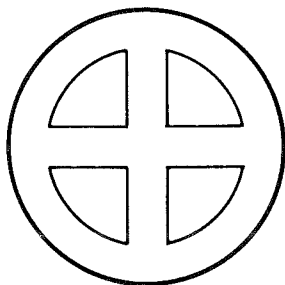


C-1902

# "Belief Systems and the Transformation in Human Values"

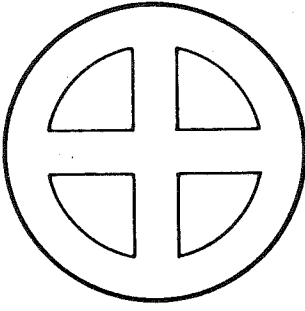
## Willis Harman



Lutheran Brotherhood  
Colloquium on the Church  
in Future Society

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

Concordia Seminary Library  
Fort Wayne, IN



# Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society

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

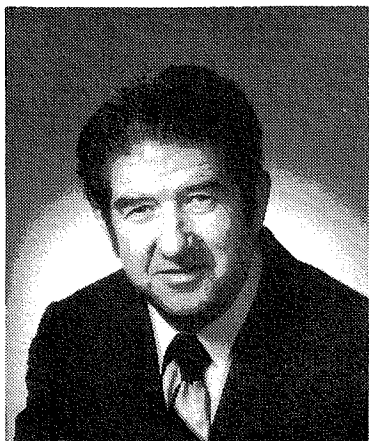
The Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society was a conference of 250 Lutheran leaders and ten nationally-known futurists. It was the first such event ever held by Lutheran Brotherhood, a fraternal benefit society serving Lutherans nationally, and was the result of consultations 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.

Dr. Willis Harman: "Belief Systems and the Transformation  
in Human Values"

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

Delivered on January 31, 1979 at the Lutheran Brotherhood  
Colloquium on the Church in Future Society

I appreciated that introduction. I do not intend to elaborate on the problems of the future because we have already heard Drs. Toffler and Platt and Gordon and they have given us a good preview. It's very interesting to me, having worked in this field for about 12 years, to listen to three fellow futurists and realize that the thing that I pick out as the most significant thing going on today that has implications for the future, none of them mentioned. That is a kind of reassessment of our basic beliefs about ourselves, a kind of new spirituality in the community, a kind of questioning where we are at this point in history. That is what I would like to spend our time together on.

I think it was wise planning in a way to have the speakers come early, get acquainted with you, hear you discuss among yourselves. It had one side effect for me: I have much more trepidation about giving this talk this morning than I did two days ago. The reason is I am far more sensitive that if I speak the truth as I see it, I am going to raise a lot of arguments. Now I think there's a creative way to deal with that. I am quite aware that to say some of the things that I have to say later on will be startling and they will raise points that you will feel that you wish to debate. Some points are maybe not too amenable to the usual kind of intellectual debate. They're more matters about which perhaps we should sit back and ponder. I have had the privilege of speaking with national Lutheran groups several times before and you have always treated me very kindly so I am going to ask the same thing this morning. Instead of rising to heated debate right away, let's ponder together some things about which I am not sure either, but I can only tell you the picture as I see it.

In working in futures research since 1967, I have been surprised at least twice -- very, very much surprised. And when we are surprised, our feelings get involved as well as our intellects. The first time was in 1969 when we began to put together the first comprehensive set of alternative futures for the couple of decades ahead. We were doing this for the U.S. Office of Education because they said they wanted to know. (It turned out they really didn't. That's a typical experience: we all say we would like to know about the future.) It became clear that there was very

little likelihood that we were going to avoid a real time of troubles which we said in 1969 was going to start about five years later, and we have since lived through the beginnings of that. But at that point, I remember particularly the feeling in my viscera because it dawned on us that we were going to have to live through the period that we were describing, and that there were aspects of it that were going to be frustrating and baffling and painful. The other time when I have been surprised is in the last year, because I see a lot of signs that a dramatic change in our basic belief system is happening far more rapidly than I would have imagined it five or 10 years ago, even though there were some signs then.

