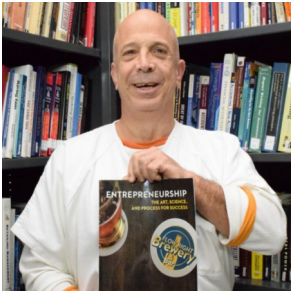


**PRISON ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM  
SANDERS ESTES UNIT VENUS, TEXAS**



**Brian Griffin:  
Great Future  
Plans**

The Phase II's first major event went off without a hitch! There was a bunch of nervous energy in the air - largely due to the fact that none of the Phase II participants knew what to expect. Most of them were up early, filled with anticipation. A large portion of these participants have not had any interaction with people from outside of the prison system in many years.

smiles. Jonathan Deluna, our In-Prison Manager, was nervous - he did not



know that he was going to have to speak in front of the crowd until the night before the event. He did a wonderful job welcoming the family and describing the program to all of the new executives and volunteers. Then, the room was split up into two groups with the Phase II participants on one side of the room and the volunteers on the other. There was a thin line on the floor between the two groups. This led to the next PEP tradition called "Walking the Line." This is where Brian Kelley asks questions and if your answer to the question is a "yes" then you approach the line. The purpose of this tradition is to break the ice so that everyone can see that there is no difference between the executives and the participants. The questions start out rather impersonal and basic about birthplaces and gradually become more personal, a variety of different home life questions, ranging from abuse, to divorce and all the way to bills not being paid. The favorite question is always the one asking who has done illegal drugs, because there are people that you would not expect to see walking up to the line.

Continued page 2

**Inside this issue:**

<b>Square Business Blog</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Financing For All</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Health Corner: Sets and Reps</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Stepping Up</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Opportunity Knocks</b>	<b>5&amp;7</b>
<b>Brian Griffin</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Recommend Reading</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Look In The Mirror</b>	<b>10</b>

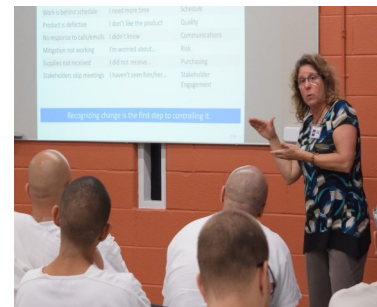
This nervousness and anxiety was soon turned into laughs and smiles as they practiced the "Tunnel of Love." This is a PEP tradition that we use to show the volunteers some love and our gratitude for their efforts with this wonderful program. The mood was also lightened up by a few rounds of lip sync battles and watching the six dancers practice their moves. At 11:45 a.m. the executives and volunteers all arrived to a "Tunnel of Love" and a room full of energy and

know that he was going to have to speak in front of the crowd until the night before the event. He did a wonderful job welcoming the family and describing the program to all of the new executives and volunteers. Then, the room was split up into two groups with the Phase II participants on one side of the room and the volunteers on the other. There was a thin line on the

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT SEMINAR**

**PEP Grad's Learn Principles of Project Management and Other Lessons in Three-Day Workshop.**

PEP added another excellent course to its curriculum when long-time PEP executive Michele G. and first-timer Cindy V. (hopefully a soon-to-be executive volunteer) graciously came to the Estes Unit to teach "Managing Life's Projects." The Monday-Wednesday evening presentation turned into a Tuesday-Thursday class when the two women could not get into the unit on Monday. Despite the one-day setback, by Thursday both Michele and Cindy were dancing down the aisles to "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" to start the class. And, they had an eager PEP graduate audience waiting and wanting to learn from them.



Michele and Cindy are both members of the Fort Worth Chapter of The Project Management Institute, an international organization founded to promote professional project management principles and techniques. Michele sug-

gested that PEP would be a perfect place to lecture and Cindy agreed - we are forever thankful for that decision.

The gist of the three day presentation was how to initiate a project - a business, school, work or personal life project - and the processes needed to see it through to the end. They talked about people that would be involved with a project (project manager, sponsor's and stakeholders among others) and the various steps in a project like scope, time, cost, purchasing and most importantly, communication.

Continued page 2

**Chris Winfield -**  
Editor in Chief  
**Cameron Gilliland -**  
Editor  
**Mark Gregulak -**  
Staff Writer  
**Jaime Edwards -**  
Staff Writer



## PRISTINE '17 THINK TANK EVENT - cont.



While people were walking the line I briefly spoke with a volunteer named Andy Netherland who is an ex-offender. He served eight years on an eight year sentence and has been free for four and half years now. He found out about PEP by doing volunteer work with the faith based Kairos program and also does landscaping work for a living. He felt more comfortable around the inmates than he did around the executives. He offered an inspirational message about staying on track in our lives by keeping a relationship with God. Everyone was then seated as they played some awesome videos made by our Media Team.



Everyone broke up into groups in visitation and the PEP room to have some "Think Tank" time with the volunteers and executives. They used this to discuss their business ideas and issues. It also offers some time to become acquainted with one another for future events. There was a short break with chocolate chunk cookies, then more rounds with the executives.



Some new volunteers were also given the same "honor", expressing to everyone how their first time attending a PEP event went. There were even sweet names issued to some of our volunteers.

