

THE GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS PROJECT - *An In-Depth Look*

By Ellen L. Hughes

With his distinguished good looks and his penchant for breaking into song, one might assume Dr. Roger Nelson performs on stage. In a sense, he does, but not one located on Broadway or in Hollywood. His reach is much broader with a supporting cast of players from New Jersey to California, from Switzerland, New Zealand, Brazil and beyond. Dr. Nelson is the Director of the Global Consciousness Project. "Our purpose," he states, "*is to examine subtle correlations that may reflect the presence and activity of consciousness in the world.*" In fact, the Global Consciousness Project (GCP) has provided good evidence that numbers which should be random actually reveal some order due to people's consciousness.

In The Beginning

A chance meeting in 1996 between Nelson, Jim Fournier and Juliana Balistreri proved to be the catalyst for the GCP. While Drs. Fournier and Balistreri were promoting the GaiaMind Project, (named for the Greek goddess of Earth), Dr. Nelson was cogitating on a network to detect global consciousness. This encounter served as a springboard. Dr. Nelson arranged to collect consciousness field data during the GaiaMind Project's global meditation on January 23, 1997. The results showed a significant effect. The Global Consciousness Project was beginning to take shape. The next two events had a more social bent - the funerals for Princess Diana on August 31, 1997 and Mother Theresa a week later. According to the GCP website (www.global-mind.org):

"... Independent REG datasets were recorded before, during, and after the public ceremonies of both funerals.

...During the public events of Diana's funeral the composite across 12 independent datasets showed anomalous deviations from expectation, associated with a probability of 0.013, or odds of nearly 100 to 1 that this was not just a chance fluctuation. During the public events of Mother Teresa's funeral 11 datasets were recorded, with a composite probability of 0.645 indicating no anomalous deviation."

These early *ad hoc* data collections were prototypes for the Global Consciousness Project. They tested the notion and provided encouraging results. It took several months to gather resources and build infrastructure, and in August 1998, the Project was ready. Over the last 17 years, more than 500 formal, rigorous trials have been gathered, and the results are impressive.

The Recording Process

The network of equipment used by the GCP is called an EGG. The name morphed from a joke about a "world EEG" (referring to the technology used to record brain waves), to eventually settle on a suggestion by Greg Nelson (Roger's son) to call it ElectroGaiaGram

(EGG). Greg Nelson developed the software for gathering and archiving the data and with minor exceptions, it has needed no modifications over the course of the project. Two main devices are used: 1) Mindsong MicroREG and 2) Orion RNG. (See pictures).

REG/RNG are used interchangeably, and refer to physical random sources based on quantum tunneling (not computer programs which produce pseudo random numbers). The EGGS are hosted by people around the world. The number of hosts has fluctuated over the years, peaking at around 70 with 40-45 units currently working. For how the data is interpreted, Dr. Nelson gave this explanation:

"A 'signal' we look for is a correlation between those devices which are designed to be independent and completely random. They are separated by typically thousands of kilometers, thousands of miles. Nevertheless, during these special moments on the world stage, we find unexpected anomalous correlations between the devices. That unexpected correlation is what we can regard as a kind of signal. It happens during special events that synchronize the emotions of large numbers of people and it does not happen otherwise.

"The data collection might be thought of as a randomly patterned tapestry created by a lot of individual devices, each recording a new trial every second. What we look for is correlation among or between those devices during special moments in world history. Peak times when people gather in the same consciousness or emotional space and share responses and reactions to something that has happened in the world."

"The data is then transmitted to a central archive which now contains 17 years of random data in parallel sequences of synchronized 200-bit trials generated every second." (200-bit trials - the number of times heads would come up if you flip 200 coins, every second, day after day, 24/7.)

The GCP has recorded 507 events through September 11, 2015. As shown below, the first formal event recorded was the terrorist bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Africa. It was recorded on August 7, 1998 by Dr. Nelson (Hypothesis Source), using three REGs, the Resolution (timeframe) was 15 minutes, the Z-score (standard score) indicates how many standard deviations an element is from the mean, and the associated probability. (For the full chart, visit <http://www.global-mind.org/results.html#alldata>).

Event ▼	Description	Timeframe	Hypothesis Source	REGs	Resolution	Z-score	Probability
1	Embassy Bombings	19980807	Nelson	3	15-min	3.209	0.001

Delving A Little Deeper

(The remainder of this article is from an interview with Dr. Nelson.)

EH: Since the project has provided good evidence, has the main purpose of the GCP changed or been updated?

RN: Yes, it has. I'm progressively more inclined to spread a kind of understanding among large numbers of people that we are interconnected in a subtle way that we don't perceive directly, cannot perceive directly. I have the conviction that if there is some effect of an unconscious interconnection among us, it might be enhanced or strengthened or become actually valuable and potent if we became conscious and understood that we are interconnected. Ultimately, if we understand that something is already happening and we learn how to increase the power or the frequency or strength of what's happening, that will have positive results.

EH: When you say "unconscious" could that possibly be part of the brain that we are still learning how it works? We may not be consciously aware of it but our gray matter does know exactly what is going on.

RN: I like the way you think. Indeed I believe that's true. When we talk about consciousness and subconscious and unconscious, these are vague ideas. Actually, a lot of us believe we already know what all that means but it is a deep mystery how consciousness works - where it is, whether it is entirely a matter of the brain functioning or if there is something outside. We have so much to learn. In projects like mine we provide quite a bit of extended information about what mind and consciousness actually is and what the extent of its presence in the world might be.

