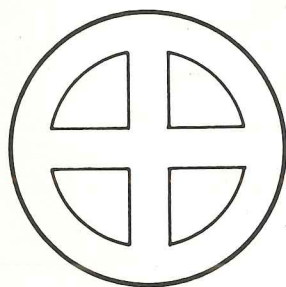


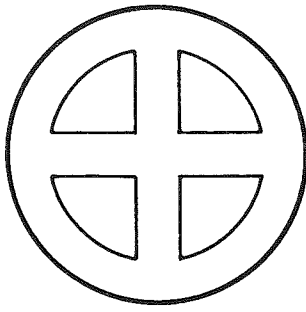
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KUHF Radio Interview with Willis Harman



Lutheran Brotherhood
Colloquium on the Church
in Future Society

The Woodlands Inn, Houston Texas • January 29 - February 2, 1979



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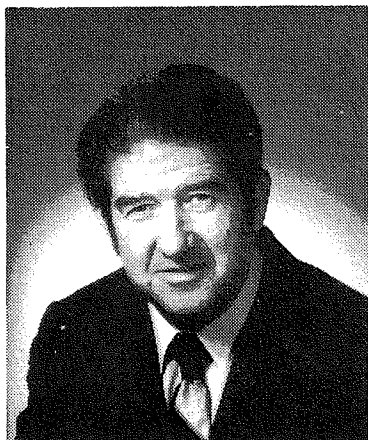
The Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society was a conference of 250 Lutheran leaders and ten nationally-known futurists. It was the first such event ever held by Lutheran Brotherhood, a fraternal benefit society serving Lutherans nationally, and was the result of consultations with several U.S. Lutheran church bodies. Among the concerns which were expressed by the church bodies in these consultations was the need for more disciplined emphasis on anticipated future changes as they influence congregational life.

The purpose of the Colloquium was to increase awareness of anticipated future change so that appropriate planning can be effected to strengthen the Lutheran church, especially at the congregational level.

All U.S. Lutheran church bodies were invited to take part in the planning, and nine participated by sending representatives, including six national presidents. Ten Lutheran church bodies were represented among the participants in the Colloquium.

The Colloquium was organized around five themes:

	Theme	Presentors
Monday	The Reality of Change	Alvin Toffler
Tuesday	Problems of the Future	John Platt Theodore Gordon Jürgen Moltmann
Wednesday	Human Values & Potential	Willis Harman Jean Houston
Thursday	Defining the Task	Warren Bennis Hazel Henderson Robert Jungk
Friday	The Role of Leadership	Harlan Cleveland



Willis Harman

Associate Director, Center for the Study of Social Policy and Senior Scientist, Stanford Research Institute.

Throughout his career, Dr. Harman has specialized in areas of policy analysis, social forecasting, technology assessment and analysis of major societal problems. A member of the Stanford faculty since 1949, he has written texts and papers on engineering, alternative futures, educational policy and humanistic psychology. In 1958, he was recipient of the George Washington Award from the American Society for Engineering Education for his outstanding contribution to engineering education.

Dr. Harman has been a consultant to the National Goals Research Staff of the White House and a Fulbright lecturer on communication theory at the Royal Technical University in Copenhagen. In his speech to the 1972 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead: A Look at Business in 1990," he stated that "contemporary political, military, economic, ecological, and social crisis are reflections of an underlying moral and spiritual crisis of civilization, and their resolution depends on the resolution of that deeper crisis." For a period he was active in the newly formed Association for Humanistic Psychology, serving as a member of the Executive Board and as a member of the Editorial Board of *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*.

Harman believes that there now are signs of a profound transformation of western society characterized by a new image of man. This new image may espouse a pair of complementary ethics: an "ecological ethic," which recognizes the limited nature of available resources and sees man as an integral part of the natural world and a "self-realization ethic," which asserts that the proper end of all individual experience is the further evolutionary development of the emergent self and of the human species, and that the appropriate function of all social institutions is to create an environment that will foster that process.

