Saturday, November 21, 1:30 pm

The Future of Humankind: Two Views

Willard’s carefully erected theory serves as the basis of many rational predictions of human survival in the face of man-made hazards, mostly from high-tech such as genetic engineering and robotics. His predictive approach relies on simple and intuitive probability formulations that will appeal to those with a modest knowledge of statistics and mathematics.

Ron’s predictions are based on major societal and technical trends. They include three basic assumptions. If something is technologically possible it will happen. People will figure out good and bad effects of technological innovations and reject the bad, and people will likely be able to recognize and avoid reaching points of irreversibility.

Dr. Wells worked at the Caltech Jet Propulsion Laboratory from 1957 to 1967 where he founded the Quantum Electronics group and was co-inventor of the satellite de-spin mechanism. Later at L-3 Photonics, he worked on applied physics, optics, and fiber optics. He is author of Prospects for Human Survival, 2nd Edition and Apocalypse When?: Calculating How Long the Human Race Will Survive.

Dr. Peterson had a long and fruitful career at Honeywell where he rose to become their Vice President of Technology and “futurist”. After retirement he started a series of “futures talks” about today’s major technical and societal trends. He has two books out, a memoir called An Introvert Learns to Fly, and a science fiction novel that peeks at our future, Gardeners of the Universe. He is planning additional books in multiple genres.
Wells, continued from page 1
Willard Wells earned his Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics and Mathematics with the dissertation “Quantum Theory of Coupled Systems Having Application to Masers” at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in 1959 where his advisor was Richard Feynman.

Peterson, continued from page 1
Ron Peterson grew up in St. Paul, became a nerd and high jumper, went to Caltech as an undergrad and roomed with a future Nobel Prize winner. Ron earned his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, in condensed matter physics in 1972, and pursued research in low temperature physics and solar energy.

Since then he has been a lobbyist, community organizer, consultant, traveler, teacher, manager of a large community garden, writer, public speaker, and publisher.

➢ Note:
Dec 6: Gala holiday party with readings from COVID-19 project . . . 4

SDIS Voices:
U.S.-China Relations . 7

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The Scholars Notebook is issued monthly during the academic year, except December, by the San Diego independent Scholars (SDIS), a nonprofit organization founded in 1982.

The mission of SDIS is to promote opportunities for active learning and scholarship, both for its membership and for the San Diego community.

Public service activities of SDIS include: (1) monthly public lectures presented during the academic year; (2) discussion groups held in public libraries or online; (3) small grants awarded on a competitive basis for research projects and (4) various cooperative educational and other projects with local organizations.

More information about SDIS and its activities is available at www.sdscholars.org. Questions: sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com

Members may submit a piece to the Scholars Notebook. Email it by the middle of each month to sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com

SDIS Board, 2020-21

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COVID-19 Writing and Art Project

➢ MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR SUNDAY, DEC. 6, 2-4 P.M.

• Readings by project authors and screen sharing of illustrations will be featured

• In a gala Zoom gathering to celebrate the COVID-19 project and getting through 2020.

• This celebration will also be the SDIS Holiday Party, which can not meet in person this year.

• Festive noisemakers and holiday hats or costumes are optional.

➢ The project will yield an archive and a booklet “COVID-19: getting through with wit and grit.”

➢ The booklet will be published by posting on our website, from which it can be downloaded or printed. Publishing will follow guidelines in U.S. Copyright Office Circulars 1 and 66 (https://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf and /circ66.pdf).

➢ For archiving, the documents will be preserved three ways: (a) on an external hard drive, (b) as a Dropbox file backup and (c) as hard copy placed in the SDIS Archives. We may approach the San Diego Historical Society and San Diego Public Library for advice concerning additional long-term storage.

➢ If an author wishes to have a work archived but not published, then it will be placed in the archive only. If that author so desires, it may be circulated as a manuscript emailed to SDIS members.
“COVID-19: getting through with with with and grit"