In fact, most scientists don't understand the power of those findings that come from parapsychology laboratories and instead believe if we just do another fMRI or a CT Scan or another insertion of electrodes into the brains of monkeys, we'll find the seat of consciousness or find that part that you were referring to. But our work pushes those boundaries and indicates the need for richer and more complex models.

EH: There was research conducted at the University of Washington whereby one researcher was able to send a brain signal via the Internet to control the hand motions of a fellow researcher. (<http://www.washington.edu/news/2013/08/27/researcher-controls-colleagues-motions-in-1st-human-brain-to-brain-interface>). Does this research affect the Global Consciousness Project or have any correlation to your work?

RN: Maybe the best way for me to approach that is say the brain is a necessary part of the system which has consciousness and so on, but consciousness is not just the brain wiggling. It's not just a few pulses of electromagnetics or squirts of neurochemicals in the brain. Consciousness is something that is bigger and much more extensive. I mean that kind of literally. **It's not confined to your head. Consciousness lives in the world.** If you think about someone like your mother, wherever your mother happens to be, now she is

suddenly closer. It is like your brain is involved and probably necessary but I think it is worth our while to consider that the brain and brain activity is only part of the picture when one wants to talk about mind and consciousness.

EH: So the brain really needs to reach outside of the physical body and interact with other things outside of it?

RN: Right. You used the term "brain"; I wouldn't. The brain does produce some electromagnetic fields but they are detectable by appropriate instrumentation a few inches away from the body at most. The kinds of things that we're talking about – interactions between/among human beings all over the world – that's global interconnection. We can track the effect of distance on subtle connections. We know from research that it really doesn't matter if the person is in the same room, in the next room or a thousand miles away; there can be the same kind of interconnection with equal potency.

EH: Is there a difference between mind and consciousness?

RN: I'm using them rather interchangeably. Mind is easier to say but it is also a little more poetic and ethereal. Psychologists are waking up to the fact that the human consciousness is real and should be studied, which they didn't do until about 20 or 30 years ago. In science, there is a kind of technical necessity to be precise about what you are describing and what you are studying and how you are doing it and so forth. Because "mind" is subtle, it is a term most scientists don't use. They don't think they can study "mind" because that's the purview of poets. But I'm inclined to believe that the poets may have it up on us so I'm very willing to talk about "mind".

EH: Something I was wondering about is the connection between UV rays and consciousness. I read Monarch butterflies use ultraviolet rays to map their migration from Canada to Mexico City. Could that have any connection with consciousness?

RN: If that's real and the Monarchs use it or are affected by it, then I don't see any reason why the same sort of thing wouldn't potentially apply to humans. We try really hard to apply the things that we know and the tools we have to work on a new question in science. We know about infrared, we know about ultraviolet. We hypothesize about how it works where "it" might be a Monarch. By extension, or as a metaphor, this might be like the interconnection of minds and global consciousness.

I think there is probably something like a "field" of consciousness in the world. We each are the source of a field that extends out from us, without knowing anything about its actual structure and components or even how to directly measure it. Nevertheless, I think that may turn out to be a good model. Consciousness is, in a way that is relevant here, information. So there is a field of information that is being generated all the time by your mind. It gets expressed often in words, but even without words, it extends out to be a presence in the world. Most of the time your consciousness field or information or mental field does not interact with others; it interpenetrates like radio and TV waves do. They

only affect each other under special circumstances. When we are synchronized by something like the global events that we identify, things like 9/11 or New Year's Eve, then our mental waves become synchronized and may add or subtract in a fashion that's kind of familiar from our understanding of electromagnetic waves. It becomes possible to have an interaction of this mental field, of our various mental fields.

Conscious Evolution

EH: What are some ways you anticipate the findings of the Global Consciousness Project to better mankind?

RN: I just spent a few days at a retreat with people who are interested in that question. How do we move onward toward a brighter future? How do we help ourselves and each other to interconnect with each other, cooperate, collaborate, create something new and necessary. Or necessary but new, which is a kind of increasing collaboration across the planet. We need to foster and cultivate that so that we can become more conscious about our work with each other.

The Dalai Lama says "What is important? Compassion is important." What does that mean? It really means that you and somebody else, maybe a whole lot of other people, are connected. You know, you have a feeling of interconnection with them that could amount to sympathy or empathy. You may be invited by your feelings of compassion to do something that helps the other person. Bringing it back close to home, you meet somebody in a crowded room, that song...

EH: Are you going to start singing?

RN: Across a crowded room (singing), we fall in love. And what does it mean? It means that we have recognized the kind of interconnection that we want to foster and elaborate. We become not just two people but two people that have created something new between them.

When we grow up where people are kind to each other, we become kind. That is a field that changes us. It is like we are receivers. My colleagues and I make these subtle interconnections – these subtle effects of consciousness – real to people so they are able to use them to become better or resist evil.

There is a fairly large number of people who are beginning to promote the idea of Conscious Evolution. Conscious Evolution means the same thing as evolution except that we do it on purpose. We do it with foresight and understanding. And we actually become capable of changing, evolving very fast. What I would be aiming for is an understanding of who we are and where we are and what we have to do and how nice it is to love each other and collaborate and cooperate. So what's going to be evolved, consciously, is our attitude and our approach and our ability to live in and co-exist in this world. Human beings have the potential of being beautiful, creative, constructive. I really do encourage

anybody who reads your article or looks at my website to start thinking in terms of Conscious Evolution. Start thinking in terms of bringing the somewhat unconscious fact of interconnection up into a reality that you can pay attention to and foster.