



# future news

a newsletter from the *futures* foundation

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## THE GOOD NEWS

# The intelligent heart

**I**t's official. The heart has a mind of its own. In a Cinderella story that is winning the interest of corporate America, medical research is transforming traditional ideas of the heart as a servant of the brain. Instead, it repositions the organ as an independent benefactor of health and psychological wellbeing. In the work environment, understanding the way it works can increase productivity.

The Institute of HeartMath in California is exploring the physiological mechanisms by which the heart communicates with the brain, influencing information processing, perceptions, emotions and health. The non-profit Institute has also developed training tools for individuals from school age to help them manage their "inner quality" (see panel at right).

"We are asking questions such as: Why do people experience the feeling or sensation of love and other positive emotional states in the area of the heart and what are the physiological ramifications of these emotions?" says the Institute. "How do stress and different emotional states affect the autonomic nervous system, hormonal and immune systems, the heart and brain?"

"It became clear that negative emotions lead to increased disorder in the heart's rhythms and in the autonomic nervous system, thereby adversely affecting the rest of the body. In contrast, positive emotions create increased harmony and coherence in heart

rhythms and improve balance in the nervous system.

"The health implications are easy to understand: disharmony in the nervous system leads to inefficiency and increased stress on the heart and other organs while harmonious rhythms are more efficient and less stressful to the body's systems.

"More intriguing are the dramatic positive changes that occur when techniques are applied that increase coherence in rhythmic patterns of heart rate variability. These include shifts in perception and the ability to reduce stress and deal more effectively with difficult situations.

"We observed that the heart was acting as though it had a mind of its own and was profoundly influencing the way we perceive and respond to the world. In essence, it appeared that the heart was affecting intelligence and awareness."

The research shows that the heart is indeed far more than a simple pump. It is a highly complex, self-organized information processing centre with its own functional 'brain' that communicates with and influences the cranial brain via the nervous system, hormonal system and other pathways.

"These influences profoundly affect brain function and most of the body's major organs, and ultimately determine the quality of life," says the Institute.

**For more information visit [www.heartmath.org](http://www.heartmath.org).**

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## IQM lifts performance

Intervention studies investigating the impact of HeartMath 'Inner Quality Management' programs in the workplace have documented increases in productivity, goal clarity, job satisfaction, communication effectiveness, improvements in employee health and well-being, and reductions in employee turnover. Case studies have also shown the effectiveness of these programs in helping organizations meet challenges such as downsizing and restructuring.

One such study, at Motorola, showed that contentment, job satisfaction and communication significantly increased after the training, while tension, anxiety, nervousness and physical symptoms of stress significantly decreased. Blood pressure in hypertensive individuals decreased, and there was a reduction in sympathetic nervous activity.

**See next page for more study results.**

# The electricity of touch: measuring cardiac energy exchange between people

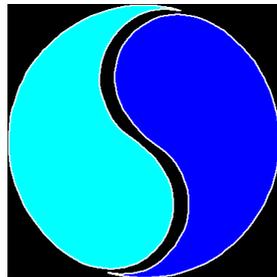
The idea that some kind of energy exchange occurs between individuals is a central theme in many healing techniques. Now it can be seen, a research team from the HeartMath Institute wrote in *Brain and Values: Is a Biological Science of Values Possible*, edited by K.H. Pribram. In summary:

"This concept has often been disputed by Western science due to the lack of a plausible mechanism to explain the nature of this energy or how it could affect or facilitate the healing process. The fact that the heart generates the strongest electromagnetic field produced by the body, coupled with the recent discovery that this field becomes more coherent as the individual shifts to a sincerely loving or caring state prompted us to investigate the possibility that the field generated by the heart may significantly contribute to this energy exchange.

"We present a sampling of results which provide intriguing evidence that an exchange of electromagnetic energy produced by the heart occurs when people touch or are in proximity. Signal averaging techniques are used to show that one's electrocardiogram

(ECG) signal is registered in another person's electroencephalogram (EEG) and elsewhere on the other person's body. While this signal is strongest when people are in contact, it is still detectable when subjects are in proximity without contact.

"This study represents one of the first successful attempts to directly measure an energy exchange between people, and provides a solid, testable theory to explain the observed effects of many healing modalities that are based upon the assumption that an energy exchange takes place."