Dr. Harman holds many professional appointments, including: president, Institute of Noetic Sciences in San Francisco (founded by astronaut Edgar Mitchell), member of U.S. Department of Commerce Technical Advisory Board, Association for Humanistic Psychology and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (fellow). He is listed as an exemplary "futuristic thinker" in *An Introduction to the Study of the Future* (World Future Society, 1977). His more recent publications include: "Understanding Social Change" *Futures* (April 1978); "On Normative Futures Research" *Policy Science* (1975); "Humanistic Capitalism: Another Alternative" *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology* (Winter 1974); "Key Choices of the Next Two Decades: A Look at Business in 1990" *White House Conference Proceedings* (1972); "Old Wine in New Wineskins" in *The Challenge of Humanistic Psychology*, J.F.T. Bugental, ed. He is author of a recent book entitled *An Incomplete Guide to the Future* which summarizes his first ten years in futures research.

KUHF Radio (Houston) Interview with Dr. Willis Harman

Associate Director, Center for the Study of Social Policy
and Senior Scientist, Stanford Research Institute
Menlo Park, California

Interviewed at the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the
Church in Future Society, January 29 - February 2, 1979.

INTERVIEWER: We are talking with Willis Harman who is the Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Social Policy and Senior Scientist at Stanford Research Institute. Mr. Harman is here at the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society. What is the essential message that you are trying to make in your presentation here at the conference?

HARMAN: Being in the field of futures research, I do a fair amount of talking about it. Usually the message has to do with the indications that we may be in a period of remarkable social transformation that goes very deep. At this particular conference, because I'm preceded by three other futurists, I'm emphasizing particularly the changes in some of the basic premises underlying the industrialized culture and the indications that those may be changing and the kind of value change that that implies.

INTERVIEWER: John Platt talks about 1945 being World Year 0 and we're now about 34 years into social change. Do you think most of the change that we're experiencing in this country really emanates from that post World War II period?

HARMAN: Of course there are all sorts of explanations and they don't necessarily contradict one another. I think you can make a case for saying that it's a whole new ball game since the end of World War II, but on the other hand to really understand where we are, I like to go back to the end of the Middle Ages. The reason is that that is the last really fundamental belief system change that took place in what's now western society. Western society, of course, includes Japan and all of the industrialized nations. In fact, the western industrialized influence pervades the globe in a certain sense. It started in western Europe and it started with the secularization of values; that is, the shifting of the basis for the guiding values of the society away from the traditional religious base and over to a practical, utilitarian base. Along with that came the concept of modern material progress.

Now that long modernization trend, eight or ten centuries long with very small beginnings in western Europe, brings us modern science, technology, the wedding of the two, indus-

trial society and a host of other characteristics of modern society. It seems to me that all of those are being challenged in such a way that one has to ask seriously if we have come to the end of that period and if there is another belief system shift that is presently taking place.

INTERVIEWER: Twenty years from now when we look back in retrospect will we say that the emerging technology reshaped our entire value system or will we say our value system used technology in ways that enhanced its structure?

HARMAN: I think that's a fascinating question because you hear over and over the statement about the effect of technology on values. Now that's a kind of short-term thing that you see, to be sure, as you get the automobile, the computer and so on -- it raises value issues and to some extent changes values. The longer-term effect is that the values of the society determine the technology that it develops. At a particular point in western Europe, they developed the technology of building cathedrals. A century and a half ago, we did not develop the technology of hypnosis because it was too unsettling to have around, but we did develop the technology of nuclear warfare. The values have everything to do with that. There are all sorts of technologies we have not developed -- largely technologies of the mind. You may think it's a peculiar use of the word technology but that's because technology has peculiar connotations.

INTERVIEWER: The potential wedding of the mind and technology (there has been some drug experimentation of expanding the mind), the potential use of mind and computer meshing in some kind of symbiosis ...