Proposed Table of Contents

1. Beaumont, Barbara ........... Reflections on the Coronavirus
2. Cumming, Jack ................. Benefits of Crisis
3. Currie, Rigdon .................. Reaction to the Covid-19 Pandemic  
                               (with link to extensive archive of photographs)
4. Freidenfelds, Lara ............. During Covid, We Need to Grieve, Find Perspective  
                              and Seek Safe Connection and Fulfillment
5. Gilbert, Arlene ............... (a) 10 Things I’ve Learned During the Pandemic  
                               (b) Flower Walks (with 4 illustrations)  
                               (c) What? Me Cook?
7. Girsh, Faye ..................... COVID and our Morocco Trip (several illustrations)
8. Glick, Robert .................. Microcosm (poem)  
                               Harmony (painting)
9. Groseil, Yvonne .............. Dark Days
10. Hilgarth, Nigella ............. Backyard Birding  
                                Illustrations: 8 amazing closeup photographs
11. Holt, Linda ................... Untitled
12. Horwitz, Gerry ............... Hello, Virus
13. Knauss, Kevin ............... Covid Hiking Break (1 illustration)
14. Krauss, Kenneth ............. Pandemic Poems: (a) Vilanelle  
                                (b) Unheroic Couplets in Plague Time  
                                (c) Sestina: Primo Lazaretto  
                                (d) Notes by a Shut-in on the Final Night of the  
                              Publicans Irrational Contention  
                                (e) The Shriek of the Sheltering Shopper  
                                (f) On Endings and Beginnings
15. Liden, Inga ................... Life in the Time of Corona

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“COVID-19: getting through with with and grit”

Proposed Table of Contents (continued)

16. Mahadeva, Vidur ........................ Medical “Go bag” for COVID-19
18. Nicholas, Randall ....................... Plague Journal -- 28 poems written on consecutive days: disability and COVID intertwined
19. Norris, Teresa .......................... My Life During the COVID-19 Pandemic
20. Offer, Judith ............................. (a) Pandemic
(b) You Can Be Whatever You Want in the U.S. of A.
(c) Gone Batty
21. Oselett, Nanette ....................... Underwater Photography and Abstract Art (with illustrations)
22. Parker, Christopher .................... Covid-19 2020 Personal Chronicle (& Illustrations)
23. Parker, David ............................ When Social Distancing Almost Caused Tragedy
(Photo: David’s legs after being lost in wilderness)
24. Parker, Dorothy ....................... Coronavirus-induced Computer Dependency Disorder
25. Pollak, Oliver ........................... Pandemics and the Longue Durée
26. Rose, Beatrice ............................ Lockdown Thoughts
27. Sage, Michael ........................... Plagues in Ancient Greece and Rome
28. Signoret-Paar, Kim ..................... Photography as Solace in a Pandemic (with a collage containing photos by Nigella Hilgarth, Martha Dennis, Janet Goff, Ursula Moede, Thespine Kavoulakis, Liz Bonkowsky, Kim Signoret-Parr, Barbara Bank and Nancy Groves)
29. Swaim, Jill ............................... My COVID-19 Story
30. Vakilian, Tiffany ....................... Nine Months of 2020 (poem)
31. Wills, Christopher & Liz ............. Monarchs as Therapy for Covid-19
   (One illustration and the link to a video)
SDIS Voices, a new SDIS discussion group that replaces our supper discussion group for the duration of the pandemic, is an experiment to see whether members might enjoy the combination of a discussion on a timely topic with the opportunity to write an essay on that subject after the discussion. The reasoning behind this approach is that some of us believe we develop our thoughts most rigorously if we write them down in a systematic way.

The first chosen topic was “U.S.-China Relations,” which was a follow-up of our September lecture by Dr. Weiyi Shi, “The Political Economy of China’s Outward Investment.” One week later, nearly 20 of us met for a spirited discussion of various aspects of the relationships between China and America. An agenda of ten questions was used and chances to talk were smoothly regulated by the “Raise Hand” function of Zoom. We not only learned from each other’s experiences, knowledge, and viewpoints, but also developed new curiosity for various ramifications of the topic. As a result, various members suggested additional videos for viewing. Furthermore, some of us had a chance to enjoy a documentary assembled by Ken Watson and Faye Girsh as part of their “Documentaries by Ken and Faye” offering. This documentary covered the new Chinese “Belt and Road Initiative,” a system of ports for trading, as well as a proposed system of trains and roads to link China with the Middle East and Europe.

After the above discussion and study, four participants each wrote an essay, choosing topics that most interested them. The essays are:

1. Jack Cummings considers the relative benefits to the U.S. of various strategies for interaction with China.
2. Mike Seidel presents a historical perspective to predict Chinese viewpoints regarding actions by the West.
3. Yulin Tan outlines why foreign scholars on our campuses are beneficial to this country.
4. Edwina and Art Curtis describe a many-decade friendship with a young Chinese man whom Edwina hosted in 1995, when he was an exchange student here.

