

ERIC LESKOWITZ

Can 'weird science' save the Sox?

DESPERATE TIMES call for desperate measures, and with this year's Red Sox season in real danger of unraveling, it's time to get help from previously unrecognized sources. We can use some arcane research to pull this one out of the hat by utilizing the latest findings in the "weird science" of subtle energy medicine and nonlocal phenomena.

In fact, there's good scientific data to show that last year's World Series MVP was not Manny Ramirez, but Red Sox Nation and the magic of Fenway Park. It all comes down to the home field advantage and how you, the couch potato reader, can use science to maximize that edge.

Statistics show that the home field advantage is real but small, averaging 1.3 points in the NFL, and a 54 percent winning percentage in baseball (rising up to 58 percent in the World Series). But it's not just friendly faces or lack of jet lag. There's a well-developed science of intangibles that involves concepts like distant intentionality, the memory of water, intercessory prayer, and conditioned spaces. Let's look at these phenomena, and see how they might translate from the laboratory onto the playing field.

That odd feeling of being stared at? It's not a coincidence — lab studies of remote attention show that the human nervous system reacts when someone is looking at you (even if you're blindfolded). That's why most of us freeze in front of a crowd. We can't handle all that energy unless we're named Curt and can actually feed off negativity. The flip side is that when positive thoughts are directed at the lab subject, his EEG brain waves become more coherent and balanced. Maybe that's what 35,000 Fenway fans do for the Sox's brain waves.

Then there's Dr. Wasaru Emoto's studies in Japan. His photographs document that the crystalline structure of water molecules can be changed by the directed positive thoughts of people nearby. It sounds corny, I know, but data are data (see the movie "What the Bleep Do We Know?" for details). Remember that the human body is 65 percent water, and think again about the impact of fans' good wishes and fervent hopes on all of those Soxian water molecules on the field.

As for those "fans," it's fitting that the word is short for "fanatic," which comes from a Latin word meaning "possessed by a demon or a deity." So why not harness this untapped energy? That's where the research on distant prayer comes in. If so-called intercessory prayer from people hundreds of miles from



the hospital can help cardiac patients recover (as at least one controlled study has shown), then what happens when the members of Red Sox Nation begin to pray at their local branch of the Church of the Carmine Hose? Maybe players' physiologies are affected as much as heart patients'; maybe batting averages are enhanced as much as electrocardiograms.

The last set of studies helps to explain the specialness of Fenway Park itself. Stanford physicist William Tiller showed that certain chemical reactions — the rate at which salt crystals precipitate out from saturated solutions — are altered if the experiment is done in a room where people have recently, and frequently, been meditating (even when temperature, humidity, and the like are controlled). He calls this the phenomenon of "conditioned spaces": physical settings (yes, like Fenway) can somehow carry the imprint of past events and prior human experiences. Tiller's quan-

tum physics explanations leave me in the dust, but the idea that certain places carry a special quality is intuitively appealing, especially if you've ever felt the rocking energy of Fenway during a big game.

From water molecules to the power of prayer.

So whenever the Sox get on a roll, something unusual's going on. I think these revelations from the new field of energy medicine have to be invoked to explain these mysteries.

So, skeptics, go Google these studies and then get off your duffs. Join the rest of Red Sox Nation this week as we focus our heart-felt attention and pray our prayers for our boys. We need to change their biochemistry and activate their water molecules like we did last year. Weird science can help the Sox win again in 2005.

Dr. Eric Leskowitz is a psychiatrist at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, where he directs the Integrative Medicine Project.