



BODY Dialogue

Barbara Barnard

(Longtime Shintaido Practitioner Barbara Barnard passed away early this year. Below are some remembrances from people who knew her, gathered by General Instructor Jim Sterling. -Ed.)

I think Barbara Barnard is a great example of someone who "got" Shintaido almost right away and continued her keiko for the love of the practice regardless of whether she got "better" at it. A shining example of what we mean by "life study."

Michael Thompson

Anytime I saw Barbara there was a sparkle in her eyes and a joy in what she was doing. Even if it was sitting her down in mud for partner stretching. Wonderful person. Great memories.

Joe Zawielski

Seeing the photo of Barbara in tie-dye reminded me of her beloved VW Bug. Pure retro-joy that was also dear to my heart. Her spirit has been and always will be a gift to the universe.

David Palmer

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Millennials and robots who dance in the night sky: A speculative surrealist essay about Shintaido and the evolution of humanity

by David E. Franklin, Senior Instructor of Shintaido

I recently completed a pen-and-ink drawing entitled "How to Speak to Your Children about Global Warming."

The drawing depicts a narrative, an unsure-of-whether-they-lived-happily-ever-after narrative. The story explains important aspects of global climate change and the precarious situation of our civilization in a way that children could understand.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful city that floated in the clouds, high above the earth and the ocean. It was kept aloft by big rocket engines. People tried to find anything they could burn to keep the engines going: wood, coal, oil, natural gas, uranium. (The engines could have been powered by the sun, but they weren't designed that way at the beginning, and once the city was aloft, nobody could figure out how to temporarily turn the engines off and change them to work differently).

The other animals on Earth invented a nickname for humans: "Monkeys that burn stuff" is what they called us. Life on the floating city seemed pleasant, but it created a lot of pollution for people and animals that lived everywhere else. The engines polluted the air and the "monkeys that burn stuff" threw their trash into the oceans. All the pollution killed lots of animals and plants. It damaged life, but life adjusts, adapts and survives. All that pollution caused the weather to change. Storms came, which made it even harder to keep the city floating in the air.

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Shintaido of America (SoA) Updates

Here are some updates from the Shintaido of America Board of Directors, from newly elected Board Chair Connie Borden-Sheets:

There have been two SoA Board of Director meetings: October 10, 2015 and March 20, 2016. Sandra B. was thanked for her 19 years as SoA Treasurer. Connie B. was elected chair of the board and Brad L. was elected Treasurer.

The board would like to move printed materials to online materials - anyone with interest and technical skills would be welcome.

The board also approved to fund the costs of printing Ito-sensei's new book. Minutes from the board meetings are on the SOA website.

There has been one joint SoA board and SoA Technical Committee (TC) meeting on May 15, 2016. The discussion was about sharing the planning and decisions from the The New Examination Committee (TNEC). TNEC is the temporary TC for ISC to prepare for the 2016 gasshuku. Joe Z. and Michael T. will be attending from SoA.

SoA has a new membership fee structure: \$60 membership fee for all members.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

The next issue of *Body Dialogue* will be in October, 2016.

Please submit articles, poems, pictures to the editor at newsletter@Shintaido.org. Deadline for submissions is September 15, 2016.

Body Dialogue is published by Shintaido of America (SoA), a non-profit organization.

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Barbara Barnard *Continued from p.1*

Barbara really brightened near the end -like a supernova...

Another angel

pure of heart

fallen on this earth

wings of light

throughout the night

find their way

back

home

David Sirgany

Barbara was always smiling and friendly like a innocent child. always sparkling.

Her being always helped me to join Shintaido group in USA, especially at the beginning of my coming to USA.

She always spoke to me with smiling like an old friend.

She must be leaving to the next journey with enjoying Shintaido as usual and smiling to us.

Thank you very much, Barbara. I was very happy to share beautiful time with you on this planet.

See you again! hahahahaha

Ko (Koichi Ueda)

Dear BB,

Greeting from Maslives, France where you visited us last Spring!

Very, very sorry, but we were not able to see you at your departure this time....

We had already planned to fly back to SF at the end of July and stay there till the middle of August!

But, it is very hard for us to believe that we will not see you again at the Taimyo class this Summer..

In any case, how was your trip (Eiko Dai) to Heaven?

Was the metaphor I have shared with you correct?