The four essays will be sent to SDIS members in a separate email on November 1 and will soon be posted on our website under a new heading for interactive writing projects.

Dorothy Parker
FILM GROUP

9:45 a.m. 1st Wednesday of month -- next are Nov. 4 and Dec. 2.

The Film Group will meet Wednesday, November 4 at 9:45 a.m. to view *A Man for All Seasons*, the 1966 biographical drama which went on to win numerous British and American awards, including Best Picture, Best Actor, and Best Director and Best Screenplay at the Oscars. Paul Scofield as Sir Thomas More, Robert Shaw as Henry VIII and Orson Wells as Cardinal Wolsey excel as their interact. Manipulation, intrigue, conscience as well as lack of conscience, integrity and lack of...all depicted as we see the stark differences between More and Henry VIII.

In keeping with our December tradition of showing a movie with good music, on December 2 the Film Group will watch Agnes Varda's second film, *Cleo from 5 to 7* (1961). In this, her second feature, Varda brings us into the life of Cleo, a successful pop singing star, whose concerns at first seem rather trivial but telling: Her attention to her appearance, to how people see her, and to the everyday strains of life in fashionable Paris, cover her anxiety about a diagnosis that she is about to receive from a recent test. The revelation of her condition comes with a release from her ordinary cares and an appetite for life. Among the small roles, the late composer Michele Le Grand plays Cleo's piano accompanist, and the hero of the silent movie she stops to watch is portrayed by director Jean-Luc Goddard, who as favor to Varda agreed to remove his omnipresent sunglasses. Corrinne Marchand is delightful as the lovely and charming Cleo.

Barbara Heckler and Ken Krauss
“Self deception” was the subject discussed at the October 21 meeting. An early question arose: recognizing another’s self-deception is not difficult, but how can it be perceived in oneself?

A participant offered the answer in referring to her own behavior. Realizing that she is often late, she attributes this to habitually underestimating how long it will take to perform a seemingly simple task before keeping a scheduled appointment; as for instance “I have enough time to fold these clothes before my Zoom meeting begins” when there actually is not sufficient time. Another participant laughed, recognizing the same behavior pattern in herself, saying, “I call it the ‘but first’ syndrome; I know I have a deadline, ‘but first’, I tell myself, I have enough time to empty the dishwasher, and then of course I’m late.”

Repeatedly lying to oneself? Is it self-deception if one realizes he/she is doing it? Is it harmful? One participant said that voicing, or merely harboring, racist ideas but denying such feelings within oneself is certainly self-deception and is surely harmful.

The conversation moved toward the popularity of TV programming and movies which feature individuals searching for romantic partners, and then toward the prevalence of search sites which specialize in matching individuals with other like individuals for dating and/or eventual relationships. It was noted that those who involve themselves in such efforts most often expect the other person to adjust or conform to them. A form of self-deception?

And, finally, it was noted that a large portion of the meeting had been centered around romantic aspects of self-deception. What does that tell us about ourselves?

Next time, Wed. November 18, we will explore ourselves and the concept of “protest.”

Gerry Horwitz
Our SDIS Inside Politics Zoom study group met on the first Saturday of October at 10:00 a.m. With only about 30 days until the 2020 election, the discussion focused on some of the hot political issues leading up to the election. For example, the first Presidential Debate had taken place just four days prior our class, so we attempted to evaluate the performance of President Trump and former Vice President Biden. We then tackled the controversial issue of whether Trump will agree to an orderly transition of power if he loses the election. We even talked about the possibility of the Supreme Court having to decide the Presidential election.

Speaking of the Supreme Court, our study group then turned to Trump’s nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to replace Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Court. Would the Senate confirmation hearings for Judge Barrett turn ugly? If Barrett is confirmed, and Biden is elected President shortly thereafter, will Biden attempt to pack the Supreme Court with additional justices? At the time of our class, we did not know this issue would become one of the most controversial issues of the election itself.

We finished our October class discussing several more issues contained in the Agenda I sent out in advance to members of SDIS. The active participation of everyone in the class usually results in our being unable to finish all of the issues listed in our Agenda. This is a favorable outcome, because it means the members of the group are totally engrossed in the topics which are consuming most of the voters across the country. These Presidential elections only take place once every four years, and our class is taking full advantage of the moment. If you share our interest in politics, I invite you join us by clicking on the Zoom link on the first Saturday morning of every month.

Al Korobkin
“The Day of the Locust” by Nathanael West, the second in our current series about “Hollywood, Behind the Silver Screen”, was analyzed at the October meeting.

