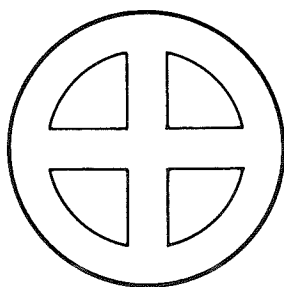


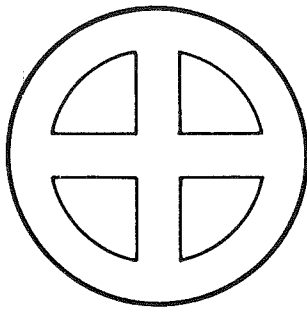
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KUHF Radio Interview with Jean Houston



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



Jean Houston

Director, The Foundation for Mind Research, New York.

Dr. Houston is a pioneer and leader in the exploration, development and application of human potentials and in the study of human consciousness. She and her co-workers at the Foundation have pursued extensive non-drug studies of altered states of consciousness, accelerated mental processes, time distortion, bio-feedback training, the programming of dreams, the psychology of creative processes, and the laboratory study of religious and peak experiences. She is currently interested in extending arts curricula in the schools as a means to improving learning and psychophysical development in children. She has been especially active in setting up programs at colleges and universities in human capacities research. Additionally, she has worked closely with women's colleges, helping to develop new curricula and educational procedures aimed at evoking more effectively the innate female potential. For some time now, she has been training teachers and introducing her methods into primary and secondary schools for more effective education, as well as working in ex-prisoner rehabilitation programs and in programs for rehabilitating the elderly.

Dr. Houston is a frequent guest lecturer at many academic, medical, scientific and governmental meetings in the United States and Europe. She was chairman of The Temple of Understanding—United Nations Conference ("One is the Human Spirit"), which brought together religious leaders from around the world, in a series of conferences, public addresses and seminars. She has served on the faculties of psychology, religion and philosophy at Columbia, Hunter, Marymount College and is presently teaching at The New School for Social Research. Additionally, she has lectured or given seminars and workshops at over 400 colleges, universities, hospitals and related institutions in the United States and Europe, and has appeared frequently on radio and television discussing her views.

She is the developer and chief consultant of the curriculum in human capacities at The New School for Social Research—at present the only advanced training offered by an accredited university in the study and application of human potential. She is President of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, serves on the board of directors or as executive officer of numerous professional societies and organizations, including the American Teilhard de Chardin Association, the Society for Art, Religion and Contemporary Culture and the Temple of Understanding. Additionally, she acts as consultant to the Danforth Foundation, Ford Foundation, and various governmental agencies, including the Office of Technological Assessment and the National Institute for Education.

In addition to numerous published articles, she has co-authored the following books: *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience*, *Psychedelic Art*, *Mind Games*, *Listening to the Body* and *Rhythms of Awakening* (to be published in 1979). She has written a nationally and internationally syndicated column and currently is preparing a television series for Public Television on New Ways of Being.

KUHF Radio (Houston) Interview with Dr. Jean Houston

Director, The Foundation for Mind Research, Pomona, New York.

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

INTERVIEWER: I'm Mark Markley. I'm on the staff of the Studies of the Future Program at the University of Houston at Clear Lake City. With me is Jean Houston, director of the Foundation for Mind Research in Pomona, New York. She is one of the main speakers at the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society being held here at the Woodlands Inn. You gave your presentation yesterday, Jean. How was it received?

HOUSTON: Extremely well.

INTERVIEWER: What did people say?