We will be with you as you became omnipresent in the universe by doing a big Oooooo.....

Keeping you with us forever by doing a deep Uuuuuuum.....

-Itolino & Nicolita

P.S.

Really missing your lemon cake!

I had the pleasure of practicing with Barbara in my mom's San Francisco Shintaido class at George Washington High School. And it really was a pleasure. Barbara had an impish smile and a youthful energy that she brought to every class. She made class fun, and it was a joy to be around her, both inside and outside of class.

I will especially remember Barbara's Tenshingoso. I learned about the depth and importance of Um from her. I don't practice Tenshingoso much anymore, but when I do an image of Barbara inevitably comes to mind. I will miss her dearly.

Elli

I spent about an hour with Barbara this morning. She is fading in and out of consciousness. We did manage to have a few short exchanges. I did Tenshingoso "A" and "O" sending my energy towards her.

Amazingly, Barbara opened her eyes and lying in bed with one arm (she can't move her left shoulder) she reached up to the ceiling and with her one hand and "ran" Eiko. Something I'll remember forever.

Jim Sterling



Oh, Barbara is still with us ! Everyday, I find "by chance" a picture of Barbara somewhere in my computer without looking for it but for some other picture.

When I was younger, visiting Pac Shin, she was always having the same attitude, looking straight to my eyes, with this big smile, always singing "La vie en Rose " (that Edith Piaf was singing) and speaking the few words she could remember in French.

Barbara Barnard*Continued from p.3*

But, you know what my friends, if I was visiting her, she had always wine to propose to me, she thought that all French drink wine every day, I am not one of those but it was fun to drink with her.

Another thing I can share with you, she would not mind this one, in the middle of her living room she had a bridge for stringed musical instruments and on it a big english dictionary was open. I found that great, don't you think? Barbara did not need "Google".

Missing her everyday,

Nicole

The Joy of Barbara Barnard

Barbara was a ray of light. You could feel her broad smile warm up the room. Her smile was elfish – as if to say, “We’re going to do something fun and unexpected together.” And fun we had, whether a playful kumite or giggling about how difficult a movement was to execute.

I started crossing paths with Barbara at Shintaido workshops after I started practicing in 1988. She stayed out of the lime-light and kept a low profile organizationally but was always happy to pitch in and bring potluck food or help with anything that needed to be done.



Barbara began practicing Shintaido soon after Ito-sensei arrived in San Francisco in the mid-1970s so she was definitely my senpai and I related to her accordingly. I think this made Barbara a bit uncomfortable because she always downplayed the length of her experience. Yet anyone who practiced with Barbara could feel the depth of her keiko.

When I started a weekly class in San Francisco, Barbara showed up and came every week. Becoming my student was her big gift to me. Barbara helped me learn what it is to be entrusted with someone’s keiko path, what it takes to teach a class for several years, how to sustain one’s gorei. Through

many seasonal themes, teaching experiments and two demonstration/exams, Barbara trusted my leadership even when she was unsure about what was in store. For this I will always be deeply grateful.

She invited me to her house on the hill for tea a couple of times. It was an entire world that carried stories from her life in a compact vertical space. I think of it as Barbara’s blue pagoda.

Barbara was loyal to all the teachers in the Bay Area but she had a special spot in her heart for Ito – and he returned that affection. Barbara and I attended Ito’s Taimyo-Life Exercise classes at Connie and Mike’s dojo every winter and summer for many years. Barbara would bring us treats and sometimes make her special lemon cake for Ito. But mostly she brought her laughter, commitment and incredible inner grace. Barbara might get flustered about a particular technique but anyone with keiko experience could see the incredible amount of wisdom she had in her body after a practice that spanned 40 years. When she trusted herself, she always knew how to inhabit a kumite.



I remember a timeless moment during Ito’s gorei as we practiced irimi (“Welcome, come this way”) – opening an invisible door and inviting our kumite partner inside. That day Barbara, Connie, David Palmer and I took turns opening doors for one another in a joyful, seamless dance around the dojo. Ito smiled and moved through us with encouraging words.

It was one of a handful of Shintaido moments that seemed to exceed space and time, and I’m so very happy that I will forever be there with Barbara.

Tomi Nagai-Rothe

Friends Tenshingoso

(Graduate Matthew Shorten led a portion of the final keiko at the Fall, 2015 Shintaido Northeast Gasshuku. He melded concepts from his Quaker practice with the Tenshingoso form, with fascinating results. Here's his write-up. for all to try! Ed.)