Now this is important to concentrate on when we are looking at societal change because underneath the societal change there are some value shifts. Underneath those value shifts are shifts in the most basic beliefs, the most fundamental premises on which the whole structure is based. And those fundamental premises don't change very often, either in the lives of individuals or in societies. One psychologist, Milton Rokeach, wrote a book a couple of decades ago called The Open and Closed Mind. An important part of this book was his discussion of the individual belief system that each of us has. We have peripheral beliefs that can be changed rather easily by education or propaganda or advertising. There are beliefs deeper down that take a great deal more evidence before we shift them. But there are fundamental core beliefs which we may go through a major portion of our lifetime without changing at all. Those premises he said are in four areas: the fundamental belief about the nature of ourselves, the fundamental belief about the nature of our neighbor or fellow man/woman, the fundamental belief about the nature of our relationship with the universe and our belief about authority. And if any of those fundamental premises change, the whole system is shaken up and we go through a traumatic change period.

In societies it is probably similar, and many anthropologists have pointed out that there seem to be fundamental premises at the core of any culture. Lewis Mumford wrote a book entitled The Transformations of Man in which he tried to identify the various fundamental transformations that western society had gone through. He picked out about half a dozen total, the last two being the end of the Roman Empire and the end of the Middle Ages. So if we talk about going through a period of fundamental change, I mean something as drastic as the end of the Roman Empire and the end of the Middle Ages, not necessarily disruptive but certainly something that we will all know we have been through; also,

something which happens much more rapidly than heretofore in history, because for one thing we have instantaneous communication around the globe. Any transformation now will involve all of the globe.

What is clear so far is that technology, and the institutions that house that technology, and the economic institutions are going to be centrally involved in any such transformation. The nature of that transformation and why it is plausible is really a context for talking about the main topic, which is the beliefs that underlie our values. Toward the end I am going to put a special emphasis on the way a society makes decisions and the way institutions in the society make decisions. When we talk about the values being important, what we really mean is that we shape the future by decisions, we influence the future by the choices we make and we make those choices in accordance with some kind of values. Those values, in turn, are based on a belief system and that belief system may be undergoing change.

I am going to be rather rapid in trying to make that transformation story plausible because we have more important things to do. There are a number of social movements. If we list these according to the main themes, we can see them in a number of groups. There are voluntary simplicities, conserver society movements, there are environmentalist and ecological movements, there are movements that aim to shift the direction of technological development, appropriate technology movements, technology assessment movements. There are decentralization and reruralization (de-urbanization) movements, there are movements that have to do with the kind of energy we use, as well as the amount of it, anti-nuclear and so-called "soft energy path" movements. There is a disarmament movement. There are various person-liberation movements including the feminist movement as one of the most important, human potential, the holistic health movement. The holistic health movement is probably especially significant because it aims so directly at the heart of the belief system. Our whole concept of health and wellness or illness is based in some beliefs about the nature of the human body-mind-spirit complex. Hence, holistic: the individual's responsibility for creating his own illness or creating his own health. And so of all the institutions that are shifting, probably the health care institutions will shift the most rapidly if, in fact, this transformation is taking place. There are transpersonal psychology, new transcendentalist kinds of movements and the various new spirituality groupings that we see around the country. Now some of these groups may strike you as a little bizzare or cultish, but on the whole they seem to be fairly healthy responses to an assortment of situations.

The one question I would like to have you raise about these social movements is the following: suppose, instead of being separate movements as these may appear to be, that the whole pattern of these movements is really one broad movement with a lot of components but they are interrelated components -- what is the meaning of that movement? What is the meaning of the total pattern looked at as a whole?

When you look at history you see a lot of events which fall in patterns and you see some institutional change, things move with varying speeds. But there are a few very basic long-term trends that move very slowly. There is one of those that has been going on since the end of the Middle Ages, it's a trend that is eight or 10 centuries long and is absolutely central to the shape of modern society. That trend I will call the "long-term multifold modernization trend," multifold because it has so many different aspects. It started with a change in the belief system and that is the critical point. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the basis for values that guided the society began to shift away from the traditional religious base and over to a practical, utilitarian base. Later on it became an economic base. Along with that came a new belief: the concept that human-kind could shape its physical environment by its own actions, the concept of modern progress, material progress. Stemming from those changes in beliefs then, we got the beginnings of capitalism, the beginnings of science, later on the Industrial Revolution, technology wedded to science and so on to the present day. Of course we speak about these things separately sometimes, the Industrial Revolution, and the rise of capitalism, but you can think of all of that as components further working out of this one long-term trend.