HOUSTON: They were filled with hope. I gathered that the previous speeches had been rather heavy on the technological, and even projecting not the happiest future. I was not looking so much at the future as possibilities that are in the present, relating to latest issues. I actually opened my speech with an image that might be helpful here. That was an image of the Legend of Parsifal and the Fisher King. The Fisher King was in terrible straits: he was constantly dying, but he couldn't die, of a wound that he had received. He was the one that had the secret of the Grail. In the myth, it's not just the Fisher King who is in illness, but the whole kingdom is crumbling away -- the palaces are crumbling, the animals don't breed, the trees and flowers give no life, it's a gray wasteland. Healers come from all over to try to help the Fisher King, but nothing works. The knights arrive there day and night with great ceremony, with great courtesousness, asking for news of the Fisher King, but it doesn't help. One day one knight, foolish and sort of small and slightly ridiculous, shows up and without standing on any ceremony he goes right up to the Fisher King and he asks, "Where is the Grail?" At that very moment, the whole kingdom is transformed: the King gets up from his bed of suffering, the rivers run, the trees bear fruit, the palace becomes beautiful again and the eroding wasteland becomes the great kingdom -- the kingdom of God. No one had been filled with enough passion for reality, enough metaphysical and psychological desire for reality, to ask the great question before: Where is it? Where is the Grail? Where is the kingdom? Where is the source? Where is the fountain? Where is it all happening? Where is the creative potential? Where is the Grail?

INTERVIEWER: So this is the question you were trying to ask here at the conference?

HOUSTON: Yes, I started asking these questions because I think it is in the great questions that what I would refer to as the X-factor in history is found. Because whenever we look at historical extrapolations, if we figure that we lived in the 16th century, we could have not predicted the Industrial Revolution and technology. If we had lived in the second century A.D., we could not have predicted the decline of Rome and what subsequently happened. It's only by asking the great questions that sometimes you get it. So, what I was doing was asking certain kinds of questions. I don't think they were of the Grail variety but maybe more of the paper cup and thermos jug variety.

INTERVIEWER: Give us a couple of examples.

HOUSTON: Well, one example would be, where are we in time and history? We are at the end of one age and the beginning of the next. We are living in the time of parenthesis, and there is no juicier time to be alive than the time of parenthesis.

INTERVIEWER: You mean that old Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times"?

HOUSTON: That was ancient Egyptian but I think everybody has it. But to be at the end of one age, when all of the things -- the moral mandates, the structural givens that were laid down 2,000 years ago (certain premises about man and nature), and 300 years ago (industry and technology) -- they've run out. The story doesn't work. However, at the same time, whenever the story does not work then all psychological energy is no longer bonded to social forms and you have a tremendous rising of the depths and rising of new possibilities. The psyche becomes richer than it was.

INTERVIEWER: Is this why we have cults today?

HOUSTON: Oh yes, cults and leaps to the East and also withdrawals. People often tend just to withdraw.

INTERVIEWER: How do you see this happening then in the future? Continuing?

HOUSTON: No, I don't think so, but let's look at some other questions. The other question I asked was, what is the possible human? I talked about some of my own research. We discover that the human capacity is much greater than we

ever imagined. You need a time like ours -- with complexity and crisis and dire necessity to begin to quicken people, to cease just being men and women in search of sustenance, using just those potentials that enable them to subsist. I talked about all the potentials we have -- potentials for consciousness, that our spectrum of consciousness is enormous. As we live (most of us) it's as if we're living in the attic of ourselves with the first, second, third, fourth floor and cellar unoccupied. We can't get away with that anymore, it literally is a question of "grow or die."

INTERVIEWER: You mean being more aware of our bodies?

HOUSTON: The extension of our bodies' capacity. As we are, we use only about 10% of our body, and goodness only knows how little of our minds and brains we use. The numbers game says 5% but it's probably much, much less than that.

INTERVIEWER: And you've been doing research in how to expand those potentials?

HOUSTON: How to explore them, how to open them up, yes.

INTERVIEWER: What are a couple of the books, just for a moment? I know you want to get on to some of the other questions.

HOUSTON: Some of my books are Mind Games and Listening to the Body, and I have a book coming out later this year called Rhythms of Awakening which gives more of the philosophy and psychology of this. People can think in images as well as in words, they can think with their whole body. They can use many, many more senses. All of us are as different as snowflakes, one from the other. We all have different physiological and neurological dominance, but we live in a culture that tends to reward us ...

INTERVIEWER: That one went by pretty fast -- neurological and physiological dominance? What does that mean?

HOUSTON: Well, for example, I would be a sort of very linear, verbal, analytic, left hemispheric type. I suspect you're a little bit more right hemispheric than I am.

INTERVIEWER: That refers to this new brain research?