Please find below the self-styled "Self-empowerment kata", which borrows from Tenshingoso, Taimyo, and a variety of other sources indiscriminately.

The original intent was to allow me to share some of our vital Shintaido movements with my other beloved community of Friends (Quakers), for whom the martial applications had to be re-named and re-purposed. So I presented this as "Prayerful Movements for Empowerment". The text can be changed to fit the participants and intent of the keiko. I tried to match the postures/ movements with Friends' Testimonies (Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality).

For use with a group of children, index cards for each part can be handed out for their oral participation.

1. (Begin in a close circle, crouching in meiso)
 - We start out small, like a seed.
 - This reminds us of Simplicity.
2. (reaching out to both sides)
 - We can hold each others' hands.
 - This helps build Fellowship.
3. (Standing together, still holding hands)
 - Later, we stand up for what we believe in.
 - This helps us develop Integrity.
4. (Raising arms together)
 - We can find Spirit in high places.
 - This encourages us to Be Seekers.
5. (Lowering arms together)
 - We might find Spirit in low places.
 - We honor That of God in all.
6. (Stepping left together in circle)
 - We can allow Spirit to move us this way...
 - We move as we Are Led.
7. (Stepping right together)
 - Or Spirit might take us on a different path.
 - We are open to Continuing Revelation.
8. (Letting hands go, raise arms out to side Sho-sei-i)
 - Everyone can access Light to help us grow.
 - This reminds us of Equality.
9. (Arms raised diagonally overhead as in Taimyo kata)
 - We can all become vessels of grace.
 - This reminds us that Spirit is Everywhere.
10. (Bring hands horizontally overhead, then arms in and down over torso, as in Taimyo kata)
 - We can absorb and integrate this within ourselves.
 - Our body is a message of the universe.
11. (Left forward kick)
 - We can knock down barriers.
 - This is the time to Witness for Justice.
12. (Right E block)
 - We can block negativity.
 - This reminds us to always have Faith.
13. (Left jodan cut)
 - We can cut through evil.
 - This reminds us to feel empowered.
14. (Right hand reaches and grabs, returns to hip)
 - We can take hold of our opportunities.
 - This reminds us to Be Thankful for what is given to us.
15. (Tenshingoso A)
 - We can build our dream into the future.
 - So we aspire to Keep Hope Alive.
16. (Tenshingoso O)
 - We should remember to give back.
 - This is our obligation to Community.
17. (Ohm)
 - And finally, we may arrive at a centered place.
 - This reminds us to be at Peace.

Shintaido in the *Wall* *Street Journal*

Here's a link to an article about Shintaido featuring Derk Richardson, Bay Area practitioner, that appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* in May.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-journey-to-recovery-with-a-sword-a-softball-and-a-bathing-suit-1464017221>

Congratulations, Derk! Great publicity for our practice.

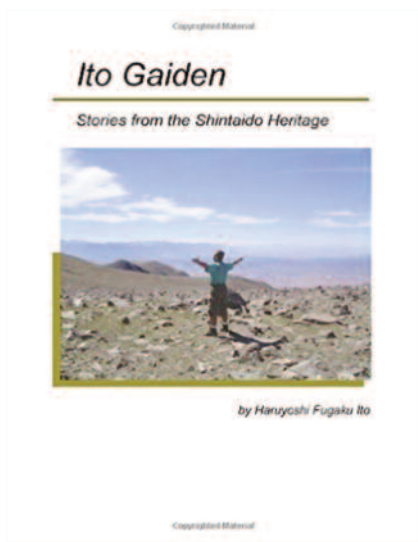
New Shintaido Book

Master Instructor H.F. Ito's new book:

Ito Gaiden: Stories from the Shintaido Heritage

is now available through Amazon. Here's a link:

https://www.amazon.ca/Ito-Gaiden-Stories-Shintaido-Heritage/dp/0692622497/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1461091286&sr=8-1&keywords=ito+gaiden



from the Amazon write-up:

In *Ito Gaiden*, Haruyoshi Fugaku Ito, founder of Life Exercise and ambassador of Shintaido in the West since 1975, tells us about these masters who preceded and have accompanied him on his path. By delivering insights into his own journey, he also helps us develop answers to the questions above. In these pages you'll learn: -Who was the mysterious Hoken Inoue whom H. Aoki, the founder of Shintaido, mentions in his book "Shintaido: the Body is a Message from the Universe" -How did Inoue's Shinwataido relate to well-known Aikido, and how it did influence the evolution of Shotokai Karate as well as the creation of Shintaido -What are the three pillars of Shintaido and how, from guiding principles, these became embodied in today's physical practice -What additional ingredients H. F. Ito sought to bring into the practice, and what succession of events led him to evolve his own brand -How these two arts, Shintaido and Life Exercise, complement each other.