This event plays a crucial role in encouraging people to pursue their idea or to come up with a new one. Everyone seemed to feel positive about all of the advice and feedback that they received. This event also served as a major reinforcement, showing PEP participants that this program is for real. There *is* going to be a payoff that comes from all of the hard work and dedication this program requires. Everyone was ready for the chance to put their newfound knowledge and advice to use in preparing their pitches and designing their business plans. The beauty of PEP is to see others just like you- with hope and positive attitudes about whatever the future may hold.



A few hours later everyone was joined back up in the PEP room and seated for the conclusion of the day. Six people who have recently made parole were given the "honor" of dancing (so to speak) to the front of the room and asked to speak about what they have gained thus far from the program.

Reported by Cameron Gilliland

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT SEMINAR - cont.



### PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

The PMI is an international organization founded to:

- Promote professional project management principle and techniques
- Create and deliver an educational program that strengthens local project management professional's skills
- Provide world class PMI certification and training

They made it an interactive event, splitting the room into two teams and having the PEP grads work collectively to plan and execute a project from beginning to end. They used a slideshow example of a painting project while one PEP team worked on opening a restaurant and the other team set up a project to remodel an elementary school.

It was a great real-world education to add to all that PEP teaches. The class offered critical thinking lessons, time management, how to map out a project plan, various risk levels and much more. As the women both stated, the PEP participants now know more than many managers and college graduates in the basics of managing a project.

And, these lessons can carry over into one's personal life.

"Everything you do in life is a project," Michele said. "Managing your



life is a project. Learning how to communicate effectively in business and in your personal life is the key." Indeed.

Cindy, as are most first-timers, didn't know what to expect on her first visit to a prison yet came away somewhat awed.

"I'm just blown away by all this. I've never had so much fun teaching. I'm really enjoying this experience. I just wasn't prepared for how much I'm enjoying this." She looked out to grads and said she was really impressed by how so many participants had a 'stand

up and take charge attitude.'

When asked about what advice she'd give to the PEP grads she said "bring a good skill set. Keep learning. It's the little things that are important. Have good communication skills, be open and honest about your past and bring a good work ethic. Many of the millennials today lack the work ethic."

A quote in the handout they brought said: "A good plan makes executing easier." Throughout our PEP experience we learn the importance of planning for a business, a job and more importantly, life. Michele and Cindy taught us more to think about and effective methods to accomplish this.

A very special **Thank You** to Michele and Cindy for their time and effort and teaching such important lessons.

Reported by Mark Gregulak

## SQUARE BUSINESS BLOG: COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Ladies and gentleman, boys and girls, children of all ages this month's PEP Chronicle now brings to you the topic in which you have all been waiting for. What we have here is the one and the only - Competitive Advantage!

A competitive advantage is defined as those things that your business does better than anyone else in your industry. Having a competitive advantage is important to your business because it is what not only draws customers into becoming your clients over the competitors; it may also give you a reason to be able to charge more for your product or service than the competition because of the added value that you give your clients. You will want your competitive advantage to provide your new start-up with the opportunity to make money in excess of the competition. In order to discover your competitive advantage it is important to examine the ordinary parts of your business and also the unique parts. You generally want to do the ordinary parts well or to the industries' standards, but put an emphasis on the resources that you direct towards the unique parts - this will be what separates you from competitors. This is what will help you to create your companies brand.

Look at your resources and decide if they are rare, durable, relatively non-substitutable, and/or valuable. If so, you will want to capitalize on these resources which will make you a unique player in your industry. What starts out as unique eventually gets imitated by the competition, so it is very important to have a sustainable competitive advantage.

A sustainable competitive advantage is one that cannot be easily copied. For many companies the sustainable competitive advantage is found in their personal relationships with customers. To develop a real advantage you will want to have a deep relationship with all stakeholders, so that you know your customers wants and needs; and also, so that you can have an ideal source of supplies and resources. Our entrepreneurship textbook states that when identifying a sustainable competitive advantage, complete the following steps:

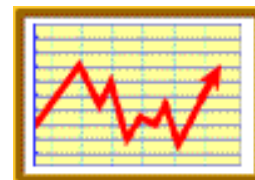
1. Develop a list of your business's assets and capabilities (either existing or proposed.) This means to list all of your assets both tangible and intangible.
2. Split the List into Standard or Unique Assets. You will really

want to evaluate the Unique Assets because that is what will separate you from the competition for some time. If you can be the first business on the market with a certain advantage this will make you a First Mover. This is good because you will build up a customer base full of loyalty.

3. Evaluate Competitiveness of Unique Resources or Capabilities. Once you have listed all unique aspects of your company you will evaluate them before you claim them as a source of competitive advantage. You will generally want several sources for your advantage.
4. Focus your resources on those areas so as to generate greater financial gains as stated earlier.

It is beyond important that when designing your business plan that you know what your competitive advantages are so that you know how to design a strategy. Knowing your competitive advantage and how to capitalize on it can mean either life or death when creating your new start-up. Now that is "Square Business"!