HOUSTON: Yes, the brain research of the left and right hemisphere. The left hemisphere deals with sequencing, linear, analytical, structural types of things; whereas the right hemisphere deals with associations, with the more intuitional, the poetic, the visual, the physical. Now

people do have one dominance, one over the other, but the problem is much more complicated than that. That's just the bare bones of it. People have dominance that would have to do with older areas of the brain, or younger areas of the brain. We educate our children to reward only those who happen to fall into the line of certain verbal, linear, analytical types of skills.

INTERVIEWER: Left brain skills?

HOUSTON: Essentially left brain. In our country we're creating people who are essentially (to talk about the laterality of the brain) "bilateral paraplegics." That's why so much of our educational money is lost. Some of the things that we've been trying to do is to restore programs for these other kinds of children in the school, arts-related programs. Now by arts-related I don't mean you string the macaroni or they give you a mimeographed picture of a witch and you put orange paint on it. Not at all! But where the child gets involved very intensely in the use of materials and the creating of configurations. A child not only learns how to weave, he learns how to build a loom. And if he's learning about weaving, he's also learning how to do grids, so that the child learns abstract conceptual material of mathematics or reading by the very visceral sensory method of doing very complex aesthetic works -- and they learn much, much faster.

INTERVIEWER: And for those people then who are born naturally dominant in a physical or right hemispheric way, that's the way of allowing them to enhance those potentials which they naturally have.

HOUSTON: Yes, to enhance the potential and then bridge into the other hemisphere. We find that the best way to work is not with a person's weakness but with their strength. You find out what their physiological and neurological strength is and build it up. If a child, for example, is not very good at verbal linear skills, he may be excellent at sensori-motor skills. He may actually think in rhythms. Then you build up the rhythm. You give him a sense of learning in rhythm. He learns mathematics in terms of a rhythmic sequence and then once he has a sense of himself as a learner, then you bridge into the verbal linear skills.

INTERVIEWER: Earlier you mentioned that it was difficult during these yeasty times of rapid change in history. When you're in one it's difficult to predict what will happen next. Can some of these skills be used to get an intuitive sense of what may be happening?

HOUSTON: I would think so because, for example, in imagistic thinking (many people think in images), images give you access to actually more areas of the brain -- to memories, to reflections, to deep subliminal thoughts and cues that you have which don't rise into consciousness.

INTERVIEWER: Kind of what Carl Jung called the "racial unconscious"? Things like that?

HOUSTON: It could be that or it could actually be just subliminal things that you pick up, things that normally go by your waking consciousness but are stored as images, and you can reflect on them. An exercise that people can do is to take a door -- imagine going down, perhaps down into a very deep corridor, down and around and around and down, then you get to a place of a door and the door says, "The Year 2000." You walk through the door ...

INTERVIEWER: ... And you see what you see.

HOUSTON: And you see what you see. Whether it's true or not is not important, but you'll get some sense of envisioning and you might get some very good ideas for your own future, things that you might want to develop. I think that those kinds of skills are helpful. Also, you know there's no such thing as an innocent potential. Our society is built on potentials having to do with cognitive, linear, athletic types of processes. But if you are looking at the world as some people do, with burnished senses, with a very extended, vivid, vital sensory system like our late good friend Margaret Mead did -- (because Margaret Mead, by the way, as a child was rewarded for being a child. So at her death she was 6 years old going on 76. She was filled with child-like vitality and a tremendous sensory taking in of the whole environment. That's why she had a superb memory, because there was so much of her invested in each moment she wasn't about to forget them). People like Margaret, we find that when they have these extraordinary extended senses and are so vital and alive, they can't take the world that seriously. Margaret Mead once told me about riding down the main drag here (in Houston) and just being so appalled at the unconscious kind of ugliness of it. It's not good for people to have to see and be with that kind of thing.

INTERVIEWER: Just kind of letting things happen however they happen.

HOUSTON: Yes, however it happens. Now when you have an extended sensory and psychological system, that sort of thing doesn't happen. You don't have these ugly shopping

malls and highways. That doesn't mean that you don't have lovely stores and wonderful forms of conduits, but it's done with much greater sensitivity and with a real sense of the relationship between these constructs and the nature around, so that people have planned communities which are perhaps larger than the family and smaller than the city.