Shintaido Robots *Continued from p.1*

When the monkeys had burned nearly everything they could find, they weren't sure what to do. Some of them tried to fly to the stars, but that's very difficult, and the spaceships weren't big enough to take lots of passengers, so only a few would be able to go. Some of them tried to build a bridge to get back to the Earth, where they could live like good monkeys and maybe do some farming, but the bridge was narrow and weak. Not many would be able to cross it. Some monkey scientists tried to make the rocket engines more efficient. They knew the city would fall into the ocean soon, but they hoped to make it a soft landing instead of a big crash landing. Lots of monkeys would die in a crash landing, but a soft landing might not be too horrible.

Global climate change is an existential threat to our entire civilization and possibly to human survival. Shintaido is not a martial art in the sense of self-defense or hand-to-hand combat techniques that help an individual survive. But maybe Shintaido is concerned with the question of human survival in general, as well as the philosophical meaning of non-survival (the acceptance of death).

For years, news and sci-fi entertainment media were occupied with other existential threats to humanity such as nuclear war, and recently the invention of A.I. (artificial intelligence). These are real threats as well. Shintaido was born, in a sense, from the ashes of the only nuclear war that humans have waged so far: the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Among the founders of Shintaido are *hibakusha*: survivors of the atomic bomb, some of whose family died. Can Shintaido inform our attitude to other existential threats as well?

Astrophysicist Martin Rees writes: "The main threats to sustained human existence now come from people, not from nature. Ecological shocks that irreversibly degrade the biosphere could be triggered by the unsustainable demands of a growing world population...Equally worrying are the imponderable downsides of powerful new cyber-, bio-, and nanotechnologies. Indeed, we're entering an era when a few individuals could, via error or terror, trigger societal breakdown...And should we worry about another sci-fi scenario, in which a network of computers could develop a mind of its own and threaten us all?"

(<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/339/6124/1123.full>)

We should, according to some Very Smart People and Leaders of Industry. As Stephen Hawking, Stuart Russell, Max Tegmark, and Frank Wilczek wrote in *The Independent* in 2014:

"... [I]t's tempting to dismiss the notion of highly intelligent machines as mere science fiction. But this would be a mistake, and potentially our worst mistake in history. ...Success in creating AI would be the biggest event in human history. Unfortunately, it might also be the last, unless we learn how to avoid the risks."

Shintaido Robots *Continued on p.7*

Shintaido Robots *Continued from p.6*

(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/stephen-hawking-transcendence-looks-at-the-implications-of-artificial-intelligence-but-are-we-taking-9313474.html>)

Rees' view conforms to that of Walt Kelly's famous cartoon character Pogo, who quipped on the 2nd Earth Day, April 22, 1971: "We have met the enemy and he is us." Even if none of them prove fatal, they are undoubtedly going to mean almost unimaginable and massive changes to our lives. Some of the scenarios are very dark. Others are very weird: Will the survival of humanity require that we modify our bodies and become a genetically-engineered human-machine race of cyborg cockroaches, able to withstand the rigors of life on a damaged planet, or in space stations, or on Mars, or frozen in spaceships on long journeys to other solar systems?

What should you do when a robot shows up at your Shintaido practice? This is not as far-fetched as it may sound, when we consider two significant trends in computer and robotics technology: (1) the development of social robots (robots that can have social interactions with people), and (2) the stated aim of the U.S. government, as Glen Greenwald writes in *The Guardian*, to collect and monitor "all forms of electronic communication" on the planet Earth (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/15/cru-nsa-collect-it-all>). Glen Greenwald is the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who helped break the Edward Snowden story.