Written at the same time as our previous subject, Scott Fitzgerald’s unfinished novel, “The Last Tycoon”, the West novel, as well as its author, could hardly be more different. Fitzgerald wrote a wistful story of the manipulations within a studio during the production of a film, and of a romance outside the studio. West wrote of the desires and unfulfilled dreams of frustrated individuals who, inspired by movies, came to Los Angeles with unrealistic aspirations. Both Fitzgerald’s early death from a heart attack and West’s early death in a car crash occurred in December of 1940.

The meeting was spent discussing West’s life and works, and, one by one, the characters, as well as the often-violent plot.


That book also leads us into the following theme, Biography. Viertel was a Viennese actress whose salons in 1930s and ‘40s Hollywood created a refuge for famous European emigres who had escaped the horrors of World War II. 

Salka Viertel (right) and Greta Garbo
Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Science (AI) Study Group is continuing its study of Al and the arts, focusing on music at the next Zoom meeting, November 13, 1 p.m. Artificial Intelligence has been used to create music, analyze music, and rearrange music. Those working in AI/Music include in their practice, besides the standard musical notes, a variety of sounds—a possibility enhanced by digital capabilities.

A guest at our next meeting has used AI to blend songs, overlaying voiceover to create the image of a curated radio station. Attendees at last year’s International Computer Music Conference have used AI to create music from street sounds. Other attendees have composed pieces from echoes, from the buzzing of bees, and the rhythms in social media re-tweets. Some have found music in the background sounds of the ocean and the wind—music that can be re-created and digitally enhanced.

Arlene Gilbert

General Relativity
(Physical Science)

The General Relativity Group met on Wed. Oct. 15, at 10:00 am. We continued to discuss plans of future study. These included pursuing a more detailed study of the Standard Model. A number of potential texts were discussed, including: Introduction to Elementary Particles by David Griffiths. Some of us decided to buy the text and see how it reads. There was some further discussion of the earlier presentation on the organization of the elementary particles into fermions (Quarks, Leptons) and gauge bosons (gluons, photons and the W,Z particles) and the scalar Boson Higgs particle.

The group also discussed and approved a proposed name change, for presentation to the SDIS Board: The Physical Sciences Group. We already had brief discussions in such areas as the ice age, Climate Change, Quantum probability and entanglement, and the Standard Model, so that this name change seems sensible.

Alvin Halpern

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On Saturdays at 12:30 Ken Watson and Faye Girsh show a documentary or slide show that they have assembled, or a lecture Ken has videotaped. The topic is announced in the week before each showing. The planned topic for Nov. 7 is Dementia. Examples from October are shown. To be placed on the mailing list, contact kmw@ucsd.edu.

October 10: DWARFISM: What is it? How are Little People Treated?

October 24
WHAT’S GOING ON IN KYRGYSTAN?
**North County Events Open to SDIS Members:**

Even before the pandemic, several SDIS members living in North County found it difficult to attend events in La Jolla because of traffic congestion, time constraints or other factors. To better meet their needs, SDIS has established a cooperative relationship with North County village (NCV), a non-profit grassroots organization that emphasizes interdependent, help-each-other living. The goal of NCV is to make aging at home easier.

NCV and SDIS have agreed to allow each other’s members to visit their activities during a trial cooperative period. All NCV events currently are offered on Zoom.

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**North County Village (NCV)**

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**North County Village Activities for November 2020**

11/10 – Film Club 3:30 – “Midnight in Paris” RSVP [jek123@msn.com](mailto:jek123@msn.com)

11/11 – Cooking Demo – 4:00 – Crawfish (shrimp) Etouffee’
RSVP [rigdoncurrie@mac.com](mailto:rigdoncurrie@mac.com)

11/17 – Memoir Writing – 2:00 RSVP [rigdoncurrie@mac.com](mailto:rigdoncurrie@mac.com)

11/18 – Book Club – 3:30 – “Americanah” by Chimamanda Ngozi
RSVP [jek123@msn.com](mailto:jek123@msn.com)

11/24 Happy Hour – 4:00 Getting ready for Thanksgiving. RSVP [jek123@msn.com](mailto:jek123@msn.com)
Our introduction to Plains Indian Ledger Art will discuss how it functions as graphic form, both as a visual formation embedded with historical meaning, and as an art form that audiences today find remarkably accessible, impactful, and compelling. Professor Frank directs the Plains Indian Ledger Art Digital Publishing program (plainsledgerart.org), which creates and curates an image database of known books of ledger drawings.