When you look at some of the elements of this trend, I mentioned first the secularization of values. Along with this, there came gradually the industrialization of the production of goods and later on services, and the moving of more and more of human activity into the mainstream economy and of course this gives a particular flavor to some of these things. When you industrialize health care or education or the care of the aging, certain qualitative changes take place. In recent years we have noted these and some of the social movements are protesting some of these qualitative changes. Along with this the economic rationality came to be dominant over more and more social decisions. We justify social decisions with impacts on future generations and other peoples around the globe on the basis of a cost-benefit study or some equivalent kind of economic argument. The consequences of this have caused questions to be raised

about the rate at which we use fossil fuels, for instance, which is economically sound and socially insane, and other similar questions which affect the future. So again we see that a trend which brought us great benefits for a while has some side effects. It was originally benefit-creating but now it becomes somewhat problem-creating.

As a part of all of that, something happened to the knowledge base in the society. The kind of knowledge that became honored and supported was the kind of knowledge that would generate manipulative technology. The values that came to predominate in science were values of technology, namely prediction and control. They came to dominate so much that in many generations we were taught that the methodology of science is the methodology that tests by whether you can predict and control with the knowledge. That, of course, leaves out of the picture the idea that there might be any other kind of knowledge which conforms to some other kinds of values, such as human growth and development or the development of humane societies. But this became so predominant that we began to take for granted that knowledge is essentially equivalent to science. "If it's not in science it's not knowledge and you don't need to pay any attention to it."

That proposition may sound a little absurd put boldly, but it predominates in our universities still. One of the characteristics of this trend was the technification of knowledge, the shaping of knowledge so that it generates technology and anything that doesn't, doesn't get supported.

There are numerous characteristic component trends to this whole movement. I mentioned a few but besides those are more and more environmental impact per capita, more and more research use per capita, more and more material growth, increasing urbanization, centralization, specialization and so on. All the aspects of the counter trend represented by those social movements are in opposition to many of the characteristics of the modernization trend.

It would take a great deal of discussion and argument to try to convince you that that picture really holds up, but I think it has a certain face validity to it. I want to focus particularly on knowledge in the society, that is to say that society's system and its relationship to values. When we talk about the possibility that not only are values shifting, through the last decade and a half or two decades, not only do we see signs of that in the culture, but underneath that we see signs of shift in the beliefs in which those values are rooted. That is all in the context of a



major transformation of the institutions of the society that very well may be going on. Let's look at that in some more detail, asking only that it is plausible that this picture might represent one of the alternative futures. If we talked a little bit longer, I would endeavor to show you that it is one of the probable ones.

When some of us were young, we heard a great deal about the warfare between science and religion. We all know how it came out: science won. If you look at the institutions of the society and what is influential and what is not, there seems to be rather little question about that. On the other hand something very interesting is happening, in that the same issues that were once raised and settled are now rising again in a slightly different form. Now this was a strange sort of debate. One of the characteristics was that certain topics that were in the realm of theology or philosophy shifted over to the empirical realm. The shape of the earth was one of the early ones. Is it flat or isn't it? But there were many others: the age of the earth. The geological discoveries relating to the age of some of the fossils and their implications for the history of the earth were at one point an issue of bitter controversy. It turned out that the empiricists carried the day. The whole battle over evolution, the origins of humankind, the ancestors of humankind: there again, the evolutionists ended predominating over the anti-evolutionists. Then the question as to whether a man has a valid sense of values, has a conscience to which he or she can appeal: that was dismissed by the theories of psychoanalysis. It all has to do with what was interjected into you by your parents when you were very young. Of course there were battles over that. Then the whole issue as to whether the human mind and spirit is something more than some kind of excretion from the physical brain remains an issue.

Last month, in this very city that we're adjacent to here, Houston, the American Association for the Advancement of Science held its annual meeting and for the first time, certain topics were admitted to the podium. These appeared in a session entitled, "The Role of Consciousness in the Physical World," which was a discussion of how scientists are going to deal with the experiential fact that we seem to be conscious. So far they have managed to ignore it pretty well. Now this brought up the whole area of psychic phenomena, the kinds of research that have been going on there. The fundamental issue turned out to be one which goes very, very deep into science as a social institution because it appears that science is at a crossroads. A great deal of what is going on is straining to take the old pattern of

science, the old paradigm, the conventional kind of scientific way of looking at things which is reductionistic, which tends to explain things in terms of the smallest elements that you can find to deal with, molecules or atoms or subatomic particles. It is deterministic. It embodies the values of prediction and control. Magnificent accomplishments have come out of this kind of science and much of the effort now is an attempt to stretch this paradigm so that it at least allows for some of these important inner-experiences of a religious, mystical sort and other reports from the inner-explorations. We read or hear papers given on how if you look at things quantum mechanically, maybe it would be permissible to talk about things religious after all. Or if you think about holographic patterns maybe we have new ways of looking at the brain so that some of the statements that have been made about the human mind can now be made more legitimately.