HARMAN: This is one of the things that's often talked about -- the man/machine interface and what we can do when we add computer power to the intellectual powers of the human mind. But it can also go the other way, that we learn more about the human mind and learn something about the values by which we use the technologies that we have or develop. My guess is that it is that latter that will be far more important.

INTERVIEWER: In the future we can literally walk around with a "chip on our shoulder."

HARMAN: Well, you can do that too! That may be kind of a trivial thing compared to what you find out about the powers of the human mind.

Let me just tell you about something that's a fairly recent development -- some work that's going on at Princeton University. You know something about biofeedback and the fact that if you supply temperature feedback from the tip of your finger, by watching that temperature and deciding in your mind to raise it three degrees or lower it five degrees, you can change the blood flow and change the temperature. In your conscious aware mind you don't know that you have that ability to change the blood flow, but unconsciously we apparently know a great deal that we don't know consciously. In fact, of all the developments in psychology in the recent decades, I suppose the most fundamental one is that all of our conscious awareness is the most minute fraction of all that's going on. Far more is going on under the surface.

The dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at Princeton got interested in the question, "what if you apply that same concept outside the boundaries of the human body?" For centuries we have heard that people could move objects at a distance with their minds. Suppose you applied feedback to that to see, if indeed, we could. You don't think you can move an ashtray on the table over there by focusing your mind on it, but if you apply sensitive enough feedback so that you can detect the slightest motion of a millionth of a millimeter, then it turns out that already unconsciously you know how to move that ashtray just as you know how to change the blood flow in your fingertip. The implications of that are a totally different concept of mind than is incorporated in the materialistic brain-focused science of modern industrialized society.

INTERVIEWER: The next step is how does one learn that? It's an exciting potential and now we're wrestling with how does one learn.

HARMAN: Then I think we have to be very humble and recognize that there were some explorers hundreds and even thousands of years ago that apparently found out a great deal about the mind which has since been lost. It's partly a matter of new discoveries and it's partly a matter of rediscovery. There's increasing interest in this and I think its significance is best understood by recalling how science in its present form came about. The most fundamental thing that happened, and it's one of the great advances of civilization, is that we established a consensus on how you publicly validate knowledge of the sensory sort. How do you decide that something is so with regard to the world that you experience with your senses? From that consensus you then develop all of conventional science and

you assure that astronomy in India is the same as astronomy in Finland, Japan and everywhere else. We don't have that same kind of consensus with regard to the inner world. When it comes to the mental and spiritual nature of man, the world of inner experience, then we find that there is a Hindu version, an Islamic version, a Lutheran version, and so on. We're at the edge of recognizing that underlying all of that, there is a common experience and a common new kind of science very different from the old, complementary to the old -- not contradicting it, but very different.

INTERVIEWER: It's very exciting to me to think in terms of the fact that we're seemingly limited in our capacities to smell and hear, some five or six senses, and yet we know that animals hear sounds that we don't hear, we know they see things we don't see, and the potential of opening up whole new dimensions that are going on around us all of the time is exciting.

HARMAN: It's a funny thing about animals, of course. In the first place, if you own pets you have a very different view of animals than if you just study science and then hypothesize about animals. We're so sure that if an animal gains some knowledge, it must have been through smell or hearing, or it must have been through some sensibility that we're used to, only they do it better. There's every reason to think that we, being animals (and the other kinds of animals too), have suprasensory abilities (extrasensory abilities) which we happen to have repressed, they have not -- they didn't have any need to. They didn't have to impress their colleagues and hide all of this. When we think of a bloodhound tracking a criminal, we're absolutely sure that it must be through the sense of smell -- it couldn't possibly be anything else. Yet, there's every reason to assume that it is smell plus some sort of extrasensory ability. When a spider knows how to spin a web and repair it even though it never had any parents to teach it because it just grew from an isolated egg, we're absolutely sure that information must have been in the physical genes somehow. There's no reason to assume that if you once open up and get the blinders off, there's a lot more to heaven and earth than our philosophies accommodate right now.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is the most overlooked or the least understood aspect of the future?

