates. Instead of browbeating and confronting inmates about their antisocial and self-destructive behavior, they are taught to focus on their inner self, to heal their tattered spirits, and to re-create themselves in the true tradition of the Phoenix. Thus far inmate and staff responses to EsteemQuest have been overwhelmingly positive.

by Ed Poindexter

My special interest in Ed's work began twenty years ago when he enrolled in the classes in Creative Problem Solving and Futures Studies that I was teaching for a local university. I met the class of one at the Stillwater State Prison. From the beginning it was clear that Ed Poindexter was an exceptionally able and motivated scholar. When the courses ended I continued contact with him during his years of advanced studies, writing, and the development of the EsteemQuest program. When a letter from him reported his failed efforts to connect to a related program sponsored by the County Commissioners office, I was able to serve as a catalyst for the connection. I arranged a meeting at the prison with Hennepin County Commissioner, Mark Stenglein, an active advocate for providing services for the underserved population of young black men.

The meeting was a classic example of breakthroughs that are taking place between and among people of distinctly different populations who share a purpose and who have access to quality, integrative thinking processes. There can be no doubt that many of the serious problems of society and throughout the world have their origin in the level of thought that operates from an absolute, polar-

ized single-minded position. Intellects that can perceive and acknowledge the validity of realities outside of their own experiences and belief systems are important resources in the search for integration and harmony of differences, and, ultimately, of a peaceful world.

Most practitioners in the field of creativity have had the satisfaction of seeing positive results of their leadership in the creative growth and development of individuals and groups in school settings as well as in business and social marketplaces. The practice of strategies for stimulating new ideas and alternatives for solving problems pays off big time. Studies and practices of the affective domain of the creative personality—flexibility, a tolerance for ambiguity, a preference for complexity, independence of thought, persistence, resilience, sense of humor, awareness, and the ability to visualize—condition the mind for higher order thinking; also for the self-esteem and confidence that comes from creative self-expression in a climate supportive of individuality and diversity.

The world struggle to make a more peaceful transition to the new international integration of differences is calling for the levels of thinking that have their base in both the cognitive

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Creativity Makes the Whole World Kin!

It may be our global
answer to chaos and
confusion—although it can
have plenty of its own
by Anne Durrum Robinson

*I have been thinking this
statement to myself for quite a
lo-o-ng time. Because I have
personal and continuing
proof that it's TRUE!*

'C'est La Damned Vie' and Growing Old Creatively

by Nancy Edwards

Ageless Anne
Durrum Robinson
just turned 90

Excerpts from
austinwoman
Austin, Texas
June 2003



Aside from her active schedule and workshops, Robinson is currently working on four books: a novel, a children's book, a humorous travelogue—she's seen 35 countries—and the one on creative aging.

Any tips on getting older—creatively? Oh, yes. "Have friends of all ages," she says. "Be optimistic about yourself. Emphasize the positive aspects of living rather than the negative. Read. Study new things. Laugh in the right way as much as possible."

Example I:

A number of years ago—before bad therapy and a collapsed hip kept me from attending national conferences—I was teaching a creativity workshop at the gathering of the Creative Education Foundation. In that workshop was a bright, attractive young woman named Nicolín Hoffmann from South Africa. I have visited that fascinating country so was doubly interested in talking to Nicolín. We were walking back to the Hub—gathering place—together when Nicolín told me that she, too, teaches creativity workshops. "And," she said, "I always end my workshops with the same poem." I write poetry so I was immediately interested. "What poem?" I asked. "Can you repeat it?" "Oh, yes," Nicolín told me. "It's short." She went on to say the poem for me:

To Be Creative

*To be creative is to trap the wind
And tame it for the blowing of a kiss.
To be creative is to net a star
And, with its shining, light a room like this.
To be creative is to snare the sun
And transform daybreak into blazing morn.
To be creative is to mount a mule
And, riding, change it to a unicorn!*

I stopped dead in my tracks. "Nicolín," I yelled. "That's *my* poem! Where in the world did you get it?" She had found it in the international newsletter that Margy Herrmann had edited for a number of years for Herrmann International. I had been sufficiently flattered and delighted when Margy printed the little verse. Now I was absolutely thunderstruck at my brainchild's reappearance in my life.

The upshot of that encounter is that Nicolín has (hurray!) stayed in my life. Four years ago she came with her family to New York where her husband has been working with the United Nations. Blessed e-mail—I'm not *always* that beholden to it—has reunited us and I'm crossing arthritic fingers that Nicolín will get to Austin for a brief visit before she and her family return to South Africa.