But all of that straining doesn't ever seem to really come to grips with the quality of the experience itself. In fact, you find that this magnificent edifice of science still deals with only half of human experience, only half of the totality, because it deals exclusively, or very nearly so, with the kind of experiencing of reality that we get through our senses. It takes that sensory data, makes models of relationships, puts it together in various ways, makes it very useful but it still is knowledge about that portion of our experience and it in no way deals with the other half of human experience, which is our whole realm of subjective experience. We have said now for many years, "We'll leave that to the humanities and the religions." But one also implies that it can't be very important knowledge since somehow science doesn't seem to be able to deal with it, so maybe it isn't even there.

The critical point seems to be that there are two possible paths for science. At this point one is to keep trying to stretch that old paradigm the way they tried the Ptolemaic theory and somehow make it fit the data, and finally gave up and said, "All right, Copernicus was right, the earth goes around the sun." There's that straining to accommodate the present reductionistic, deterministic emphasis on the measuring kind of paradigm that characterizes science.

The alternative path is to say besides that we need a complementary paradigm. We need one that takes consciousness as the primary data and starts from there. It will be more holistic, it will be teleological, it will allow purpose to enter in, it will emphasize the qualitative. It

really doesn't make any difference whether you call that science or not, the important point is that it becomes a legitimate kind of knowledge and it becomes a universal kind of knowledge in the same way that science is.

Here is the really important point: stop and think what this development really means, if it should take place. The essential point in the history of science is that a consensus developed as to how you publicly validate knowledge, how you test it in an open way so that anyone who wants to test for himself can do so. We have finally come to believe that knowledge has validity because of this public testing. It is an open inquiry. There is no elite that has control over it. The result is that astronomy is the same in India or in Finland or in Japan or wherever you go, and the same with other branches of science. For that half of human experience, the sensory part, we have this consensus on public testing of knowledge. We do not have a similar consensus on the exploration of inner experience, the world of psychology and spiritual knowledge. So the Hindu version of man's psychological-spiritual nature appears to be different from the Christian version, appears to be different from the Islamic and so on.

If a consensus is now developing on how we publicly validate this knowledge in an atmosphere of trust by sharing the deepest experiences that we have instead of hiding them from one another, trying to compare them with experiences that other people have in other cultures, trying to test them in all the ways that we can think of that allow us to gain confidence in that sort of knowledge (and this kind of testing has of course gone on within the various religious traditions of the world), if it is going to be a global kind of testing and we are going to come out with one body of knowledge about the aspect of our existence, as well as a body of knowledge about our sensory experience, you can see what a revolutionary development that would be. You can also see some of my trepidation, because just as in mentioning that to the physical scientists on the other side of Houston earlier this month, I felt a bit of nervousness because some of them wanted to attack it, I also feel some nervousness here.

What this really amounts to is that the two great traditions in our culture, the tradition of science with its emphasis on public validation of knowledge and the tradition of Christianity, would be coming together. They would be more and more saying the same thing. They seem to say conflicting things, partly at least because the area of science was partial.

To explore this in some more detail we have to go back and look at some of the various areas in science that have been very controversial, and in fact have been taboo in some respects. We will talk about some of the phenomena that have appeared both in earlier years and recently.

Hypnosis was a taboo area for a long time; it no longer is. Generations of scientists die off and others come in, and things that were very uncomfortable aren't so uncomfortable to the replacement group. But hypnosis is very strange business. If I am a good hypnotic subject, it can be suggested to me that I will see something out here that is not there (somebody is sitting in that chair over there and you don't see anybody there but I see somebody there) and it is very real. Or I can be persuaded that I can lift a weight that ordinarily I know I can't lift, or I can be persuaded that I have here not a fountain pen but a hot iron. If I put it on my hand, it raises a blister and gives all the signs of a burn. There are powerful implications to that. One of the implications is that a lot is going on under the surface and that probably because of all this unconscious activity, various suggestions that come into me have a powerful effect on my life and on my perceptions. I perceive as I am taught to perceive, as it is suggested to me I should perceive. Now that is really enough to make us feel uncomfortable. One of the classic experiments or demonstrations in hypnosis used to be, in sophomore psychology classes, to get a good subject and suggest to him that when he comes out of the hypnotic trance when a certain word comes into the conversation, he will feel an urge to go over and open the window. He is brought out of the hypnotic state and the conversation goes on but with this post-hypnotic suggestion. When that word comes into the conversation he goes over and opens the window. The most interesting thing is he has a perfectly rational explanation as to why that was a reasonable thing to do.