Contributed by Cameron Gilliland



## FINANCING FOR ALL

Outdoor furniture isn't cheap, and that means that big furniture stores have a major advantage over little ones: They're able to provide no-down-payment financing on products that cost several thousand dollars. Laura and John Merlein, co-owners of **Laura's Home and Patio**, in East Northport, N.Y., couldn't afford to offer something like that, and as a result were losing business to larger stores, especially on big ticket items. "We had a number of customers asking us if we did any kind of financing," Laura says.

### The fix

They discovered **Blispay**. It allows retailers to offer customers no-interest financing on purchases of more than

\$199, so long as they are paid in full within 6 months (after that there is a 19.99% APR). **Blispay** handles basically everything: Setup is free, and it provides instore signage and online banners, charges no fee and even handles the payments. Customers apply for financing (in the form of a **Blispay** Visa card) via a user friendly smartphone app.

### The results

Laura's Home and Patio began offering **Blispay** last May, and the results were immediate. During the shops peak season, customers using Blispay accounted for 13% of sales and average \$4,517 - a whopping 92% more than the stores median patio furniture sale. It helps that the application process is fast: approval takes about 5 minutes. "It's

great that they don't have to leave the store" say Laura "Because if somebody has to leave, they may not come back".

### Second Opinion

**Blispay's** top competitors are Synchro, typically for larger retailers, and Affirm, which is for online stores but moving to brick and mortar. Brenden Miller, an analyst at market research firm Forrester, says *all retailers could benefit from these services- and not just those with expensive goods*. "It could be a fashion retailer selling \$300 cocktail dresses", he says. The best systems work in-store and if need be) online, offer quick mobile sign-up and have transparent terms.

Source Entrepreneur.com



## STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE

Upon graduation, PEP encourages us all to step up and assume a leadership role. Pod Coach. Pod Mentor. Peer Educator. Department Lead. Accountability Leader. There are many opportunities.

Although in the past we had had “leadership” roles in our old lifestyles, these skills do not necessarily translate well to our new lives. This has been a very real challenge for us because we could not use the same methods as we were accustomed to when dealing with issues. Our core values have undergone major changes – Our behaviors as well.

Taking up this challenge has not only given us the chance to help others, but helped us to grow as humble Servant- Leaders.

Everybody’s mindset, motivations and attitudes are different. We have learned to take different approaches when dealing with individual situations. Some are more challenging than others and require more patience and diplomacy. We always try to be sure that when we talk with a PEP brother that we are motivated by love and his best interests. This is one of our 10 driving values and the most critical one when dealing with each other every day.

We want to leave you with this:

Being in a leadership role has been a great learning experience. It has had its challenging moments but has also been very rewarding. We wish to thank all of our brothers in J-Pod for the patience you have shown us, as we are still

learning to serve in love.

We encourage all you brothers to take up the challenge.



Rueben Vasquez Horacio Zamudio

### HEALTH CORNER:

## ACUTE VARIABLES - SETS AND REPS



Exercise training programs are often based on our past experiences or of those that design them. For example, those with backgrounds in bodybuilding, powerlifting, or Olympic weightlifting tend to differ from programs designed by those with group exercise experience or previous athletic experience. Although all of us may not want to become fitness trainers, we do however want to apply the most effective and appropriate exercise techniques.

**Acute variables** are the most fundamental components of designing a training program. They determine the amount of stress placed on the body and, what adaptations the body will incur. Whether designing a training program for ourselves or a friend, understanding acute variables will help us achieve a more progressive approach to training and help to avoid **general adaption syndrome** (the dreaded plateau).

Let’s start with **repetition range, intensity,** and number of **sets**.

- **Muscular endurance and stabilization** is best achieved by performing 1-3 sets at 12-20 reps at an intensity of 50% to 70% of your one-repetition max (1RM). Rest periods 0-90 seconds.
- **Hypertrophy** (muscle growth) is best achieved by using 3-5 sets at 6-12 repetitions at 75%-85% of the 1RM. Rest periods 0-60 seconds.
- For **maximal strength** 4-6 sets of 1-5 repetitions at an intensity of 85%-100% of your

1RM. Rest periods 3-5 minutes.

- **Power** adaptations require 3-6 sets at 1-10 repetitions at 30%-45% of 1RM, or 10% of bodyweight. Use medicine balls, kettlebells, and box jumps. Rest periods 3-5 minutes.

**Repetition tempo** refers to the speed with which each repetition is performed. This is another important variable that can be manipulated to achieve more training objectives. Terminology I will be using: **Eccentric muscle action** occurs when a muscle develops tension while lengthening. Eccentric is the deceleration part of the move and is usually referred as the negative. **Concentric muscle action** occurs when the contractile force is greater than the resistive force, resulting in shortening of the muscle. Concentric action is acceleration and is considered as the lifting phase of the move. **Isometric muscle action** occurs when the contractile force is equal to the resistive force, leading to no visible change in the muscle length.

- **Muscular endurance and stabilization** is best achieved by using a (4/2/1) repetition tempo. 4 seconds on the eccentric action, 2 seconds on the isometric hold, and 1 second on the concentric contraction.
- **Hypertrophy** (muscle growth) is best achieved with a (2/0/2) moderate tempo. 2 second eccentric action, 0 second isometric hold, and a 2 second concentric action.
- **Maximal strength** adaptations are best achieved with a fast or explosive tempo that

can be safely controlled. Keep in mind, because an individual will be using heavy loads when training for maximal strength, the actual velocity of the movement may be rather slow, but the individual will be exerting himself or herself with maximal effort.