## What does this mean for the future?

Does this research signal the end of the Age of Reason? Will the rule of rationality in the west give way to older, more holistic ways of thinking and acting? Certainly futurists and other explorers have long anticipated the end of the divide between heart and mind. Many have actively worked toward healing this split. In a wider view perhaps it signals, at this perilous time, a hopeful sign that the west could move from its adolescent preoccupation with the external and the physical to a more reflective inner focus. This would fit Ervin Laszlo's suggestion (*Future News February 01*) that our socio-cultural evolution, which began with the domestication of plants and animals, is

about to overtake our biological evolution. He argued that the past 10,000 years have seen our "extensive evolution", a time of conquest, colonisation and consumption. It is extensive in the sense that it has been an extension of power and influence; control and domination of the other, the outside, the external. Now, he says, it is time for "intensive evolution", with a new value system, a new ethic, a new culture and even a new civilisation. Its essential components are communication, connection, comprehension -- orientations that are synchronous with our true natures and the true nature of the world and the cosmos as evidenced by the ancient traditions and modern science.

## BODY OF EVIDENCE

Early researchers John and Beatrice Lacey noted in the 1960s and 70s that the heart appeared to be sending meaningful messages to the brain that it not only understood, but obeyed. And it looked as though these messages could affect behavior. Other researchers in psycho-physiology and cardiovascular activity have since converged with neurophysiologists to create the discipline of neurocardiology. One of its pioneers, Andrew Armour, introduced the concept of a functional "heart brain" in 1991. A growing body of scientific evidence is now demonstrating the link between mental and emotional attitudes, physiological health and long-term wellbeing:

- Men who complain of high anxiety are up to six times more likely than calmer men to suffer sudden cardiac death
- Over one-half of heart disease cases are not explained by the standard risk factors — such as high cholesterol, smoking or sedentary lifestyle
- An international study of 2,829 people between the ages of 55 and 85 found that individuals who reported the highest levels of personal "mastery" — feelings of control over life events — had a nearly 60% lower risk of death compared with those who felt relatively helpless in the face of life's challenges
- According to a Mayo Clinic study of individuals with heart disease, psychological stress was the strongest predictor of future cardiac events, such as cardiac death, cardiac arrest and heart attacks
- Three 10-year studies concluded that emotional stress was more predictive of death from cancer and cardiovascular disease than smoking; people who were unable to effectively manage their stress had a 40% higher death rate than non-stressed individuals
- In a study of 5,716 middle-aged people, those with the highest self-regulation abilities were over 50 times more likely to be alive and without chronic disease 15 years later than those with the lowest self-regulation scores.

Saluting global peace activists, Australian futurist Tony Stevenson agrees that the short-term threat of war must be dealt with. But so, too, must the underlying causes. In this article, he explores what he sees as the real causes of war.

## THE BAD NEWS:

# People power? Or power before people?

I doubt many weekend walkers want Saddam to stay in power. Nor Osama bin Laden to roam free. But if we drill through the layers of meaning to reveal the foundations of anger about this war, we find distaste for any plan to spill blood for oil. And a dislike of putting money and power before people.

Drilling deeper we may find opposition to the White House's intention to control oil supplies in a wider region -- the Middle East and Central Asia. Even deeper, we find a longer-term game plan for US world supremacy.

The office of Condoleezza Rice, Bush's national security adviser, has issued a document, ordered by Congress. It is called the National Security Strategy. In opening, it declares that the American model is the "single sustainable model for national success" that is "right and true for every person, in every society". Australian foreign correspondent Peter Hartcher, in Washington, says it's a rewrite of a post-Cold War Pentagon document which said that US strategy "should maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role".

Rice's Strategy lauds the unprecedented power of the United States. It dispatches the traditional doctrines of containment and deterrence to the bin. It says America "will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the US".

So there we have it. The US wants to be all-power-

ful. Remember here, the US military budget is just under half the total spent on arms by all the world's nation-states.

Drilling deeper still, we find that the American power-base is merely a lead agency for spreading a mindset of me-first thinking, making it hard to understand and accept someone different. Its current muscle flexing coincides with the rise of a predatory form of corporate power justified by a free-market, can-do ideology now infecting the planet.

So, does the war on Iraq come not just from Saddam, but from the same folks who brought us the greenhouse effect and the greed in Enron, World.Com and corrupt financial auditing?

Is the same hard-hearted mentality found closer to home with HIH and One.Tel, and the federal government's curious enthusiasm for a US-led war?

Such analysis is not anti-American. It is shared by many of my thoughtful American friends and, no doubt, by many Americans who took part in peace marches. (See reports from US & UK commentators on p6 - Ed.)

It critically questions the dominance of the global corporate power structure and its neo-liberal egotism, greed and aggression. The American power elite does not have a monopoly on such things -- just a huge interest.