The implication of that is, of course, that we too may have perfectly rational explanations for doing things which are really done for quite a different reason. The whole concept of unconscious processes was fought, and it is not too hard to see why we might be uncomfortable about some of this. It is a very strange business that I come to realize that only the most minute fraction of my total mental activity is available to my conscious awareness. Most of it is outside that awareness and part of these unconscious processes has to do with the phenomenon of repression. I repress information; I see things but I don't let myself see them. Part of myself is hiding from another part of myself; part of myself is lying to another part of myself. We are

all more or less comfortable with that idea but there was a time when we were not, when that was fought as a scientific concept. Similarly with the idea of psychosomatic illness, the concept that my mind can create the illness of my physical body. We feel uncomfortable with this perhaps because there is a sense of loss of control. All of these matters relating to these unconscious processes had a tough time getting accepted, becoming legitimate. Part of this has to do with the more positive side of the unconscious processes, the part that shows up in intuition, in intuitive judgment, in hunches, in the creative process.

I have several friends who have trained themselves to ask this creative process, this creative problem-solving capability of the mind questions and even to ask for answers to those questions in image form. One of these persons is president of a large industrial corporation, who became president partly because he introduced some very novel inventions into the business of the industry. I remember one of them particularly because it was really quite striking. He had a very, very tough problem: he needed a new kind of furnace for melting magnesium because with the changing prices and dependability of natural gas, there had to be a great technological jump. He didn't know how to make it and none of the people who worked for him knew how to make it. He was sitting in his living room on Sunday afternoon and he was musing to himself almost out loud, "I surely wish I had a design engineer who could design a new furnace." He made notes, took down some sketches, and took it in the next day. He gave it to his design man, who looked at it, realized it was a tremendous breakthrough and said, "Where did you get this idea?" My friend said, "You wouldn't believe me if I told you," and his employee said, "Well try me." So he described this situation and the design person said, "Well I'll build it as fast as I can. I know it will work because that's the way I get all my ideas."

I have another friend who is an architect and had a tough problem designing a shopping center for the creative arts. He just didn't know how to do it. He was sitting in front of his sketch pad and all of a sudden he looked up at the wall (I happened to be there at this time and I didn't see anything) and he started to draw like mad. He ripped that paper off and went to the next sheet and drew again, and sketched out a shopping center. It turned out he was sketching it from a three-dimensional model which was complete with the parking laid out, the landscaping in and furthermore it would accommodate him. If he asked it to turn over so he could get a plan view or turn around so he could get a side view, it would do so. This was pretty

startling to him but he found out that, "Well as long as you can do this I'll ask again." The next time he was puzzling over a project, he was driving down a winding road up the San Lorenzo Valley near Santa Cruz, California where you really have to keep your eyes on the road. All of a sudden in front of the windshield there was the model, in this case of a mountain home that he was trying to get some ideas for. So he asked it if it would please go away until he got off the road, got home and got his sketch pad out. It did, then it came back and he made his drawings from it.

I happened to get interested in this and we looked into it, but it turns out there are a lot of people in the society in hiding, who know that as business executives or scientists-inventors they answer questions this way, but they don't talk about it too much because until very recently it wasn't terribly respectable. In fact, one colleague of mine at Stanford University had an experience which is so striking I'll describe it to you. As a result of this experience he became warmer toward the students and he is more effective in every way. The experience was that he felt that he could ask this creative center questions and it would answer. He found that there were certain questions that were really very basic questions that he avoided asking, but when he did confront them there not only would be a resolution but something even more remarkable happened.

