



Written by [Beverly K. Eakman](#) on July 7, 2011

America's Ultimate Reality Show

The most potent “reality check,” especially among industrialized nations like ours, is the one discovered by accident. It’s the one that can’t be scripted, the one that makes a person sit up and say “Whoa!!”

Like the conversation overheard at the District of Columbia’s tony 1789 Restaurant — a favorite of the Capitol Hill crowd: A group of professionals representing various conservative institutions and foundations was seated adjacent to one with liberal staffers from various congressional offices. The liberal staffers apparently were celebrating and talking rather loudly, when one of their members voiced concerns about the chances of a particular initiative under discussion in Committee. A fellow across the table laughed heartily, and between mouthfuls, said: Oh, don’t worry about them, for Heaven’s sake. Conservatives don’t even have enough money to fund their own conferences.



Whoa!!

Or the sixth-grader in another restaurant, whose mother challenged: “You do know where eggs come from, don’t you?”

Replied the girl: “Safeway.”

“I mean *before* that,” retorted her mother, irritably.

The child thought for a moment, then blurted: “Thompson’s Dairy.”

Whoa! (Mom pulled the child out of public school the following semester. For additional proof, see [here](#).)

Or how about the brainstorm by some of our nation’s leaders to recruit foreign immigrants to serve as entrepreneurs so that [America’s unemployed workers might get jobs](#) — in an era of terrorism fever, when way too many immigrants, legal and otherwise, are entering our country *en masse*.

Whoa!

But what has to be an all-time-high occurred just a few weeks ago. According to a source that, for obvious reasons, wished not to be named, the incident occurred in a briefing for new congressional staffers at a NASA center. The topic was the need for new and improved weather satellites, with representatives of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) making the presentation. In the midst of a lecture that lasted for some time, a youngish staffer leaned toward the



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fellow next to him and said: “I don’t see what we need all these satellites for when I can just download the weather any time I want to my cell phone.” *And his colleague nodded in agreement!*

Double whoa!

Here were not one, but *two* U.S. college graduates who apparently never considered where, exactly, their vaunted weather downloads originated. They’d probably learned all about recycling, how man-made global-warming is destroying the planet, and that space exploration has been a colossal waste of money with nothing to show for it. Three guesses how these staffers will advise their member of Congress on energy and “sustainable development” issues. They didn’t even know that satellites were responsible for their weather forecasts. So, were they similarly unaware that satellites can locate subterranean oil and gas deposits, or that space-based collection of solar energy might have changed the dynamics of the energy debate had the plans on NASA’s drawing boards in the 1970s been pursued to microwave-beam solar energy directly from geosynchronous orbiting space arrays to earth-based receivers — which, in turn, were to be transmitted to power plants across America.

This columnist discovered that most people believe we have hundreds of [power grids](#) across America when, in fact, we have only three — meaning that they already transmit to many plants and would be able to receive inexhaustible space-based solar power. Maybe the idea would not have worked, but with the improvement of solar cell technology and the means of living, building and working in space, odds are that NASA could have paid for itself — and America would now be telling the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations of the Middle East to “go pound sand” — literally.

Now, of course, with trillion-dollar budgets and an incomprehensible debt, such outside-the-box thinking is dead for the foreseeable future, as America’s leaders focus on unsustainable, socialistic giveaways and bailouts here at home.

The congressional staffers, of course, are too young to recall any of the benefits of the space program, and even if they did, such would probably be limited to computerized video games and virtual reality gadgets worn by military pilots to locate enemy forces.

As for good old American ingenuity and its once-vaunted can-do spirit: It is a sputtering shadow of its former self due to a combination of overregulation, emphasis on the collective instead of the individual and red tape. Candidates are measured in terms of their monetary “war chests,” not by their ideas. Conservatives do extremely well at bashing their liberal nemeses: the press, the entertainment media, the economy, ongoing unemployment, foreign wars, ObamaCare, our phony-baloney “security” system, immigration — and, of course, schools.

But which of these worthies are unveiling a unique plan to solve any of the ills they so despise? Are any of the existing candidates, in fact, even *thinking* in terms of a strategy, other than getting elected?

Woe!

Beverly K. Eakman began her career as a teacher in 1968. She left to become a science writer for a NASA contractor, then editor-in-chief of NASA’s newspaper in Houston. She later served as a speechwriter and research-writer for the director of Voice of America and two other federal agencies, including the U.S. Dept. of Justice. She has since penned six books, scores of feature articles and op-eds covering education policy, mental-health, data-trafficking, science, privacy and political strategy. Her e-mail, a detailed bio, speaking appearances and links to her books all can be found on her website: www.BeverlyE.com.



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