- **Power** adaptations are best achieved with a fast or explosive tempo that can be safely controlled.

The **rest interval** is the time taken to recuperate between sets or exercises and has a dramatic effect on the outcome of the training program. Each exercise that is performed required energy. **Energy currency** also referred to as adenosine triphosphate (ATP) and phosphocreatine (PC). The rest interval between sets determines to what extent the energy resources are replenished before the next set. The shorter the rest interval, the less ATP and PC will be replenished and consequently less energy will be available for the next set. Can be used as a means to increase intensity and promote better hypertrophy, endurance, and stability.

- 20-30 seconds will allow approximately 50% recovery of ATP and PC.
- 40 seconds will allow approximately 75% recovery of ATP and PC.
- 60 seconds will allow approximately 85%-90% recovery of ATP and PC.
- 3 minutes will allow approximately 100% recovery of ATP and PC.

# WHERE THE JOBS ARE

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projected where the greatest demand for workers will for the next 10 years:

<u>Fastest-Growing Occupations</u>	<u>Growth</u>	<u>Median Annual Salary</u>
Wind Turbine service technicians	108%	\$51,050
Occupational-therapy assistants	43%	\$57,870
Physical-therapist assistants	41%	\$55,170
Physical-therapist aides	39%	\$25,120
Home-health aides	38%	\$21,920
<u>Occupations - Most New Jobs</u>	<u>Growth</u>	<u>Median Annual Salary</u>
Personal-care aides	26%	\$20,980
Registered nurses	16%	\$67,490
Home-health aides	38%	\$21,920
Food preparation and servicing workers	11%	\$18,910
Retail salespersons	6.8%	\$21,780

The move to green energy continues as evidenced by the growth of wind technology. If you've been to West Texas lately you'll have seen numerous 'wind farms'. Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and other western states have seen rapid growth in wind turbines. Numerous companies are also placing turbines in the ocean to harness the coastal winds. The growth is not just in the United States as many countries are now utilizing wind technology to produce energy. The home health care, nursing and assisted living fields are also seeing

tremendous growth due in large part to our aging population, or, the baby boomers. According to WikiTaxi, United States citizens over the age of 55 make up approximately 25% of the population, or, nearly 77 million citizens (The population of the United States is nearly 309 million as of 2013).

As entrepreneurs, statistics like these should get your brain working

Contributed by Mark Gregulak Source: Wall Street journal

## Biggest Issues Facing New Business Owners

A recent survey of small-business owners identified the biggest issues they face in operating their business. Keep these in mind while considering your business plan. They are listed by most pressing issue to least:

- Taxes: 22%
- Quality of Labor: 17%
- Government regulations and red tape: 15%
- Poor sales: 12%
- Competition from larger companies: 9%

By: Mark Gregulak

### Quote Corner

**What we do today, right now, will have an accumulated effect on all our tomorrows** - Alexandra Stoddard

**In the morning ask yourself, "What good shall I do today?" As the day draws to a close ask yourself, "What good have I done today?"** - Benjamin Franklin

**I think the purpose of life is to be useful, honorable, compassionate. It is, above all, to matter: to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all** - Leo Rosten

## Can You Taste Success? Restaurants are Still Hot.

Most people have a romantic notion of one day starting a restaurant. And, it appears that food entrepreneurs continue to put their money where their mouth is.

Eating and drinking establishments continue to grow yearly (this does not include food trucks, which are booming, or fast food restaurants). In 2005 there were just over 500,000 facilities. Eating and drinking establishments are starting up at a rate of approximately 8,000-9,000 per year. In 2016 there were over 600,000 establishments and that number should steadily increase if our economy continues to thrive.

The growth can also be attributed to the proliferation of cooking shows on TV. Shows like "Iron Chef", "Bar Rescue", "Hell's Kitchen" and others continue to capture wide audiences.

With that said, the business is still considered one of the most risky. 27% of new establishments close within 12 months and 60% fold up within three years.

With most businesses, the most critical factor is location, location and location. Then, with hard work, a good menu, quality servings, innovation and a dash of this, a sprinkle of that and a pinch of luck, people will come. More and more people are spending their disposable income on eating out. That's why food establishments, as a start up, continue to be a popular with PEP participants and many others.

Bon appetit!

By: Mark Gregulak

## Great Future Plans: Brian Griffin



Brian Griffin is an Extreme '17 Graduate. He was released to the Columbia transition house May 9<sup>th</sup>. Although known as quite possibly the Grumpiest Old Man in America, he is well loved and respected by his PEP brethren. Brian is highly motivated to succeed; like most of us of a certain age and experience (over 50, multiple trips to prison) he knows he can no longer procrastinate- this is his last "second chance". Brian has a great business idea – **Western Horseback Adventures**. It is one that with hard work and patience, and a little luck, Brian can realistically expect to bring to fruition. Before he left, Brian wrote the following:



I had a very good family with great parents and grandparents. I was a country boy who was involved in fishing, hunting and playing football. I loved my parents and family a great deal. My story is an old one that many of us share, so I won't bore you with the details. Suffice it to say that drugs, alcohol and multiple TDC visits led to where I am now. Throughout this incarceration I have devoted my life back to God. Then I got invited to PEP and I absolutely love it.



