

# “The Double-Edged Sword of the 21st Century”

From the notion that if two sides of the same blade are sharp, it cuts both ways. The metaphor may have originated from the [Arabic](#) expression (sayf dū ḥadayn, “double-edged sword”). In the Bible, the word of God is described as a being sharper than a double-edged sword.

With a double edge sword, we can see the edge of the blade and the resultant consequences of the sword blade can cut or even kill you. This you see with your eyes...the sharpness of the edge and the intended consequences. The feeling of pain and even death make one ever more aware of the intention of the sword holder. There have been plenty of movies which have shown battles with swords. Akira Kurosawa, <http://kurosawamovies.com/main.htm>, comes to mind as examples of great battle scenes with blades.

In our late 20<sup>th</sup> and current 21<sup>st</sup> century we are being surrounded with a new kind of Sword. The first Sword was introduced to us by the computer. The second version of the sword will be AI, artificial intelligence. We need to learn how to see and feel the implied danger and safety of the computer's edges. We have all experienced the results of being hacked into: be it our bank accounts, our privacy, the small secrets of friends or our children, etc. In times past, we were hacked into by the “brick and mortar reality, rob a bank or/and put your money into a bank's vaults. Dig a hole and bury your prizes. But there may come a time when we forget where that hole or rock or tree marker is! Let me See?

We can still do this if we remember. But the virtual reality world has seduced us into buying into the internet cloud, the Dropbox's promise, the USB card and so on. Should our computers go down or get corrupted or hacked into...then we a get a cut

and begin a new kind of bleeding or worse yet we can have a stroke, so to speak. 911. Then we learn about the "backup" ...the need to find a virtual "hole" to store a copy of the information. So now we can relax and feel secure for the 'cut' of the sword. This also come with some possible unforeseen risks but for the price of another hard drive, a flash card or an online 'vault' we can feel safe and protected. As my mother would say, get your wallet out.

The oncoming advent of a personal robot slides us into an even more reliable promise. But with this comes many more reliable slashes and cuts. Again the "blade's sharp edges are not visible to our flesh and blood corporal bodies. Our 'bodies', we learn, are extended into outer space, a space not of the Earth but out there? in there? Somewhere. Hello... I see dead people!

You may find yourself living in a shotgun shack

And you may find yourself in another part of the world

And you may find yourself behind the wheel of a large automobile

You may find yourself in a beautiful house, with a beautiful wife

You may ask yourself, "Well, how did I get here?"

And you may ask yourself, "How do I work this?"

And you may ask yourself, "Where is that large automobile?"

And you may tell yourself, "This is not my beautiful house"

And you may tell yourself, "This is not my beautiful wife

AI's, (artificial intelligence) claims it will make life easier, give us more leisure time, creative time. This is one edge of the Sword. The other edge has not quite been exposed yet. We think, we believe we have seen both edges but the 'cuts' have not yet been felt. The drops of blood are not yet staining the carpet...to the uninformed that is. How do you feel about a robot feeding your ailing mother or father at every meal? I think I might prefer a Rhesus monkey, something with a heartbeat, two eyes filled with curiosity and affection...I

don't know. I once read that scientists can do a lobotomy on monkeys. At the time of the article the operation could either render the monkey from incapable of either throwing feces or masturbating, but not both. (Circa 1970)

I am not a Luddite by any means, but I would like to know what could happen when the sword's blade swings back towards me. (My wallet only carries one bandage.) My wife Amy and I watched "Terminator" for the umpteenth time. There are 4 sequels. This movie predates the current AI promises. Will some of us choose or be forced to accept the AI promise or resist AI. AI can render us to become more passive. It can use our power, change our way of thinking. And what of our Spiritual nature. We once used our arms, back and eyes to push or pull a door open. Now we quietly move along a corridor as if we've been whisked by an unseen fairy towards our destination, perhaps to use our muscles to carry our shopping bags instead of opening the door.

To be sure AI and Human Intelligence, (HI), will be around for a while until the introduction of the Borg or Swarm technology wakes us up to a fearful conclusion. A digital Plato's Cave metaphor. Michael Tyson said that everyone has a plan or a dream until they are punched in the face. Now where is that band aide!

I'm just saying...I'm just saying. As my friend Pokey use to say "there's 3 sides to every story: his side, her side and then the truth. Artificial Intelligence Plus Natural Intelligence...somewhere there must be a Soul. I know let's design Bots in different models. A Jewish model, comes with assorted color Yarmulke, an Atheists model, a Catholic model. Let's not forget the LGBT option for that droid and a, what the hell, a Redneck unit, a gender switcher...there is no end is there. Nazi, Communist, African American. Madame we have a stutter option available for the hard of hearing relative. Did you say your child has ADD, no problem we will reprogram Robbie with the latest Lithium Chip? We even have a 'Dude' droid. I digress.

In the end I hope it A(I)ll works out for us, but there will be some cuts and severing of limbs so to speak from the Sword. Must be, it's going to be the result of the unforeseen learning curve. I believe since the introduction of the 'voice mail' and push 1 for this and push 2 for that we have eroded our ability to think and speak our thoughts while trying to communicate with other human beings. As of now we aren't able to look at our human server in the eye, to see a frown on his or her face as she takes our hamburger order at McDonalds. We won't be able to say 'how are you', 'having a bad day', 'I like your hairstyle or tattoo'. Our supermarkets now give us the option of scanning our own grocers at the cost of again shutting us down from communicating to each other at the checkout isle. I believe the more isolated we become the more natural, read Earth changes, disorders will occur. My mother told me in the early 60's that she noticed the weather changed whenever a new rocket was sent up into space from Cape Canaveral. (I won't even mention Chemtrails)