The first of these questions was, "What if I were helpless and had to be taken care of?" He realized he had been afraid all his life that maybe someday he would have to be taken care of by others. When he really confronted this question, he found that there were many people around him who were available for help and he hadn't noticed they were willing. Also that he had inner sources of strength he could draw on and he hadn't noticed that either. Then he asked a question about good and evil and a question about life and death, and again as they were confronted, they were resolved. As these questions were approached one by one, the whole landscape around him got brighter and brighter, and people seemed to be very holy. They seemed to be just where they should be, doing just what they should do, the whole thing seemed to be exquisitely working out in beautiful ways that led him to feel that his previous perceptions of the world were simply in error. If you really could see more clearly, this glistening shining world with beautiful people doing what they should be doing was really much closer to reality.

The effect of that vision, which he calls back from time to time, has affected his life very markedly in the last year and a half. But the one aspect of the incident

that I left out was that when he started to describe these things as they were occurring to him in the context of his family and some of his colleagues, they got very upset. The net result was that he was locked up in the county medical facility for three days, labeled a maniac. So we don't really know how to handle some of these things in this society, but there are hints that in these unconscious processes there is a tremendous wealth that we could draw upon.

Let me go a little bit farther with this. Let me describe two experiments in this realm of psychic phenomena and one in the realm of biofeedback training because they are so important for their implications. In biofeedback training you learn that if feedback is provided as to the state of various bodily processes, unconsciously you know how to control parts of your body you didn't realize you knew how to control. And so biofeedback training is used for the relief of migraine headaches by controlling blood flow in the brain and on the head, for the relief of peptic ulcers, and so on. One of the classic demonstrations is to put a temperature sensor on your finger tip and focus your mind on raising the temperature of that finger tip by 5 degrees or lowering it. It turns out that with that information being fed back, you in fact know how to dilate the capillaries, change the blood flow and change the temperature of the finger tip. You didn't know you knew that. It is a kind of unconscious knowing.

The dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science at Princeton University, Robert Jahn, had a very interesting idea. He said through the history of society, we know there have been reports of the effect of mind on the physical world. There are many accounts of this in the Bible but there are many more recent instances also of this psychokinetic phenomenon, people who seem to be able to use their minds to make some sort of interference out in the physical world. Of course we usually hear also the cries raised about fraud, delusions and so on, but nonetheless he said, "Let's see if it's possible that the mind can have effects outside the human body as well." But just as with some of the effects inside the body, we don't know that we know about these things until the feedback is provided. So, if I tell you that there is an ashtray on a table over here and you focus your mind on it, you can move it and slide it off the table onto the floor. You smile tolerantly and say that you don't believe that you can do that - maybe Uri Geller or somebody, but not you. Nonetheless, it turns out in this experiment that if you provide the feedback of a very, very slight motion, something of the order of a millionth of a millimeter, if you can detect that very slight

motion, we all apparently know how to create such effects remotely from the human body by the power of the human mind. That simply does not fit into the conventional scientific paradigm and it is only one of many phenomena that doesn't fit, but this particular demonstration is so striking because it appears that anyone who has a little determination can walk into the laboratory and demonstrate for himself that he has this ability.

Let me mention one other experiment because of its implication. This came about rather accidentally, but it has been replicated by a number of different laboratories. It involves two people. A stimulus is put into one person which creates some sort of modification in the brain wave pattern, the EEG pattern. Then that is picked up in the brain wave of the other person, who is completely isolated, in no communication whatever with the first person except that they are in rapport -- they are friends. A particular stimulus that was used in one case was a strobe light flashing at approximately the alpha frequency of 10 flashes a second. This produces in person A, who has the light flashing in his eyes, a 10-cycle component in the brain wave pattern. Simultaneously, in person B there is a similar telltale component in the EEG pattern indicating that person B knows unconsciously that in that time interval the strobe light was on. On the other hand, consciously he has no knowledge of this. So again, further indication that we know much more than we allow ourselves to know about what is going on in the minds of those who are in intimate relationship with us and even maybe some partial strangers.

Now we need to talk about some of the implications of all of this. I have listed these very simply but they are very powerful. Those few words are rather deceptive. This phenomenon of unconscious knowing - knowing what we don't know we know - is far more pervasive than we ever imagined it was and we don't know where the limits are. We have lots of evidence to indicate that suggestion, expectation, images have a great deal of influence on our behavior. Some people know this: athletic coaches, for example, train athletes by having them lie flat on their backs and imagine athletic success (throwing baskets, or pole vaulting or whatever). Imagine success after success after success and it turns out that that imagining exercise is even better in some ways than actually going through the physical motions. There are executive development courses that are based on this principle of giving yourself suggestions that you will be successful in various ways, you will achieve certain goals. It turns out that the indications are that suggestion was pretty powerful.