I want to own a trail riding business. I have 20 years of experience in training and breaking horses as well as 40 years of experience in outdoor cooking. I've been employed by Sleepy Sheep Ranch and Rocker Lazy K Ranch for five years each. I cared for horses as well as being a guide, cook, and all around ranch hand. Like a lot of employees, I've always thought "I can do this, no, I can do it better!"



"Ride a Horse of Course!"



Through my participation in PEP, I learned a whole lot about how to actually get something like this off the ground. There's a lot more to it than most people think. That is why most new businesses fail. I **know** I can make it work. Now comes the fun part. Actually getting out, getting on my feet, staying focused and staying out.

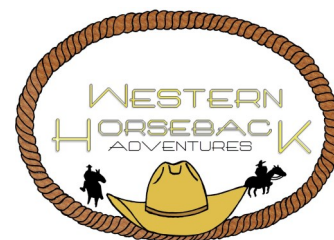
I'll be at the Columbia house, so I know I'll have a roof over my head and access to all the PEP resources. One thing about being a little older now is that I've developed what I think is one of the most important character traits – patience. I think I have a pretty good handle on the impulsiveness that has led to so many wrong choices. I see the big picture and take the long view. Clichés, I know, but valid.

Through all the events, I've developed some pretty good relationships with executive volunteers. I will continue to develop and nurture these. I had consistently good feedback from several, who made a point of wanting to "continue the conversation" once I was released.

I know that at first I'll probably get a less than ideal job. So what? I hoed sweet potatoes for TDC for \$0. I can work. I know it'll take a few years to truly get on my feet. Again, so what? I'm concerned about the rest of my life, not next week.

Anyways, I'll keep you posted. Good luck and God bless.

**Brian Griffin**  
**AKA Sweet Gillette**  
**"I'm the best a man can get"**



### Submission Policy

The PEP Chronicle actively seeks submitted content- articles (original or to-be-reprinted), applicable current event stories, profiles and Op-Ed pieces. In the business world, written communication skill are every bit as important as verbal- We have Toastmasters to develop the one; The PEP Chronicle can provide opportunity to work on the other.

**Written submission to be between 150 and 500 words**  
**Material can be edited for content and/ or length at the discretion of staff.**  
**Content should be in line with PEP's stated aims and goals**  
**Opinion pieces are just that- opinions- and are welcome. Just don't be that guy who rants offensively and**

**incoherently**  
**Submission does not guarantee acceptance.** Content is reviewed for suitability by Chronicle staff as well as PEP management in Houston. **Don't get your feelings hurt if you do not have your work printed. Try again.**

# Construction Industry Opportunities

## Shortages of Workers Bring Opportunities for Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs need to look at and understand job, economic and numerous survey data to find needs, opportunities and ideas. Regular reading of newspapers (like this one), magazines, watching and listening to the news and business oriented shows on TV and the radio are good places to start.

A recent survey by the Associated Builders and Contractors, a trade group, found that the industry is 500,000 to 600,000 workers short. That is a huge shortage but also a call out to savvy entrepreneurs.

The shortage is mainly in the construction business. Home building, high rise builders, apartments, commercial building companies and others are begging

for skilled and unskilled laborers. The needs include carpenters, HVAC personnel, roofers and nearly all workers associated with building.

What is really an eye-opener is that soon President Trump and the Congress want to set in motion the America Infrastructure Repair Project. Experts estimate it will be over \$1 trillion in projects to fix America's roadways, bridges, as well as the construction of new highways and other projects. These projects will last for years.

So, if there's already a shortage of workers what's going to happen when all these projects start to go out for bid? Opportunity calls.

Are you prepared to answer the call and opportunity?

Source: The Wall St. Journal



# Know Your Audience

## Target Audience Considerations

One of the most important lessons in Phase II in building your business and pitch is who is your target audience or customers. It may be the most important consideration when planning a business.

A new survey stated the people 50 years old and old-

er now make up about 35% of America's population. But, though this is only 1/3 of the population, this demographic group controls more than half of the nation's investable and disposable income.

This news could be critical in how you market and move your business idea forward.

Source: USA Today



## Shout Out Corner

- Congratulations to **Jaime Edwards** on being elevated to Peer Educator. A well-deserved promotion to a man always willing to give back. Nice job Jaime.
- A tip of the hat to **Tywinn James** for continuing to help others. **Tywinn** can always be seen dispensing advice and tutoring others who need help and direction.
- A pat on the back to **Art Santana** and **Isidro Jacquez** for stepping in a doing a great

job as the new D.J.'s. Music to our ears!

- A big Thank You to all those involved with the Mothers Day's cards for the PEP members. You know who you are (and so do we). Thank You for your efforts to help make our Mom's smile.
- And lastly, Thank You to those that volunteer to help out when the BP editors and others need help with the typing and other duties. Your efforts are admirable and they don't go unnoticed.
- Congratulations to **Fernando Camacho** on

being named Toastmasters Lead.