HARMAN: The least understood and the most misunderstood aspect of the future is clearly where our values come from, to guide all of this technological capability that we have now. In retrospect, to some future historian it's going to

turn out to look very, very strange. We almost deliberately built up a knowledge base (which we call science), which focused on developing the capability to manipulate the physical environment more and more, and blocked off the development of any further knowledge about those deep, profound inner experiences out of which have always come the value commitments of every society that has ever existed. So, we end up being more and more like a ship with ever and ever more powerful engines, going faster and faster, but with no compass or chart.

INTERVIEWER: As the image of man changes, what social institutions do you anticipate will experience the greatest change?

HARMAN: Let's creep up on that one, I don't know the answer to that. I don't even know an answer to that. First of all let's talk about what institutions are probably going to change first. If I wanted to know whether this change is really taking place, the first set of institutions I'd keep my eye on are the health care institutions because the fundamental issue of the nature of man (the nature of health, the nature of illness, what it would be like to be totally healthy and so on) -- those questions are being faced right now in the health care area. The challenge of holistic health care to conventional health care is one which has been growing and will grow more. The deepest questions about the nature of man are right on the surface there. Watch that institution. I think it's going to change remarkably.

The institution that will be most threatened probably is the scientific institution, because of the extent to which science has gotten linked with technology and in turn linked to industry. It's not going to be easy any more for science to recognize there might be a complementary paradigm which would take our inner experiences and deal with them more in their own terms than the reductionistic present science does. It's not going to be any easier for the scientific establishment to accommodate to that than it was for the priesthood of the Middle Ages to adapt to the changing world view at that time.

INTERVIEWER: Or the priesthood of the 20th century.

HARMAN: I avoided saying that. One of the key frontiers there is going to be is the scientific one. The A.A.A.S. meeting in Houston this month had a session on the role of consciousness in the physical world. In that session it became quite clear that there are two paths that the scien-

tific community could take. One is to continue to try to stretch the present paradigm with quantum mechanical talk and holographic pattern talk and so on, and try somehow to squeeze the richest of human experience into that paradigm. The other path is to recognize the need for a complementary paradigm, to go on and start to study those experiences in their own right, in their own terms, and then see what kind of knowledge you can build up from that.

A further comment about your question is that the institution that will affect the lives of all of us the most when this finally hits is the economy. The economy has a set of values all its own. They embody the technological values. Those values have, in recent decades, more and more permeated the whole society so that more and more we use economic rationality to decide social questions. More and more we justify actions (wise or foolish) by putting them into a cost-benefit study or by some other way quantifying them and putting them in economic terms.

When all of that is challenged and the whole rationale of letting that kind of thinking have such dominance in the society, the whole issue of appropriate technology which we already see in a social movement, the whole matter of what are we going to do about the other two-thirds of the world that doesn't have all this affluence and technology, and how are you going to correct that balance somehow (and in economic terms, it's very hard to make that make any sense at all) -- when all those questions hit and the new belief system begins to reshape the economy, then you're going to find the real transformation of the world takes place.

INTERVIEWER: So the questions then become growth for whom and growth for what.

HARMAN: And what kind of growth. Do you really mean human growth and development or do you mean something else?

INTERVIEWER: One out of four people in the world are Chinese and as we look at what's beginning to emerge from China, is it fair to assume that one of the things the so-called cultural revolution attempted to do was meet the basic human needs of the people (shelter, clothing, health care), and now that those basic needs seem to be primarily met, they're moving toward a more technological time? Is that the way to begin to move -- you start with the basics? Is this the paradigm for emerging nations?