INTERVIEWER: Do you see that happening in terms of the creation of community?

HOUSTON: Oh yes. I think, for example, where we are now, The Woodlands, is certainly a very lovely example of this, in contrast to some of the other parts.

INTERVIEWER: Jean, you've really been looking a lot at these various potentials and what might happen if we realize them. What do you see for the future? What do you think are the biggest surprises that may occur in five years, 15 years, 50 years?

HOUSTON: Maybe I can get into that by saying what my other questions are. What is the feminine archetype and why is it rising in our time? I think that's one of the big surprises. I think that what you're seeing with ERA and the rise of women and the rise of the feminist movement is just the bare beginnings, and it's perhaps not as important as something else that's happening.

For example, with our research subjects and with clinicians generally, we find an activation in many people of images of the female principle, the feminine principle. Many men feel this feminine principle rising in themselves. That doesn't mean that they're getting sissified, quite the contrary. It means that they are having certain kinds of sensibilities of the relationship of man and nature, and the way things cohere and grow. I think this is arising in perhaps millions of people all over the world. I find it all over the world, not just here.

INTERVIEWER: In fact that was really part of the Parsifal myth.

HOUSTON: Yes, very much so. What that means is not that women are rising and you're going to have a matriarchy (although my friend Hazel Henderson might disagree). I think that what is happening is a natural corrective. For example, when you look at the great matrilineal societies the emphasis is on having and growing and being, rather than on doing. It's on making things cohere and grow rather than the dramatic specificity of action.

INTERVIEWER: Kind of the holistic rather than the reductionistic, the piecemeal.

HOUSTON: The holistic rather than the reductionistic. It's looking for the symbiosis and the nurturing of things. Well, we need that in order to contrast with what has been a kind of manipulative, consuming, aggressive, aggrandizing relationship to nature and to other people which as we see has led us, in part, to some of the horrors of the 20th century. So I think that this is a principle of nature rising to restore the balance. I think that it's going to be very, very interesting in terms of the future because 52% of the human race is coming into its own. It's no longer bounded just by one role. That doesn't mean they will not always have that role -- I certainly hope so! But what is happening is it means that a very different style of looking at the world and of being human is coming into the mainstream. And people would say, "Oh, men and women are the same." They are not the same and a lot of neurological evidence is showing that they are considerably different. It isn't just the obvious sexual differences, it's profound differences. It's a difference that probably has to do with seeing things in wholes and seeing things in terms of resonances rather than something that is out there. That doesn't mean that many, many men don't have the same characteristics. They do. But I'm saying that this principal is arising.

INTERVIEWER: And that may bring a number of surprises.

HOUSTON: It's going to bring incredible surprises. I think this is a major X-factor.

Other kinds of things -- I think that our schools are going to change rapidly because our school systems are breaking down right and left. That's going to be very important. I think it's about time that children really get educated, their minds awakened. And what we're now learning in this new revolution that's happening in this brain/mind/body research, we're finding ways to tap the snowflake capacity. I will have to say that in my own research, I've never found a stupid child. Never. I have found incredibly stupid educational systems. But I've seen so many children wake up when we give them different styles of knowing and learning and we find that they can learn on many, many levels.

INTERVIEWER: Where can people dig deeper to learn those skills? I know you mentioned several of your books, Mind Games, etc. If you recommended five or so books to expand those kinds of potentials or to dig deeper in terms of

understanding about the future and what one might do to prepare or to try to create the kind of future one would like to live in, what would you recommend? I know that's a hard question but you're a capable person!

HOUSTON: I'll just start from home, my own books and I would even recommend our own journal, which deals with this. For example, our next issue is a big double issue on arts and education.

INTERVIEWER: That journal is ...?

HOUSTON: "Dromenon."

INTERVIEWER: Where does one get it?

HOUSTON: You can write to us -- Box 600, Pomona, New York. It's \$9.00 a year and it has a lot of information.

INTERVIEWER: It's the Foundation for Mind Research?

