

What's at Stake in Barbara Marx Hubbard's Conscious Human Evolution?*

By Marilyn McNamara

Barbara Marx Hubbard lectured on "Conscious Evolution" in Chapel Hill on February 21, 2014, a presentation co-sponsored by CES, the C.G. Jung Society of the Triangle, Emerson Waldorf School, the Fenwick Foundation, Pickards Mountain Eco-Institute and United Church of Chapel Hill. The question she presented is what is the next stage of evolution for *homo sapiens sapiens*?*

Humans, she said, have always evolved and are still evolving. It's a different kind of evolution than the evolution of species, i.e., genetic evolution. Human evolution is now primarily "exogenetic," the evolution of human consciousness and capacities. This evolution is affecting everything. We may consciously improve this evolution-evolution by choice, not chance.

Recalling our long and ancient history, Dr. Hubbard said that it took billions of years of Earth history before our early human (hominid) ancestors emerged some three to five million years ago. And it was only c. 50,000 years ago that our *homo sapiens sapiens* ancestors came out of caves with neither fur nor clothes nor much in the way of language, but as a self-reflexive species with two main purposes: self-preservation and self-reproduction.

- Australopithecus Africanus: 5 to 3 million years ago
- Homo Habilis: 2.5 to 2 million years ago, using primitive tools
- Homo Erectus: 1.8 million to 100,000 years ago, spreading all over the world
- Neanderthal Man: 400,000 to 30,000 years ago, having advanced tools, language and complex social groups.
- Homo Sapiens Sapiens: Anatomically modern humans dating to about 200,000 years ago and exhibiting modern behavior dating to about 50,000 years ago, for example Cro-Magnons as an early form, settling in Europe c. 35,000 years ago, producing sophisticated flint tools, jewelry and the famous European cave paintings

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* "**Homo sapiens** (Latin: "**wise man**") is the scientific name for the human species. *Homo* is the human genus, which also includes Neanderthals and many other extinct species of hominid; *H. sapiens* is the only surviving species of the genus *Homo*. Modern humans are the subspecies *Homo sapiens sapiens*, which differentiates them from what has been argued to be their direct ancestor, *Homo sapiens idaltu*." Wikipedia contributors, "Homo sapiens," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Homo_sapiens&oldid=597249479 (accessed March 8, 2014). *Homo sapiens sapiens*, or "anatomically modern humans," appeared c. 200,000 years ago. Wikipedia contributors, "Anatomically modern humans," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anatomically_modern_humans&oldid=598468049 (accessed March 8, 2014).

Reminding us in this way that humans have always evolved, she referred to Teilhard de Chardin, who pointed out that the pattern in this evolution has been toward greater complexity, consciousness, and freedom. Why, then, shouldn't we expect to further evolve?

She went on to explain that today each person is a contemporary expression of the entire evolutionary process, and that each person, therefore, is invited to be an integral part of furthering the human evolutionary process. But how?

In this context our speaker reminded us that Abraham Maslow studied and mapped human wellness. Consequently, we have come to realize that what healthy people have in common is personally rewarding work characterized by service. The direction of evolution is with just such an understanding—to say YES to one's vocation is to turn on the universe's push towards further evolution inside of oneself!

Crisis often proceeds transformation, but it also can lead to devolution such as Nazism in Germany. So along with feeling our present crisis, both its destructive potential and its hopeful possibilities, each person is to further his or her capacity of tuning-in to what might be called his or her innate spirituality, i.e., his or her own innate signaling system. The sooner more and more people do this, the sooner the walls separating the religions will come tumbling down triggering what she called a *Planetary Pentecost*.

What is also needed for the next evolution is, however, not only personal transformation. We need a Peace Room as powerful and sophisticated as the War Room in the White House. This needs to be a Global Communication Hub where people focus on what's working and find ways to track, support and communicate these successes adequately so that no person or group has to go it alone. In this way, knowledge to save planet Earth is and will be available to us.

She praised the efforts of Occupy Wall Street, but said this could be improved by shifting the focus away from the selfishness of others to noticing and praising whatever and wherever people are furthering solutions to the human endeavor!

Therefore, according to Barbara Marx Hubbard, **HEART** is central to the next phase of the human--**HEART** as an empathizing tool, a discerning tool, and an energizing tool. As more and more people so develop, we will see the hundredth monkey effect.

For those who remained to attend the day-long workshop with Dr. Hubbard on Saturday, February 22, she led them on a journey into their essential selves and their abundant possibilities of creation.