- Art Contest winners: **Steve Martinez**, 1st Place Portraits. **David Dawkins** 1st & 2nd Place Cartoons.
- Fittest Man Competition: 1st Place- **James Morris**, 2nd Place-**Louis Gonzalez**.

Take a bow all of you. Well deserved and well done.

By Mark Gregulak

# CRITICAL THINKING

## TRUTHINESS:

### Post-Release Reality & Alternative "Facts" or Fiction?

A multi-part series in which we explore and analyze beliefs commonly held by our brethren

**Truthiness: a quality characterizing a "truth" that a person making an argument or assertion claims to know intuitively "from the gut" or because it "feels right" without regard to evidence, logic, intellectual examination or facts. Named the 2005 Word of the Year by the American Dialect Society and for 2006 by Merriam-Webster.**

**Editor's note: The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author, drawn from decades of observation and contemplation.**

### I WANT MY CHECK!: All the free stuff that's waiting for us

I can't wait! We get more stuff than we ever could have possibly earned for ourselves working for a living. Let's go through the list.

- You have 24(or 30, or 48) hours to go get form 310-40, the Aladdin's lamp you rub to fulfil all your desires
- Hurry up to the SS office and collect your \$1,500 because prison made you retarded. Then get your \$310 for every month in prison check. Then your \$150,000 loan. The \$1,900 for a car comes next. Then.....My brain is exploding-I gotta stop. Here is what we get:

The Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) is for people with documented physical and/or emotional disabilities, not for the rehabilitation of released prisoners. We receive food stamps for three months (renewable), Medical care through Medicaid, under some circumstances low-income housing subsidies. Remember, though, there is a new Daddy (because the government is our daddy, right?) in town, and his name is **Donald**; all this is subject to change. **You may possibly find some grants if you look around. Some cities have private charitable organizations that can help you out.** If you want, you can go on Social Security disability and receive 800 or 900 dollars a month. You must be diagnosed by a psychiatrist, an MD, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Having been in prison does not qualify. You do, however, get all the future benefits of having been documented by the federal government as being unable to take care of yourself! I see a FEMA internment camp in your future. **Utilize the tools and network PEP has given you—You'll be fine.**

### TDC A/C

We're getting a/c by the end of '14.'15.'16.'17..... The Feds are going to make them. No we're not. No they're not.

Let's begin with the constitution, specifically the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment (*cruel and unusual punishment*). Lack of air conditioning has not been found to constitute cruel and unusual punishment. The ice water coolers, posters and hot weather safety articles in the Echo meet the criteria that avoid that threshold. Folsom Prison in California gets 115<sup>0</sup> in summer and below freezing in winter - no cooling and minimal heating. There are prisons everywhere in areas that reach 100<sup>+</sup> temperatures without a/c. Feds included

Estimate at 500 million dollars +, *very* conservatively. That's just to install the equipment and ductwork on the cheap (its government contracting, it won't be cheap). The equipment cost to replace the 2 dozen or so (5 ton and less, builder's grade) package units at Segovia unit was \$435,000. Take into account that every unit's electrical infrastructure and consumption (\$\$) will double. Texas is a state that cuts funding for poor kid's school breakfast and lunch programs. **Nobody cares**, 'cept your mom (maybe not even her). When and if it ever does happen it will take years. It will be the largest mechanical construction project in the nation and we'll know years in advance. There will be engineers, manufacturer reps and contractors crawling all over these units. It won't be a surprise. Those red brick units will be gutted. Feds pay? You think the current administration and congress cares? **Stay out of prison and enjoy all the a/c you want .**

### SLAVIN' FOR THE MAN

The reason we TDC prisoners don't get paid for work is that we "traded" that away for good time, right? That's because to make us work, they have to remunerate (pay) us somehow, right? To do otherwise would be slavery, right? **Wrong.** Read the constitution. On April 8, 1864 the senate passed an amendment to abolish slavery. The house followed suit on January 31, 1865. The northern states and sufficient southern states ratified the bill to reach the required 2/3<sup>rds</sup> threshold and the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment was adopted December 6, 1865.

**TEXT: Section 1.**Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall be duly convicted*, shall exist within the United States, or anyplace subject to their jurisdiction. **Section 2.** Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by

appropriate legislation.

Case Law: United States vs Kozminski (U.S Supreme Court 1988) allows involuntary servitude for the purposes of criminal prosecution

The vast majority of other prison systems provide pay *and* good time credit. **Texas just does not believe in doing that. That's all. Sorry for our luck. Lots of paying jobs on the streets. ( or so I've heard )**

### BARBARA BUSH: REINA DE LOS NACHOS

**Barbo, Keefe , CCA, Unicor, et al... are owned President XXX, Governor XXX ....or Barbara Bush**

Next time you enjoy some fine pod spread nachos, remember who to thank- The wife of the 41<sup>st</sup> president, the mother of the 43<sup>rd</sup>, the daughter of publisher Marvin Pierce, cousin of prez #14, Franklin Pierce and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow – Barbara Bush!! That's what families that have been in North America since a hundred years before the founding of the USA do- Invest their vast oil and Wall Street fortune in TDC chips. Then name the company after the matriarch!