Example II:

I'm old enough—just turned 90—to remember when Spam was more or less respected food stuff. Now it's an e-mail choker. Even with the obvious e-mail address of anniecreate@hotmail.com I get untold numbers of ads on Viagra and worse. *I finally wrote a retaliatory poem but had the good sense not to send it.* So I have formed the habit of going through my e-mail and deleting immediately anything from anybody I don't recognize.

A number of months ago my e-mail carried the appellation gautamsharma@hotmail.com. Nothing familiar there. So I had my hand on the "delete" key. I also teach intuition and something kept me from pushing that key.

I waded on through the unappetizing list, ruthlessly erasing as I went. Once more I came back to gautamsharma@hotmail.com and *again* I almost deleted it. Once more something stayed my hand. When I finally opened the message it was an extremely nice one from a young man in India who is employed by an international firm and who is in the process of writing a book. One chapter, as I understood the message, is to be on women in small businesses. The author's e-mail was asking my permission for an interview.

Gautam has proven to be an intelligent, charming and thoughtful person who has many of his own ideas to share. With e-mail ease we have had numerous across-the-globe conversations. We have exchanged pictures—his, in a celebratory garb worn to his cousin's wedding, is much more impressive than mine in a birthday hat with candles. But at least we are no longer faceless correspondents. He has sent a gift representative of his storied country. I shall always treasure it.

South Africa, India, Orange (Texas) and Utah. If you check the map over you won't find four more differing hotbeds for original thinking.

Again a mutual interest in creativity has shrunk the world to conversational size.

Example III:

Quite a number of years back—I've quit counting, except in Roman numerals—I attended a Creativity conference somewhere. At one of the large sessions we were divided into groups of three to work on some challenging assignment. My threesome included me—then already white-haired and probably in my late 70's—a rather nondescript fellow, and Dale Parish. I still wish I had a photo of Dale's face when he beheld his fellow conspirators. Dale is a Mensa member, *extremely bright* and, fortunately, extremely nice. So he didn't "cuss out loud." But his face betrayed a major misgiving. One old lady. One apparently dull-as-dishwater fellow. However, our threesome did surprisingly well on our assignment. Dale's facial expression changed to one of obvious relief. We have remained friends even across

She believes negative thinking actually inhibits the memory. And it seems her positive outlook is doing its job. As she enters her 10th decade, her memory appears to be completely intact. The edges of the pictures may have faded some, but the details are still there, in full Technicolor.

“My goal has been to have a productive and reasonable happy life and to be of use to other people,” she says simply.

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the intervening Texas miles. He is from Orange, an outpost of the highly individual, and works for a large oil company.

At another national conference I arrived late and dashed into the nearest workshop, apologizing profusely for my tardy interference. A head shot out from one of the rows and a laughing voice said, “Well, Mrs. Robinson!” Of course the head belonged to Dale. Now years later we have just had a pop-in visit from our booted, Stetson-hat-ed friend. The visits may be far between but they are always creative and inspiring.

P.S. Dale combines the practical with the creative. When a tornado ripped through his neck of the woods, a large section of those woods fell down on his house—trapping his son in a bedroom upstairs. Dale had been reared in farm country so he—as I recall—borrowed a tractor and set to work to de-tree the house and release the prisoner. I truly don’t know many people who can change roles so suddenly when the occasion demands.

Example IV:

This sample includes creativity, intuition and synchronicity—which I have long considered what, in the south and southwest, we call “kissin’ cousins.” Over a long period of time I have accumulated three inspiring books on the various aspects of FLOW: that incomparable time when mind, body and spirit all seem to be


in complete accord. In the fairly recent past I suddenly had the impulse to get out my three books and “refresh” myself on them.

Because of current domestic circumstances I am wa-a-ay behind on various endeavors, so *that* urge seemed to be an unnecessary time-consumer. However, I have taught myself to pay attention to these strong impulses. Consequently I located the three volumes, laid them beside my bed, and hurriedly refreshed myself on their contents.

In no time at all I had a long-distance call from Bruce Hoerner, in Utah, who is doing a dissertation on FLOW...one which he hopes later to make into a book. Utah is a long way from Texas and I’m not sure yet how Bruce got my name but we had a long, very interesting talk.

I am holding in my documents the exciting materials Bruce sent me. One of these hectic days I will be able to pause long enough to check back on his progress.

So South Africa, India, Orange (Texas) and Utah. If you check the map over you won’t find four more differing hotbeds for original thinking.



Again I carol loud and clear:

Creativity Makes the Whole World Kin!