Is all this the real core of our frustration? Are an Iraqi war and Australia's headlong rush to join the Pentagon only the symptoms?

-- Tony Stevenson

## WHO IS IN CHARGE?

"The Bush administration's relentless unilateral march towards war is profoundly disturbing for many reasons, but so far as American citizens are concerned the whole grotesque show is a tremendous failure in democracy," writes Edward Said in the Al-Ahram Weekly. "An immensely wealthy and powerful republic has been hijacked by a small cabal of individuals, all of them unelected and therefore unresponsive to public pressure, and simply turned on its head. It is no exaggeration to say that this war is the most unpopular in modern history....In all my encounters and travels I have yet to meet a person who is for the war..."

"Every one of the 500 congressional districts in this country has a defense industry in it, so that war has been turned into a matter of jobs, not of security. But, one might well ask, how does running an unbelievably expensive war remedy, for instance, economic recession, the almost certain bankruptcy of the social security system, a mounting national debt, and a massive failure in public education? "Demonstrations are looked at simply as a kind of degraded mob action, while the most hypocritical lies pass for absolute truth, without criticism and without objection."

*Edward Said is professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University, New York. Full text of his article is available at [www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org).*

“ Naturally the common people don't want war, neither in Russia, nor in England, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are going to be attacked, and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.

*Field Marshall Herman Goering at the Nuremberg trials, a few months before he was executed in 1946.*

*"learning from the past is a good way to prepare for the future.... 'If policy-makers are serious about transforming Iraq after Saddam is dead, then they would do well to read deeply into their own secret history.'"*

## THE WAR ON TRUTH IN AUSTRALIA

Lying politicians, corporate collapses, abuse by clergy, and sportsmen who have difficulty recalling "the number of tablets they consume" have fuelled a corrosive cynicism in Australian society, according to a senior judge.

Launching a program to encourage Victorian law firms to appoint ethics practitioners, Justice Frank Vincent of the Victorian Court of Appeal said one of the disturbing features of modern times was a conspicuous and widespread acceptance in the community of breaches of trust by major institutions and structures. He said it was taking less and less to produce a reaction of disbelief in a society where there have been "downright lies" by politicians, "sickening" disclosures of physical and sexual abuse in the church and corporate collapses where those responsible have walked away with their pockets full while ordinary people have been left to suffer.

Justice Vincent argued that most people would have serious reservations concerning the reliability of what is said by a number of our senior political figures, some of whom have...seriously breached the public's trust by "telling downright lies, and... by statements which are, to put it mildly, disingenuous," reported Katherine Towers in the Australian Financial Review.

"A whole range of our public figures and activities we see as contaminated and ultimately that has a powerful corrosive effect upon our society."

## Fact and fiction for decision-makers

Daniel Ellsberg, heroic whistleblower of Pentagon Papers fame, was a student of decision-making. After completing his Harvard PhD in decision theory he was seconded from the Rand Corporation to the US National Security Council during the Cuban missile crisis. This was a significant learning experience, writes Australian researcher Paul Monk in an article entitled "War and the Lying Machine" (Review 14/02/03 pp 1-9).

"It left him, he recalls, 'with a vivid sense of how thermonuclear warfare might actually come about in a crisis, not only by the failures of high level control ... but as a result of major miscalculations at the highest levels and of prior commitments made without any adequate sense of where they were likely to lead. Each side had grossly misunderstood the other, wrongly estimated its behaviour, failed to understand actions of the other as response to...their own words and actions'.

After the Cuban crisis, Ellsberg was invited to examine patterns of senior-level American governmental decision-making in Cold War crises. Soon afterwards he was invited to study the problem of Vietnam -- which led to his experiencing the Tonkin Gulf incident from the inside. This was his introduction to official lying.

"In my new job I was reading the daily transcripts of [defence secretary Robert McNamara and secretary of state Dean Rusk's] secret testimony [to congressional committees in closed hearings] and at the same time I was learning from cables, reports and discussion in the Pentagon the background that gave the lie to virtually everything told both to the public and, more elaborately, to Congress in secret session," he wrote in his new book *"Secrets: a Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers"*.