**BARBCO:** Established 1971 in Huntsville TX by 4 members of the Love family. Current owners are Rudy and Deborah Love, a married couple.

**KEEFE:** Established in 1975 in St. Louis MO by a former Missouri DOC employee. Currently classified as an EOC (employee owned company).

**UNICOR** (Federal Prison Industries) is a wholly owned US government corporation created in December 1934 as a prison labor program for inmates in the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

**California Prison Industry Authority** since creation in 1947, a self-supporting state entity

**CCA, CoreCivic:** Founded in Nashville Tennessee by Thomas W. Beasley, chairman of the state Republican Party, Dr Robert Crants and T.Don Hutto in 1983. Investors included Jack Massey, founder of HCA Vanderbilt University and TVA. CCA has 114 institutional stockholders that together amount to 28,736,071 shares of stock and is classified as a REIT (real estate investment trust). Largest shareholders are RS investments (3,296,500), WesleyCapitalMGMT (2,486,866) and Capital Research and MGMT (2,057,600). Continued page 9

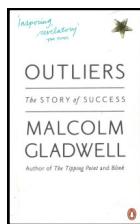


## OUTLIERS

### The STORY of SUCCESS

Malcom Gladwell

Available in the General Library



Outliers: The Story of Success is the third non-fiction book written by Malcom Gladwell, published in 2008. In *Outliers*, Gladwell examines the factors that lead to high levels of success. To support his thesis, he examines the causes of why:

- The majority of elite Canadian hockey players are born in the first few months of the calendar year
- Microsoft founder Bill Gates achieved his extreme wealth
- The Beatles became one of the most successful musical acts in human

history

- Cultural differences play a large part in perceived intelligence and rational decision making
- Two people with exceptional intelligence, Christopher Langan and J. Robert Oppenheimer wound up with such vastly different fortunes

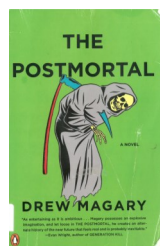
Gladwell repeatedly mentions the “10,000-Hour Rule”, claiming that the key to expertise in any skill is, to a large extent, a matter of practicing the correct way for a total of 10,000 hours. Consider - how long are trade apprenticeships? 5 years- about 10,000 hours. Professions that require graduate degree- 5 to 6 years-10,000 hours. Professional athletes reach their peak after about 5 years.

*Outliers* has two parts: Opportunity” and “Legacy”. In the introduction, Gladwell lays out his purpose: “Its not enough o ask what successful people are like. It is only by asking where they are from that we can unravel the logic of who succeeds and who doesn’t”.

## THE POSTMORTAL

Drew Magary

Available in the General Library



Imagine a near future where a cure for aging is discovered and-after much political and moral debate-made available to people worldwide. Immortal-

ity, however, comes with its own unique problems-including evil green people, government euthanasia programs, a disturbing new religious cult and other horrors.

Dark, funny and entertaining, *The Postmortal* imagines a postmodern dystopia that would seem farfetched if it didn’t seem so possible. Its depiction of the future isn’t filled with cheesy robots fighting Will Smith. It will make you regret ever wondering what it would be like to live forever.

Like Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, but with humor, this novel makes you realize that what's waiting for us is not a bunch of cool Mad Max adventures.

## TRUTHINESS cont.

### SOVEREIGN CITIZENS : You Can't Tell Me What to Do 'Cause You're Not The Boss Of Me

Self-described sovereign citizens take the position that they are only answerable to their particular interpretation of the common law and are not subject to any government statutes or proceedings. They do not recognize U.S. currency and maintain that they are “free of any legal constraints”.

The concept of the sovereign citizen originated in the Posse Comitatus (Latin “force of the county”) movement in the 1960’s as a teaching of William P Gale. This concept has influenced the tax protester movement, the Christian Patriot movement and the redemption movement- the last of which claims that the U.S government uses it citizens as collateral against foreign debt.

This is another one I’ve heard about for decades. It’s interesting but I’ve never found a credible instance of it working. Think about it- Imagine you’re a, say, Guatemalan citizen traveling the world. The moment you step foot on any U.S

territory- Land, embassy, military base, whatever, you are subject to the laws of the U.S. Read the first two article of the constitution-This is where jurisdiction is established. There are mountains of case law: United States v Hart , Young v IRS, Stoeklin v Commissioner, US v Kenneth Leaming , US v Wesley Snipes 2008. Yes, *that* Wesley Snipes. Received 3 yrs & the US Supreme Court declined to hear his appeal. His “advisor” got 10 years. Whether you like it or not, believe he can or can’t, Uncle Sam will enforce his laws. **Leavenworth also known as “Heavenworth”, has a great movie theatre-they give you popcorn when you walk in. They also have tennis and put-put golf on the yard.**

### MARTIAL LAW: Here Comes FEMA & We're All Gonna Die!! :

Remember the year leading up to the last presidential election? ”Obama is going to declare *martial law* so he can remain president”. How’d that work out? Ask President Trump. First heard this one under Reagan. Then Bush #1.Then Clinton. Then Bush #2.