The first thing we need to understand—I am shocked at how few people grasp this—is that the global silicon brain (or collective extension of our brains) has millions or billions of ears and eyes and motion-sensing accelerometers and thermometers and so on all over the place in the form of smartphones, laptops, security cameras, speed-monitoring cameras on highways, satellites in space, etc., all of which are constantly collecting data about human behavior and many of which are networked to the internet: all are measuring human behavior en masse, which is called "big data."

Computers can read text well. Their ability to recognize the content of spoken languages is improving rapidly. Facial-recognition software isn't only about identifying people: soon computers will recognize emotions. Machines do not need algorithms to understand human emotions. They just need big data to correlate certain facial expressions (measurable with facial-recognition software) with certain text content and situations that are typically associated with certain human emotions. I learned this from reading about Rana el Kaliouby's research (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03mlf48>). She's the Chief Strategy & Science Officer at the MIT Startup Affectiva and is an expert in emotionally aware artificial intelligence. Every time we interact with the Internet, or go in public where there are security cameras; anytime we're in the presence of a computer or mobile phone, even when they're switched "off"; at all of these intersections, we're feeding the pool of big data, which later can be mined. We're teaching computers about

ourselves: how we're likely to behave, what stimulates us, what calms us down, what makes us happy or sad or confused. Computers may not "understand why" but every day they learn more about "what" and "how."

This is not a conspiracy theory. This is not an Orwellian dystopia, or any other sci-fi scenario. This is our world today.

Holographic social robots exist, and can track the human gaze. No doubt they will soon learn to interpret human emotions and simulate not only sexual intimacy but also emotional reactions. Physical social robots will also be among us, and like Google Street View (data for which will soon be collected by autonomous robot cars), they will wander around studying human behavior. They will need to operate in environments originally designed by humans for humans, so they will study our physical movements and learn from them.

We all know what it feels like to experience things. Otherwise, who's reading this now? The question is not whether we'll create artificial intelligence—we have already created A.I. to some degree. Machines seem to think and solve some kinds of problems; and they will simulate thinking for themselves increasingly well. Nor is the question if we'll create artificial beings with intention, that can act autonomously. Intention, or the simulation of it, can be built in. The question is whether we'll create A.S., Artificial Sentience. As we continue to develop social robots—including robots that can simulate emotional reactions—we will certainly try to invest them with the illusion of sentience. They probably won't need to look more realistic than cartoon characters. As long as they have eyebrows that move, noses that wrinkle, and a linear component in the position of a mouth that can change shape, that should be enough.

A.I. that's smarter than us may let us live, just as we let gorillas live, at our mercy. But teleport yourself to the boardroom of a large corporation invested in such extremely profitable technologies: "If you think the warnings of a paralyzed pencil-head scientist in a wheelchair are going to stop us..." Is that what it's like in today's corporate boardrooms? We don't really know, do we? We have only the Hollywood image, and no access to the decisions made behind closed doors that determine many aspects of our lives (NAFTA, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris climate change talks, etc.). That's a little problem for the survival of humanity. The People know what is best for the People.

Thinking about the meaning of *shoko* (one of the most physically and mentally demanding Shintaido meditation exercises, in which the practitioner concentrates on extending a wooden sword toward the horizon for long periods of time), a robot would have no problem doing *shoko*, because a robot would not suffer or get distracted. But is the purpose of *shoko* to suffer, or is it to plunge into the space where reality is formulated?

Shintaido Robots *Continued on page 8*

Shintaido Robots *Continued from page 7*

Should we try to train roboticism into our Shintaido movement, to move in some sense robotically? Surprisingly yes, according to Hiroyuki Aoki:

What is *kiru*—"cutting?" The locus described by the swing of the sword is itself a sign. Only that. Nothing more.

Whenever we talk about the martial arts we usually think of strength or weakness, or spiritual exercise and concentration; but, denying this way of thinking, simply swing the sword. Denying all emotions, simply swing the sword like a machine or robot. (Shintaido textbook p 39)

When one considers the humanistic attitude of most Shintaido practitioners, this seems like some of the weirdest advice the founder of Shintaido has ever given practitioners. And yet what's hidden in it? When you try to be robotic, nothing extra, nothing personal, no attachment, no emotion; when you attempt to strip away everything, you get to the "unavoidable self," the part you can't help but to express.