HARMAN: I don't think that that question has one answer because one of the issues is when you buy the technology do you buy the whole belief system to go with it? I just came back from a meeting in Mexico City on the third world demands for a new international economic order. It was very fascinating to see what developed there because there were clearly two major points of view. I'm neglecting the fact that there is also a left/right dimension in here too, but as John Platt pointed out in an earlier talk in this particular meeting, the industrialized world has certain characteristics whether it happens to be more communist or capitalist. So the left/right issue is assuming less and less importance, probably. The other dimension that gets to be more and more important came out clearly in this meeting, which was sponsored by UNITAR (which is the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and also by the Center for Economic Studies of the Third World in Mexico City.

Two points of view with regard to this other dimension are important. They may be the two ends of a spectrum. One is that the objective of the new international order is for the poorer countries of the world to somehow get on board this long-term modernization trend and get all the goodies that the industrialized world already has; that they will follow along the same path except there will be a bit of a time lag and an income gap; that that's what they want -- the opportunity to do that. That's a bit of a caricature, but it's more or less the dominant point of view.

There was also a very important minority point of view which says, "No, we don't want that whole belief system. We don't want to become an appendage on the world economy with those kinds of values, but rather we want to preserve values in our own culture, we want to develop self-reliance, we want to put the emphasis on human development (and that we will define in our own terms), and we want the benefits of modern technology, but we want to shape that and use it in our own way." One scholar of this, Denis Goulet, calls this liberatory development as contrasted with materialistic economic development: development, but development with emphasis on liberation of the individual, liberation of the group, of the culture, of the nation, rather than on economic indicators (like GNP and productivity and so on). That, I think, we get to be a sharper and sharper difference in the future.

The question you asked then has to be reshaped in terms of the dimension. My own guess is that the disenchantment with the direction, the thrust of materialist western culture is going to grow and also that the strength of the liberatory development concepts is going to grow. That's very closely allied, of course, to some of the appropriate technology and related sources of movements in this country.

INTERVIEWER: Is it possible then for third world emerging nations to leap-frog the whole Industrial Revolution movement that western Europe and the United States went through, and go into a service-oriented, information, appropriate-technology culture without passing through this whole consumer-oriented, industrial movement?

HARMAN: That's what is often said but that assumes the answer to the question, "Is the service economy of the western world the place the third world wants to go?" I think you're going to hear more and more, "No," because the service economy has not solved the problems of the western world. It does not constitute a solution to the problems. We do not solve the really basic problems of industrialized society by generating more and more services and more and more appetite for services just so that we keep everybody busy in that big economy and keep it rolling. That's not the only future. It's getting to look less and less attractive. The second thrust that I was trying to point to in the third world is very emphatically saying, "No, that's not where we're going. We're going somewhere else with more emphasis on the most basic of human needs (which are spiritual), and not emphasis on people getting involved in the services economy in order to keep the services economy going so that more people can get involved, and so on." That's an endless, mindless circle.

INTERVIEWER: What's the role of institutional education in this process?

HARMAN: Probably to stay out of the way and not interfere any more than necessary.

INTERVIEWER: Just with the development of communications, the capacity to place all kinds of learning skills and training on small discs, it seems like the whole educational process will probably change considerably.

HARMAN: I don't want to be facetious here. Of course there's a role for educational institutions, but I think the educational institutions we'll see in the future are going to be of a sort where we recognize much more clearly than we have that we're all learners. There's a lot to be said for learning together, with older, more experienced people learning along with the younger ones. Of course there is some place for the kinds of educational technologies that you mentioned, but probably far more important is the role of the institution in developing a learning climate so that as a whole we become learning organizations, a learning so-

ciety. I think that's really so different from the hierarchical universities and other educational institutions of the past. My first "top of the head" answer is not that far off. There is a certain shock value anyway.

INTERVIEWER: What's the basis of your greatest optimism for the next 20 years?

HARMAN: My basic optimism is that the human spirit is rising again and it's not going to be pushed around. There are many, many aspects of this and what's happening in the third world, what's happening with minority groups, and what's happening with women -- those are very important parts of it; but the technology-incorporating institutions are an important part too. I recall that at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1933, the program there had a very interesting statement which was something like the following: "Science discovers, industry applies, man conforms." That apparently went over quite well in 1933 and you know that will not go over in 1979. The human spirit is rising and man/woman are not conforming. That is precisely the reason for optimism. We're rediscovering our essential spiritual nature that, institutions and technology alike are for us to use to human ends and we are not to be used to technological and economic ends. That is an important part of the whole transformation that's going on and because that's growing so rapidly, I think there's a fair chance that we may make it through the transition without tearing ourselves apart.