**"Those who forget  
the mistakes of the past  
are condemned to repeat them."**

-- George Santayana

"On the evening of August 4, at a NSC meeting, President Johnson asked John McCone, head of the CIA, 'Do they want war by attacking our ships in the middle of the Gulf of Tonkin?' McCone answered, 'No. The North Vietnamese are reacting defensively to our attack on their offshore islands. They are responding out of pride and on the basis of defence considerations.' Yet Johnson went before Congress on August 7, calling for sweeping war powers to respond to North Vietnam's 'unprovoked aggression'. The Gulf of Tonkin resolution was passed 416 to 0 by the House and 88 to 2 by the Senate. LBJ's Vietnam war had begun."

When the Nixon administration began, Ellsberg had hopes of influencing the president through Kissinger. He tried to encourage Kissinger to read his study of decision-making in Vietnam. Instead, he found "the new administration repeating the same patterns in decision-making and pretty much the same (hopeless) policy as its predecessors without even knowing it."

It was against this system that Ellsberg finally rebelled in 1971, says Monk, by leaking to *The New York Times* a secret study of US decision-making in Vietnam since 1945. He decided that he would no longer agree to serve a system that "lies automatically, at every level from bottom to top". His open rebellion was triggered, more than anything else, by Kissinger's lies in his capacity as Nixon's national security adviser.

Publication of the Pentagon Papers began on 13 June 1971 and the rest really is history, as it was Nixon's attempt to silence Ellsberg that led directly to his downfall. Meanwhile, there were other learnings.

"Ellsberg was initially more fascinated than appalled to observe that 'journalists had no idea, no clue, even the best of them, just how often and how egregiously they were lied to'. The fact is, he writes, that there was an 'apparatus of

**Continued next page**

## ELLSBERG ON FACT & FICTION From page 4

secrecy, built on effective procedures, practices and career incentives, that permitted the president to arrive at and execute a secret foreign policy, to a degree that went far beyond what even relatively informed outsiders, including journalists and Congress, could imagine'."

This leads him to what is certainly one of the most significant judgements in the book, says Monk. "It is a commonplace that 'you can't keep secrets in Washington', or 'in a democracy'; that 'no matter how sensitive the secret, you're likely to read it the next day in The New York Times'. These truisms are flatly false. They are in fact cover stories, ways of flattering and misleading journalists and their readers, part of the process of keeping the secrets well... the fact is that the overwhelming majority of secrets do not leak to the American public... The reality unknown to the public and to most members of Congress and the press is that secrets that would be of the greatest import to many of them can be kept from them reliably for decades by the executive branch, even though they are known to thousands of insiders."

"What, then, are we to learn from all this in present circumstances?" asks Monk. Dismissing the obvious answers to his own question, he concludes that learning from the past is a good way to prepare for the future.

"Decades of questionable US (and Western European and Russian) policy lie behind the looming war in the Persian Gulf. Too much of this history remains secret. If a study like [Ellsberg's] were to be done now, I expect it would reveal valuable lessons for policy-makers and also for the world public. The policy-makers are almost certainly as largely ignorant of it as Kissinger was of the history of Vietnam policy in 1970..."

"If policy-makers are serious about transforming Iraq after Saddam is dead, then they would do well to read deeply into their own secret history."

## Corporate reform

### California introduces Code for Corporate Responsibility

A Code for Corporate Responsibility introduced in California would amend the state corporation law to expand the duty of corporate directors to protecting the environment, human rights, the public health and safety, the communities in which the corporation operates, and the dignity of the corporation's employees. Currently, board members only have a duty to maximize profit for shareholders.

### Warren Buffet condemns derivatives, CEO pay

Investing guru Warren Buffett delivered a broadside against derivatives in his annual letter to shareholders of Berkshire Hathaway, his company. "Derivatives are financial weapons of mass destruction, carrying dangers that, while now latent, are potentially lethal," he wrote, assailing the potential risks of these futures contracts that have proliferated in recent years. According to the International Swaps and Derivatives Association, the value of derivatives is \$82.7 trillion, up from \$37 trillion in 1998 and \$3 trillion in 1990. Enron was a major abuser of derivatives, which allowed the energy trading company to book profits that were years away. Buffett also lambasted independent directors of mutual funds for failing to lower management fees and dismiss investment managers.

### Executive Compensation

Yet another study has demonstrated that out-of-control corporate compensation packages have little to do with actual company performance. Four professors from Indiana University and Texas A&M analysed 229 studies on the topic from 1971 to 2001 and found that motivational compensation, like stock options, does not produce commensurate gains in stock price or asset return. The article was published last week in the Academy of Management Journal. Meanwhile, USA Today has analyzed the Fortune 1,000 and found that there is "little correlation to the amount of stock owned by insiders vs. return on equity".

For more on corporate reform visit <http://www.citizenworks.org>.