The paradox of Taoism is that the Sage follows the Law of Nature. And in Nature, there is no "should." There is only How Things Are, no alternative reality that is morally preferable in an indifferent universe. There may be universes that contain other how-it-could-have-beens, but the Laws of Nature that describe how the pieces of this universe, the movements of atoms and molecules that comprise trees and doctor's visits and nebulae fall into place: they do not prefer a how-it-should-have-been, only people do that.

Without this how-it-should-have-been, it's hard to make ethical judgements that rely on imagining alternative outcomes and judging some to be more acceptable than others. Ethical judgements are those that influence the suffering of other beings, and that's why we'll need to know if A.I. beings will also have A.S.—Artificial Sentience. Will they really be sentient beings that can suffer, or will they just be able to simulate the appearance of suffering, to appear to suffer, without experiencing it (because if they aren't really sentient, they won't experience anything at all)? Without that, Shintaido will be mostly useless to them. They will learn some tricks about balance and body movement, but that's about it.

The question posed by our mad drive to fly à la Thelma and Louise off the cliff of the complete face-to-face Turing test as soon as possible—when robots are able to simulate the appearance of thinking and wanting and feeling so well that we can't tell the difference between the simulation and the real thing—is whether there'll be any way for us to know if they experience suffering or not. The behaviorist view of animals as automatons will be turned on its head. In other words, the philosophical question posed by robots that simulate sentience is: if we accept the scientific materialist world view that we are no more and no less than a collection of moving sub-atomic particles, molecules, composed of atoms, formed in the explosions of dying stars, then what makes us different from robots? Maybe sentience is a math-

ematical function of complex arrangements of molecules. The material universe rises up and sees and knows itself in an amazing accidental balancing act of temporary anti-entropy called "life." If we're made of molecules and we can do it, why can't robots?

If robots simulate sentience and decision-making (free will) so well that we can't distinguish their "consciousness" and "free will" from those of humans, then where will we look to find something that makes us different? A mystical "divine spark" that only humans have? Please. Please give me your cell phone, your computer, your car. And don't fly in airplanes, they don't fly. They are based on a system of knowledge that has no need for a divine spark.

To say that your consciousness miraculously arose from the laws and processes of nature, indifferent to your existence, is quite different from saying that evolution was guided by a teleological divine spark, and that the universe, filled with love, actually gives a shit about where you, or it, is headed.

Interestingly, the word "robot" comes from Czech. It was coined by Czech author Karel Capek in his 1920 science fiction play R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots). In the play, the robots become unhappy working as slaves in factories making things for humans and organize a revolt, leading to the extinction of the human race. Luckily, it's mere science fiction. We don't need robots to wipe out the human race; if we just keep on going the way we're going, there's a good chance we're going to do it well enough all by ourselves, thank you.

Here's a brief primer about how to behave toward a robot when it attends a Shintaido practice in which you are a participant: *Improvise*.

This will be the key to the success of the Shintaido movement that has eluded us thus far. Robots will be fascinated by Shintaido, because it is rich with experiences that are likely among the most difficult for robots to analyze and predict. Some aspects will be very suitable for robots. For example, robots can experience the challenge of maintaining balance on two legs while doing a wide variety of movements, jumping, rolling, while holding various types of sticks, touching each other. They will learn from these experiences, just as we do. They will probably be good at following the aspects of Shintaido that involve rituals and consistent procedures: bowing, folding keiko gi, cleaning the dojo. But many other aspects of Shintaido—the emotional and invisible aspects that are not visible with motion-tracking cameras, no matter how high-res—will be harder for them to access.

When robots try to crack the puzzle of what humans are doing when we practice Shintaido, what will they observe?

Perhaps the essence (the "spirit") of Shintaido is invisible to silicon life forms. It might be relatively resistant to digitization even when you take pictures and videos of it. There's nothing magic about this: some forms of information are easier to encode digitally (like text), some forms require more data and more complex algorithms (like video).