Creative Leadership in a Prison? Why Not?...continued from page 3

and affective domains of the creative mind. The seminal work of Dr. E. Paul Torrance has been defining those processes and attitudes for all the many years of his research and publications until his recent death. In his later years he initiated the term “Beyonders” to describe highly creative persons who “do their very best, going beyond where they have been before and going beyond where others have gone.” Ed Poindexter’s achievement is typical of Beyonders.

The meeting at the prison for a discussion of a social problem between advocates from two entirely different vantage points has made a “creative leap beyond” that can serve as an example for a broader initiative to bring a variety of diversities together for mutual under-

standing. David Santulli is executive director of “United Planet,” an international nonprofit public charity, based in Boston, Massachusetts. His concept of “relational diplomacy” is the basis of his vision for a creative range of technologically-based programs for fostering intercultural understanding.

Practitioners and advocates of creativity have reason to believe that their work in teaching for the development of individual creative potential can be seen in an expanded context. The world has need of the highest order of quality thinking and the creative action that capitalizes on the integration of differences. It can happen in a prison. It could happen anywhere.

EsteemQuest’s working philosophy is based on the following motivational paradigm:

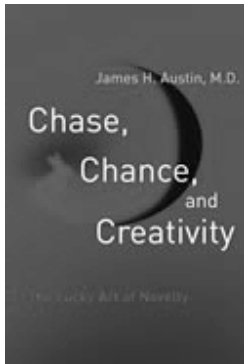
The EsteemQuest Motivational Model for the African American
is Self-Esteem of
Race-Esteem + Self-Love + Self-Worth + Self-Image + Self-Confidence

Berenice Bleedorn is an “Educational Entrepreneur” and has initiated and taught courses in Creative Studies and Futures Studies for more than thirty years in university education and business departments. She is the author of *The Creativity Force in Education, Business, and Beyond*. Contact Dr. Bleedorn at e-mail: bee@creativityforce.com

Chase, Chance, and Creativity

updated paperback edition

by James H. Austin, M.D.



Recently I read a book that truly triggered my creative thinking processes. *Chase, Chance, and Creativity* is a book that gives insight into the development and career of a biomedical researcher from an autobiographical perspective. Columbia University Press originally published Dr. James H. Austin M.D., Professor Emeritus of Neurology at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, first book, in 1977. This updated paperback edition of his book, released in 2003 by MIT, includes a new introduction and recent material on medical research, creativity, and spirituality. Professor Austin's other work, *Zen and the Brain*, won the 1998 Scientific and Medical Network book prize.

Chase, chance, and creativity are the book's three main themes.

Chase . . .

As a teenager, Austin was fond of chasing and catching wild rabbits. In his career as a biomedical researcher he was devoted to the pursuit of solutions to medical problems. The first part of the book deals with his neurological and biomedical research.

Chance . . .

The second part of the book devoted to the theme of chance was the most interesting for me. Austin views chance through the eyes of a biologist. He highlights the importance of chance by reflecting on how genetic accidents we call mutations are the basic fact responsible for the evolution of mankind. Austin sees chance alone as the source of every innovation, of all creation in the biosphere. He devotes a whole section of the book on how to court Dame Fortune and Lady Luck in our creative endeavors.

Dr. Austin describes four varieties of *Chance*:

Chance I is completely impersonal. You can't influence it.

Chance II is influenced by general exploratory behavior. It follows the Kettering Principle that chance favors those in motion. You need a persistent curiosity about many things coupled with an energetic willingness to experiment and explore.

Chance III is the result of sagacity. It follows the Pasteur principle that chance favors the prepared mind. One needs a background of knowledge based on abilities to observe, remember and quickly form significant new associations.

Chance IV follows the Disraeli principle that chance favors individualized action. The English Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli summed up this principle with "we make our fortunes and we call them fate."

Chance IV favors those with distinctive, if not eccentric hobbies, personal lifestyles, and motor behaviors.

Chance I just happens, the others are stirred up, discerned, or instigated.

Austin emphasizes that nothing is predetermined. Chance can be on our side if we but stir it up with our energies, stay receptive to the glint of opportunity, and continually provoke it by individuality in our attitudes and approach to life. The key to creative success lies in our personalized drives and sensibilities interacting with chance.

Creativity . . .

The third part of the book is devoted to the theme of creativity. Austin autobiographically describes how he grew up to be a questioning "adverbial man" whose curiosity is piqued to solve problems. He describes the researcher in any field as an "adverbial man," one who defines what happens, then figures out where, when, how and why it happens.