There is no mechanism in the constitution to “declare martial law”. If you mean “President

XXX is going to declare himself emperor for life and come and get our guns”, ok. He’d have to have the **complete** cooperation of the entire congress and US military. This is unlikely, due to the polarization of our politics and structure of our armed forces. Unique in the world, our military embraces the philosophy that command authority “pushes up from below”. It expects and rewards independent thinking.

The martial law concept in the U.S is closely tied with the right of **habeas corpus**, which in essence is the right to a hearing on lawful imprisonment. The ability to suspend habeas corpus is related to the imposition of martial law.

Article 1, Section 9 of the US Constitution states “The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public safety may require it.” In the US martial law is limited by several court decisions handed down between the American Civil War and World War II. In 1878 congress passed the Posse Comitatus Act, which forbids military involvement in domestic law enforcement **without express congressional approval.**

# THE DUNNING-KRUGER EFFECT

## Unskilled and Unaware: How Difficulties in Recognizing One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments

Many of us have experienced the following-

Having conversations with people who want to tell you about their "theories". Most of the time it is someone who has read or seen something, then comes up with, or just parrots, some idea, and wants to talk to someone about it. Of course the problem with these "theories" is that they are not scientific theories at all. In science, theories are not just wild guesses cobbled together from disparate observations. A theory is an idea that is consistent with known, verifiable facts and makes testable, repeatable predictions. This concept is integral to what is known as "The Scientific Method".

Sometimes talking to someone with a theory is anything but fun. Those are the people that are true believers in their own speculation, and the view those who don't validate their view with contempt. After all, these self-styled Leonardos are smart, amazingly smart. If there is something they don't know about or that doesn't agree with them, well, it must be wrong and it can't really be all that important anyway!

### Welcome to the Dunning-Kruger Effect

The phenomenon was first observed in a series of experiments by David Dunning and Justin Kruger of the department of psychology at Cornell University in 1999. The study was inspired by the case of *McArthur*

*Wheeler, a man who robbed two banks after covering his face in lemon juice in the mistaken belief that, because lemon ink is usable as invisible ink, it would prevent his face from being recorded on surveillance cameras.* The authors noted that earlier studies suggested that ignorance of standards of performance lies behind a great deal of incorrect self-assessment of competence.

Dunning and Kruger proposed that for a given skill, incompetent people will:

- Fail to recognize their own lack of skill
- Fail to recognize the extent of their inadequacy
- Fail to accurately gauge skill in others

In other words, the skills you need to produce a right answer are exactly the skills you need to recognize the right answer. *If you are incompetent, you can't know you're incompetent.* Or as Joseph Heller explained *Catch-22*: If you are crazy, you can't know you are crazy.

Dunning and Kruger set out to test this hypothesis on Cornell undergraduates in psychology courses. In a series of studies, they examined student self-assessment of logical reasoning skills, grammatical skills and humor. After being shown their test scores, the students were asked to estimate their own rank in class. The competent group estimated their own rank accurately, while the incompetent

group overestimated theirs.-Students about to get D's and F's thought that they had scored B's or better. As Dunning and Kruger noted: "Across four studies, the authors found that participants scoring in the bottom quartile grossly overestimated their test scores and ability. Although their test scores put them in the 12<sup>th</sup> percentile, they estimated themselves in the 62<sup>nd</sup> or above". Meanwhile, students of high ability tended to underestimate their relative competence. These results have been repeated in many studies in the intervening years.

British philosopher Bertrand Russell Knew about Dunning Kruger before it had a name: "**The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people are so full of doubts**"

Confucius: "**Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance**"

Shakespeare: "**The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool**"

**The lesson? Put your ego aside. Lose the hubris and gain some humility- Better to keep one's mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.**

Source: Compiled from many sources  
Contributed: C Winfield



### TRUTHINESS cont.

Lincoln and Grant suspended habeas corpus (with congressional approval) during the civil war, as did Roosevelt during WWII. Following 9/11 Bush attempted to place Guantanamo Bay prisoners outside of the jurisdiction of habeas, but the Supreme Court overturned this in *Boumediene v Bush*.

There have been instances of the use of the military within US borders, such as during the whiskey rebellion and in the south during the civil rights crises, but these acts are not tantamount to the declaration of martial law. Deployment of troops does not necessarily

mean that the civilian courts cannot function; that is one of the keys, as the Supreme Court has noted, to martial law.

Critical thinking question: The idea that our military would turn on its citizens is hard to fathom. **Why would they?** It's a 100% volunteer citizen force, philosophically the most Libertarian group in the nation. Any military personal taking part would be subject to prosecution under the UCMJ for sedition, treason and obeying unlawful orders, among other charges.

**If Kanye gets elected Prez, or ISIS goes nuclear, though, all bets are off.**

By Chris Winfield

### Next Issue : FROM MY COLD DEAD FINGERS-

- Gun Laws and the convicted felon
- Trigger Happy- is my 5 year-old daughter's glue gun classified as a lethal weapon?
- Will Jess Diaz and his roofing nail gun leave the ATF A Hootin' and a Hollerin' ?



•"Manipulating The System"