HOUSTON: Yes, Foundation for Mind Research, Box 600, Pomona, New York or just "Dromenon." There's a lot of information. "The Wonderful Brain/Mind Bulletin" edited by Marilyn Ferguson. I'm the president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology. They provide conferences all over in many areas where people who can teach the development of these skills are available. So I think your local or regional Association for Humanistic Psychology can be extremely helpful.

There are so many books. What are your favorite books? You tell me.

INTERVIEWER: Well one thing I think of immediately is the book by Anderson (a kind of survey of the various groups and offerings) called Awakening. It's in paperback. The book by Adelaide Bry on visualization which is called Directing the Movies of Your Mind. It's kind of fun and it introduces people to these kinds of things.

HOUSTON: Then there's also the book by Nancy and Mike Samuels on visual thinking, Seeing With the Mind's Eye, which is extremely useful.

INTERVIEWER: This really brings up the topic of all these groups that are doing these things. I seem to recall a phrase you used one time, "the chicken franchise of the mind."

HOUSTON: "The Chicken Delight -- or the Colonal Sanders franchise of the mind." I think for the most part it's a healthy phenomenon. I used to get angry at it because, coming in as something of a behavioral scientist in this field, they were so simpleminded. But I don't think, by and large, it hurts anybody and it introduces them (in almost a kind of kindergarten and first grade way) to these things. I don't think that they're harmful -- perhaps some of them are, but for the most part they're very well-meaning people who try to give some of these basic skills. These are skills that humanity has had for thousands of years, but which had always been in the providence of "the special people." Now these potentials to explore the body, mind and psyche are being democratized. We're having a democratization of the potentials and that's all to the good because once you have a democratization, you're much less likely to have cults of people who say, "I know, I have the specialties."

INTERVIEWER: Or government ...

HOUSTON: ... Or government controls on those things. For those who are interested in greater seriousness in these kinds of things, there's a wonderful new book out called Brain and Education. It just came out, edited by Chall & Mirsky by University of Chicago Press. I think the journals (the "Journal of Humanistic Psychology") are good.

INTERVIEWER: Given that we're here at a Lutheran conference, what do you see as the relevance of the old religious texts to all of the things we've been talking about -- the Bible, the Koran, the Bhagavad Gitas?

HOUSTON: I think these texts are loaded with these forms. As I said to the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium yesterday, really it is the spiritual and religious traditions that have preserved these different understandings of the nature and extension of consciousness. I said that one of the reasons so many young people are making a leap to the East is because the western religions are not providing them with their own enormously rich tradition of spiritual and psychological development.

INTERVIEWER: You said you were very optimistic with the people here. Do you see ways in which Christianity could (or the western, religious, Judeo-Christian traditions)...?

HOUSTON: Oh yes, very much so. Especially because the religious traditions are much more relational than the eastern traditions. They look for the way that you can relate man and nature, and man and social context because the relation of man to God is relational. It's not that one

is part of God as in the eastern religions, but that one is in a state of dynamic relations, that one has to build bridges. This building of the bridges is also the building of the social forms. I think it is much more likely that the kinds of things that I'm talking about can happen here, rather than in the east. One of the things that I was saying to the Lutherans is that you have the freedom with church schools to really begin to explore the new kind of education because you're not beholden to the public bureaucracies. And (many of them are ministers) to begin to think of yourselves as stewards of the talents in helping people to develop the 10 talents, and to use that kind of parable as stewards to become evocators and envisioners of what is possible. This is fully within scriptural tradition where Christ says that "the kingdom of heaven is in the midst of you," it is within. Furthermore, "these things that I shall do, you shall do more." So that the radical demand, the radical Christian demand is to utilize as much as we can. There are problems, of course, of people feeling themselves as born-guilty creatures who dare not explore the inner depths lest they find themselves in the denizens of hell, but I think this is changing.

INTERVIEWER: In speaking of the future, this is really a continuation of the Old Testament tradition of being a prophet.

HOUSTON: Yes, of being a prophet. Very much so. And they see themselves that way.

INTERVIEWER: And what you're saying then and what you were saying yesterday is that we can all be prophets in our time, and that we need to.

HOUSTON: I think we almost have to. We need the democratization of the great mandate -- to be prophetic and to be Christic, at the same time.