Austin describes how through his leisure enjoyment of creating music, pottery and painting for a small circle of friends he developed a creative mental set. Once in this creative frame of mind, new ideas come more freely. He was able to sustain this creative frame of mind in his endeavors as a biomedical researcher. I was reminded by this firsthand autobiographical experi-

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He advises the reader that every prescription for creativity must be a highly individualized one. "Learn to recognize what works for you."

E. Paul Torrance Student Scholarship Award



The ACA Torrance Student Scholarship Award honors E. Paul Torrance's lifetime commitment to supporting graduate student studies. This award is to recognize a graduate student whose study—at the masters or doctoral level—shows promise that he or she will become a leader in the field of Applied Creativity. The recipient receives an *Honorary Lifetime Membership in ACA*. This membership includes the ACA newsletter and attendance at annual ACA conferences—meals and other expenses are separate and calculated at the member rate. The awardee will be required to present his or her work at the upcoming ACA annual conference.

Nominations for 2004 award should be sent no later than March 1, 2004 to:
Dr. Fredricka Reisman
School of Education
Drexel University
3141 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
or e-mail: freddie@drexel.edu

Nomination Process

Nominations and self-nominations will be accompanied by a three to five page paper written by the nominee describing their research and how it will make a mark on applied creativity. Their degree should include a focus on the research into and/or the development of creativity.

Selection Criteria

1. The study research question makes an original, unique, and important contribution to the field of creativity.
2. Relevant application of creativity or new approach to the development of creativity is included.
3. Importance of disseminating the study findings are apparent.
4. Research design is scholarly, well thought out, and may involve quantitative, qualitative or combined methodologies.
5. Must include a recommendation by the student's Dissertation Chair or Master's Degree Advisor.

Selection Process

A three person panel comprised of leaders in the field of applied creativity will review the applications and make their recommendation based upon the selection criteria to the ACA board for final approval. The panel and ACA may elect not to present this award annually if, in their opinion, selection criteria have not been met.

Chase, Chance, and Creativity...continued from page 6

ence that Austin had, of the lecture given by Judy Laws at the ACA 2003 conference in Philadelphia. Judy Laws reported on her phenomenological investigation of Research and Development scientists' experience of creative self-efficacy. Her research showed how we can gain a belief in our own creative self-efficacy through our hobbies and this can be transferred to our professional lives. Austin adds further validation to this phenomenon.

Austin stresses the need to become very relaxed and loose. We have a need to escape from the firm grip of the Protestant ethic in which only logical work is deemed to be laudable. We need consecutive time, one- to two-hour blocks of time, devoted solely to the creative process.

Austin cited an Israeli study in which the Torrance Creativity Test was used to assess creativity in a group of Israeli students. Just before the test, a control group of students listened to a recording of the performance of Israel's most popular comedian. The control group had higher creativity scores in terms of originality, flexibility, and fluency than those who had not listened to the comedian. Humor enables us to loosen up and be more open to creative ideas.

Austin values the role of meditation. It enables one to "let go," to enter a realm of non-thinking. As a neurologist, Austin realizes that the civilized world blizzards us with synaptic overload of unnecessary stimuli. This causes mental traffic jams and clogs our thinking. Austin wrote a tome on the subject of meditation. His book, *Zen and the Brain*, is a guide to all the mysteries of meditation and the mind.

Austin describes a prescription for creativity that he wrote for himself. He advises the reader that every prescription for creativity must be a highly individualized one. "Learn to recognize what works for you." If you are looking for a book that challenges your thought creative processes, this one's for you.

Ed Maciocha works at the Naval Inventory Control Point in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is an avid personal explorer in the field of creativity and its application. He has devoted much of his time to reading, training, networking and applying creative concepts to his work and life.

ACA mission

The American Creativity Association (ACA) is the national organization of professionals in the field of creativity. Through its programs and services, it offers individuals and organizations opportunities for learning, professional development and networking. It is dedicated to enhancing the use of creativity throughout our society for the betterment of the human condition.

ACA vision

ACA is the virtual academy that leaders and professionals in the field of creativity turn to as the primary source of ideas and information dealing with creativity and where initiates to the field can begin their journey of discovery. To achieve its vision, the ACA provides: 1) forums to present, test and exchange ideas; 2) opportunities for networking and fellowship; 3) clearing-house services for information on the state of the art in creativity research and practice; and 4) means to link theorists and practitioners.

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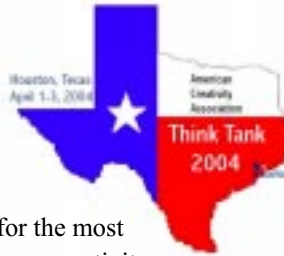
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