Mind is predominant over biological processes. We see that in psychosomatic illness. It is an implication of all the biofeedback work. Mind is extended in time and space. Not only is there the phenomenon of remote viewing, seeing something that your physical eyes couldn't possibly see. With a little suggestion you can see something that won't happen for half an hour. That you can see what is going to go on at a remote site half an hour from now indicates there is something funny about our usual concept of time.

You may wonder why you haven't heard about some of these things if they are actually going on. There is a peculiarity to this area of knowledge: there are certain obvious military and intelligence applications if you can see at a distance, if you can interfere with the guidance system of something going on overhead, if you can interfere with somebody's mind at a distance. A great deal of the money that has been spent in these areas by governments has been spent in military and intelligence and we don't have very easy access to that information. Nevertheless there is still enough that is out in the open so that we know these phenomena are very probably there. That is a different thing from saying that there is consensus in the scientific community that we really understand these. Minds are joined in ways which are not accounted for by the usual means of communication and mind is ultimately predominant over the physical.

Let's talk about the real implications of this. Take the matter of what we know about the creative process, that there is a part of your mind that you can ask questions and you can get very elaborate answers. The answers astound you because that part of your mind seems to have access to information that you didn't know you had. There is an implication from that and it is obvious except we don't seem to think of it. In fact, we seem to be guarded against it. If there is a part of your mind to which you can pick out very difficult questions and refer them, if that part of your mind seems to have such amazing ability to give solutions to problems, answers to questions, then instead of just selecting a few to turn over to that part of your mind, why not turn over questions like, "What should I do today with my life?" "What should I do with the rest of my life?" Then we find that in fact in every religious tradition in the world, the core set of beliefs is the proposition that that is indeed a good idea and that in fact that's what it is all about.

We don't use words like "prayer" very much except in some circles like this. That is, you can go to a lot of scientific meetings and never hear the word mentioned. But

nonetheless in the history of our knowledge about meditation, contemplation and prayer, all these phenomena we have been talking about have been noted. They have been noted as sidetracks which you should not get entranced with, except for the central asking of the fundamental questions of your life.

Let me give you one more example to show just how strange some of these things can get. A pair of scientists, a man and a woman, at Columbia University in the mid-60s were working together. They had a very difficult relationship and they also had very frustrating relationships with the academic community, all of its bureaucracy and the hostilities that were hidden. One day one of them said to the other, "There must be a better way" and the other, a woman, said, "There is. I'm sure there is and I hope you find it." Sometime later, in the quiet of her home she heard a voice inside her mind. She had never heard such a thing, and the voice said, "This is a Course in Miracles, please take notes." She reacted the way most of us would react, she thought she was losing her mind. So she called her colleague and asked him what he thought. He said, "Well I've heard a little bit about that sort of thing, so why don't you just go ahead and listen. Take down in shorthand anything that comes, and then I'll type it up and we'll keep it a secret. We won't look foolish in anybody's eyes. But if it turns out to be useful we'll have it." So they made this pact and shortly after that the voice started again. "This is a Course in Miracles. It is a required course. Only the time in life you take it is optional." Then it went on to lay out a 1,500-page manuscript eventually, over a period of six years. Many years later they were persuaded to make it public and it was rather recently published.\* It has been handed around by word of mouth and there are now about 35,000 copies out. It turns out that many people feel this is a uniquely valuable document because it is a set of exercises, a kind of do-it-yourself get-acquainted-with-your-own-inner-voice. It announces itself as a speedup for a few people who really want to do this job and do it fast. The particular device that is recommended is using your most difficult relationship with another person as a laboratory, but also making some use of the suggestion that I do indeed have an inner voice and that it is a voice to which I can ascribe some authority and can learn to listen.

---

\* For further information contact: A Course in Miracles  
P. O. Box 635  
Tiburon, CA 94920

Of course you have to learn also to distinguish that from other voices because this is very hazardous business. Everybody knows how Hitler, for example, and the group around him listened to inner voices and they got very different kinds of messages. So one of the tests goes something like this: there are two belief systems, says this course, and one is your belief that you are separate or that you have separated yourself from the one reality, from God. And the other belief system is that you are not separated; as long as you follow the belief system that says you are separate, you will from time to time experience feelings of anxiety, depression, guilt and fear, and these are indicators of subscribing to the wrong belief system. You will not admit in yourself the true magnificence of what you are, but you can learn to see it more easily in your brother. That is why the work with loving unconditionally in the most difficult relationship that you have. As you experience that relationship fully and as you listen more and more, you find joy, serenity, peace. You find even that the universe has a sort of sense of humor. You find what sanity and wholeness are, and here are the exercises you can undertake.