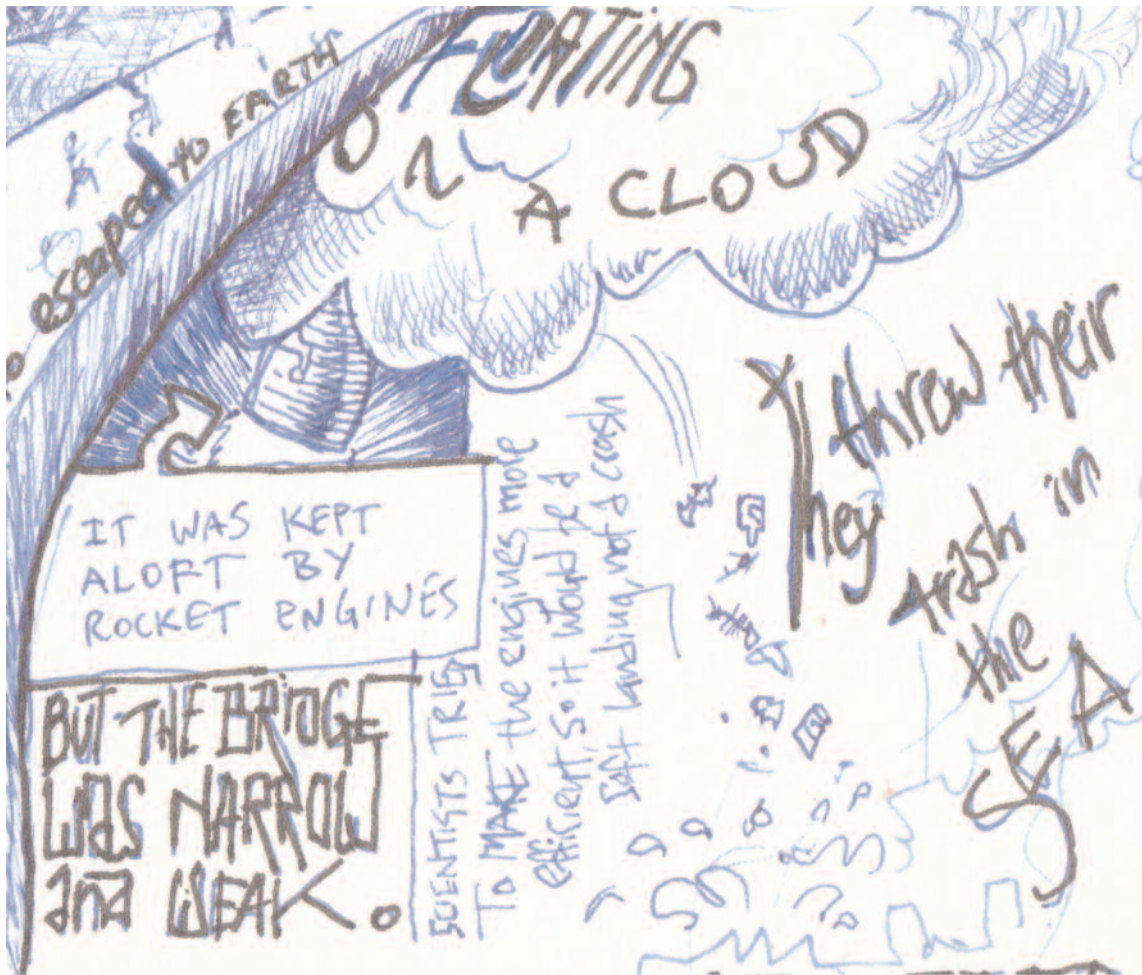
BODY

Dialogue

Shintaido Robots *Continued from p.8*

Computers can read bar codes easily but have difficulty learning our speech; we can't read bar codes, but we learn to speak without being explicitly taught. Perhaps the type of information encoded in the body by Shintaido and other esoteric disciplines is one of few hidden codes we humans have that they can't crack so easily, an earth warrior tool for communication and communing, property of the few natural human Jedi knights left to walk the earth.

Or perhaps the space race, the urgent need to leap from the dying placenta of Planet Earth to the stars, is a physical embodiment of our (literally) "highest" aspirations. Travel far into outer space in these bodies— genetically engineered cyborgs though they may become— could be realized in this variation of the multiverse. In that case, the values embodied or embedded in Shintaido should be encoded into digital robotic form to compose part of the psychic RNA that survives travel through space when we return to the stars from which we came. It need not be a dark reality. Consciousness, in some form, will see the beauty of the nebulae with infra-red and x-ray cameras for eyes. Imagine looking at the burnt-out ashes of Earth from thousands of light-years away, pointing (with whatever apparatus we will have evolved by then for pointing with) and saying, "home."



How to Speak to Your Children about Global Warming

pen-and-ink drawing

by

David Franklin