## DEMOCRACY AT RISK?

"Jeb Bush stole the vote in Florida in 2000 by kicking thousands of legitimately registered black voters off the voting rolls because they had similar names to Texas felons, a feat well documented by Greg Palast and the mainstream British press, writes Thom Hartmann. "Bush portrayed the problem as one of incompetent elderly voters, dumb minority voters and a problem with 'chads' - unreliable voting technology.

"Bush's answer was to install touch-screen voting machines across Florida in time for the 2002 election. (In this, he was following a similar course to Georgia, Texas, and 30 other key states, in large part because of \$3.9 billion in federal funds offered by the 'Help America Vote Act' passed just after the 2000 election to encourage states to replace government-run paper-trail vote systems with no-paper-trail computerized systems from private corporate vendors.)

"But in the November 2002 election, when some Florida voters pressed the touch-screen 'button' for Bush's Democratic opponent, votes were instead recorded for Bush. 'Misaligned' touch-screen voting machines were blamed for the computer-driven vote-theft, and when a losing candidate in Palm Beach sued to inspect the software of Florida's computerized voting machines, a local judge denied the petition, citing the privacy rights of the corporation that wrote the programs.

"This was followed by January 2003 revelations that Republican Senator Chuck Hagel was the former head (and a current stockholder) of the private voting machine company that tabulated the vote in Nebraska - where he ran for office and won - and that he had neglected to tell Senate ethics investigators about it." And there's much more....

*Thom Hartmann is the author of "Unequal Protection: The Rise of Corporate Dominance and the Theft of Human Rights."*  
[www.unequalprotection.com](http://www.unequalprotection.com) and [www.thomhartmann.com](http://www.thomhartmann.com)

# Signals in the noise

## Fighting over pharming

As the US prepares to tighten its rules governing the production of pharmaceuticals and chemicals in genetically modified plants, some organisations are voluntarily going way beyond the existing regulations. But there are suspicions that ensuring food safety isn't the only motive for big companies such as Monsanto.

*New Scientist* 11 03 03 992

## Slaves to the clock and not happy: that's rich

If family life feels pressured, rushed and dictated by the clock, chances are you are among Australia's higher income earners. A new study shows that it is the better off who complain about having no time and it asks, provocatively, whether these households deserve sympathy.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 07 03 03 993

## Dare to be different

It's one of the success stories of Australian banking, but the CEO of Bendigo Bank reckons there's no mystery about why serving the community is a winning strategy.

*BOSS* February 03 994

## Shaping the Societal Bill

Education, pensions and healthcare are the main components of the Societal Bill in Europe. This story analyses the principal trends and trend breaks that will shape the bill in the next decades. Population ageing, changes in household structure, technological progress, new organisation of work and leisure, changes in market labour structure and regulation and increasing migrant flows are the main factors that will call for a reform of social systems in Europe.

*Futures* February 2003 995

## Back to basics: the future of sanitation

Plans to build sewage works for the 1.2 bn people now living without fresh water and sanitation should be abandoned, says the World Water Association. Instead, the world should revert to using human solid waste as compost and fertiliser and allow liquids to drain into the ground.

*The Guardian* 11 03 03 996

## Inventing a science of peace

Ashutosh Varshney, a political scientist at the University of Michigan, argues that social organisations built on shared values -- such as trade unions or political parties -- are more likely to strengthen their communities against conflict. He has been developing a theory about preventing ethnic conflict.

*Review* 07 03 03 997

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## US and UK commentary on the war

### A Supreme International Crime

Any member of a government backing an aggressive war will be open to prosecution, writes Mark Littman. The threatened war against Iraq will be a breach of the UN Charter and hence of international law unless it is authorised by a new and unambiguous resolution of the Security Council.

*The Guardian* 10 03 02 998

### Why He Can't Wait

"These are the actions of a regime engaged in a willful charade. These are the actions of a regime that systematically and deliberately is defying the world." That was Bush talking about Iraq last week, but it describes his own regime quite accurately. Just six days earlier, the White House announced that it didn't matter if Iraq disarmed: the goal was regime change.

*Knight-Ridder/Tribune Information Services* 11 03 03 999

### The "Bush and God" Scam: Don't Buy It

"Bush & God", the cover of *Newsweek* announces, as if the two were business partners. That's what the White House wants us to think. It is mounting a massive campaign to paint the president as a man on a divine mission, a man who sees himself as an agent of God.... There is a risk in this strategy. It makes Bush look like a fanatic, writes Ira Chernus.

[www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org) 10 03 03 1000