Even if we had some religious persuasion, we might be inclined to dismiss something like that, especially because of its spooky origins. After all there are lots of other automatic writings and similar sorts of things around. Some of them seem to have some value and some have less. The real test of something like this, of course, is whether it works with people. In this particular case, it seems that there are thousands of people who find that this is the most valuable thing they have ever found in print.

As an example of the sort of thing that may happen as we begin to open our minds up and admit that we know a very little bit about reality and that a lot of things that are not incorporated in our science and philosophy may indeed be possible, let me carry that one step further because it relates to the decision-making of the society. If you take the implication that minds are joined, that there is a creative process that we can have access to, that mind somehow has control over and dominance over the physical in some ways, then we see that when claims have been made from time to time that through the process of minds joined in prayer that guidance can be obtained; that that guidance may be on occasion rather specific guidance for individuals or for the whole group; and that that guidance may even include the apparent gathering together of resources necessary to carry out activities in the form, say, of meeting people that belong working together, meeting them seemingly accidentally, except with the feeling that it was not accidental somehow.

To a lot of people in our modern age that seems a very strange idea. But we live in a nation in which that was the guiding idea as the founding fathers set forth this new democratic experiment. And you can find ample evidence of that in the Rosicrucian/Free Masonry tradition, which was the tradition of the vast majority of the founding fathers, of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, of the members of the Constitutional Convention, and also many of our foreign helpers like Kosciuszko, Lafayette, and so on. That community moved here when we were still colonies, set up this experiment, and they intended it to be guided by that sort of group asking together for guidance from the higher mind. They tried to remind us, in case we should forget, that that was what they intended. That is how the Great Seal came to have the unfinished pyramid with the all-seeing eye in the capstone position that you see on the back of the dollar bill.

The symbolism has a very clear meaning: that in the case of the individual life or the society, the structure is not complete until the guidance is of that sort. George Washington, on one occasion in Valley Forge, gave instructions to his orderly not to disturb him for a full day while he went into his tent and prayed for guidance. In this prayer, there appeared to him a figure in the form of a woman who showed him the next 150 years of the nation's history and indicated the things that would need to be done in order to get the Revolutionary War over with. This is not repeated in most of our history books. We are not inclined to take very seriously that any modern statesman, general or other public leader would get specific guidance in the form of images that would help him then steer the course of the nation and of the globe.

Nevertheless, the direct implication of all of this new development is exactly that, that they weren't kidding, that they meant that this was the kind of guidance that could be depended upon whether it is running a business or running a nation, and that only our belief system keeps us from reaffirming that capability for that kind of guidance.

Now of course it takes some discipline. It is interesting in our society that it takes a lot of discipline to be an astronaut, it takes a lot of discipline to be a marine. We have believed in space exploration, we have believed in warfare, and so we generate the discipline to create astronauts and marines. We have not felt it was necessary or even advisable to generate the discipline to create this kind of guidance, because in our dominant belief system we really didn't believe it was possible.

What I have tried to suggest to you is that there are abundant indications that a major transformation of the global society is going on, and we could only touch on that because of time limitations. Embedded in this is a major transformation of our belief system which very likely is going on. We have tried to look at some of the details of that, and what seemed to come out of it with regard to values was not only that there are values associated with a belief system which includes belief in the spiritual and the transcendental as very real though unseen parts of human experience, but it goes further. Not only are there guiding values, but the most sure guidance of the individual, of the group, of the institution, of the society seems not to be to take the values, even the very best values, and incorporate them in some kind of intellectual analysis and come out with social cost-benefit decisions as to what we should do, but rather to put the intellect in the service of something still higher and ask separately and ask together for the kind of guidance that we surely need to steer our course through some very difficult shoals.

This has always been and continues to be the real task of religion, even though in our discussions in the last two days I haven't heard very much about it. The kinds of things we have been talking about this morning, and particularly the last half hour, really amount to the combined fruition of first, Christianity, our Christian tradition, secondly, our scientific tradition of open inquiry, and thirdly, our national heritage of a new order, not just for this nation but for the globe, based in the very kinds of values and decision-making that we have just been discussing. Thank you.