Professor Frank received his B.A. degree in History in 1980 from Yale College. He went on to complete a second B.A. in History where he was awarded First Class Honours at Merton College, Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship. In 1983 he entered the History Ph.D. program at the University of California, Berkeley, receiving his doctorate in 1992.

Dr. Frank began teaching in 1991 as the Landmarks Assistant Professor of History at the American University in Washington, D.C. on a two-year joint appointment shared with the National Museum of American History. At the Smithsonian he worked as a consulting historian for the American Encounters exhibition. He began his appointment at the University of California, San Diego in 1992 in the Department of Ethnic Studies.

Link:  https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/92792356272?pwd=NGpaYkpqL0pubEdrR2FMcGdtS2JZQT09
The Early Eighteenth-Century Apocalypse: Some Origins, Confluences, and Questions

Wednesday, November 11, 2020, 7:30 P.M.

Margaret DeLacy
Northwest Independent Scholars Association (NISA)

At the turn of the eighteenth century, the closing years of the Little Ice Age brought unpredictable famines. Dynasties failed and empires were transformed. Global trade and imperial wars spread plague and other diseases across Europe as smallpox and measles devastated American communities. Yet simultaneously, a series of fortuitous events fostered a few personal connections that spanned the western world from Istanbul to America and would transform health and medicine forever. This talk will sample some of these encounters, both large and small, and interrogate their causes and outcomes.

Margaret DeLacy is the author of several articles and three books:

- *The Germ of An Idea: Contagionism*,
- *Religion, and Society in Britain, 1660-1730*
- *Contagionism Catches On: Medical Ideology in Britain, 1730-1800*.

She received her Ph.D. in English History from Princeton University. She is active in the Northwest Independent Scholars Association (NISA).

Like SDIS, NISA is a partner organization of the National Coalition of Independent Scholars (NCIS). Since SDIS and NISA are in the same time zone, we are inviting each other to our lectures and other activities.

Link will be sent prior to meeting
Contact Margaretdelacy@comcast.net for assistance
## November 2020

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### Upcoming Events

**2020 Holiday Party**: Sunday Dec 6: 2-4 pm (This year, a celebration of the COVID-19 anthology, with readings from authors and screen sharing of visual pieces. Noisemakers and holiday costumes encouraged. By Zoom. BYOB.

1:30 pm, February 20: **Current Scientific Results on Alzheimer’s Disease**  
Jerold Chun, M.D., Ph.D. Sanford Burnham Prebys Institute

Next SDIS Board Meeting: December 1; Bimonthly 10 am, 1st Tues of month.
## SDIS New Member Form and Optional Library Card Form

**UCSD Library Cards:**
- If you are 65 or over, affiliation with SDIS entitles you to a discounted UCSD Library card, Level 2 (graduate student) privileges, except for inter-library loans.
- Your SDIS library card is $25 with this membership form. SDIS will match your $25. That is, for cards acquired at this time, UCSD charges SDIS $50.

Tax-Deductible Contributions to SDIS are encouraged and welcome. Your dues are also tax-deductible.

### MEMBERSHIP:
Dues paid in September through March apply to the current fiscal year (Sept-Sept). Those paid from April through August also apply to the subsequent year.

**PLEASE provide ALL information for our Directory. Print, or write very clearly.**

| Date: | ____________________________ |
| Name(s): | __________________________________ |
| Address: | __________________________________ |
| City: | ___________ | State: | ___________ | Zip: | ___________ |
| Home Phone: | _______________________ | Work/Alt/Mobile Phone: | _______________________ |
| Email: | _______________________ |
| Field(s) of Interest, (maximum of three) | _______________________ |

### APPLICATION FOR OPTIONAL UCSD LIBRARY CARD
Effective for Academic Year Beginning October 1

I assume responsibility for lost, damaged, or overdue materials borrowed on my UCSD/SDIS library card:

| Signature: | _______________________ | Print Name: | _______________________ |

### PAYMENTS
Make checks payable to SDIS. Please mail entire form with payment(s) to David E. Parker, 8773 Caminito Abrazo, La Jolla, CA 92037

| Tax Deductible SDIS Dues ($40/single, $55/couple) | $ _______________________ |
| UCSD Library Card (Optional - $25) | $ _______________________ |

**Tax Deductible Contributions** (Optional)
- Operations
- Helen Hawkins Research Fund
- Jane Ford Book Fund

| TOTAL ENCLOSED | $ _______________________ |