INTERVIEWER: In contrast to that, what's the basis of your greatest pessimism?

HARMAN: That we may tear ourselves apart! The basic pessimism is that there's a tremendous amount of inertia in the institutions that we have and as those institutions shift around, to be based on new premises and new values, it's a very threatening thing. The key to all of this, I think, is can we understand it well enough as it's happening to keep our anxiety levels down? If so, we'll make it around the bend. If the anxiety levels are too high, we'll feel threatened, we have faction fighting against faction, and the destructive power of all of that can be tremendous.

INTERVIEWER: As more and more young people become more and more concerned about the future, anticipating the future and alternative futures, what are the skills that you believe are most essential for them to develop in their quest?

HARMAN: I would put first and foremost the skill of learning who they are, learning about the sources of inner strength and inner wisdom. From that comes a sense of security so that you can be flexible, you can move with things, you aren't threatened by change. If your anxiety level is down and if you are in touch with your inner self, then you can handle anything. The rest you can learn very easily.

INTERVIEWER: What are the most significant problems you see lying ahead about which formal studies about the future, as opposed to other inquiry disciplines, could be of significant assistance?

HARMAN: I think formal studies of the future are one of the most valuable ways we have ever found to think about things, because they force you to be broad. You can't think about the future and think about a subdiscipline in physics or a subdiscipline in sociology. As a way of thinking, it fits with any problem. It seems to me that the questions we most need to ask are around the issue of what we're going to do with the fantastic manipulative capabilities that we now have. Now that we can do almost anything with technology that we can imagine doing (if you put enough money and time into it), what's worth doing? Where are we headed? What really are our societal goals? If you look at our actions and infer from those what our goals are, our goals are to increase the GNP, to reduce unemployment (to reduce the fraction of people who are captive of the mainstream economy), and to increase productivity (which is to say to replace human beings by machines -- even in doing very interesting things like craftsmanship). We've got a lot of goals that if you look at them very carefully, they don't make too much sense unless there's something along with them in terms of the broader human goals. We need to rethink what the broader human goals might be and what the more specific goals of the society might be, and hence, what our alternative futures might be starting from here and get that into the public dialogue. That's the way you end up not being imprisoned by the economic institutions and the technologies and all the rest. I guess I end up feeling that alternative futures is a pretty healthy way to think, but that so far it's had too much emphasis on the economic and technological aspects and not nearly enough emphasis on the social, cultural value aspects.

INTERVIEWER: In continuing this line, if you were to offer some suggestions for some students in this area (and in fact you are), what five books, papers or other works about the future do you think most important for students to be exposed to?

HARMAN: The first one that came to mind I'll answer honestly, but I don't think it's useable for your purposes. I tried to raise some of these issues in my own book, An Incomplete Guide to the Future. I think it has some value from that standpoint. There's a book by an ex-resistance leader named Mark Satin which is called New Age Politics and I think it has one of the clearer views of what one of the future alternatives for the society may be. Even though it came out of the radical movements, I've recommended it to many business executives. If you want to understand what's going on, here's a good tip.

I guess the thing that next comes to mind is something that describes the situation with regard to our belief system, its dominance by the materialistic economic premises, and what the alternatives are with regard to a new kind of knowledge which does much more honor to our inner experience. I don't know of any particular one thing there, but surely that's an area in which I would want to put a lot more emphasis because in very practical terms -- not abstract, academic, philosophical terms -- we have to ask together the question, "Who am I? In the very deepest part of my self, what is it I really want? What do I want from my fellow man"? Then you can ask, "How might we change things to get there?"