

Defrosting Frozen Wisdom

By Richard Kirby

Introduction and Editing by Gordon Arthur

Abstract

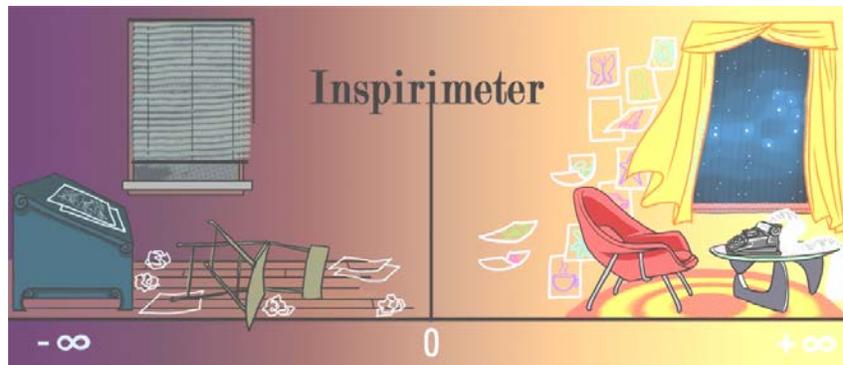
This article explores some of the thinking of Richard Kirby, who coined the term defrosting frozen wisdom for searching for past wisdom in hibernation and applying it to the present and the future. It gives an introduction to his work and then gives some extracts from his final book, *The People's Astronomy*.

Keywords: Richard Kirby, defrosting frozen wisdom, *The People's Astronomy*.

Introduction

This article tells part of the story of a unique man who was a model for inspirational leadership for the good of humanity. Richard Kirby became interested in space in 1961, when at the age of 11, he heard of Yuri Gagarin, Alan Shepard, and John Glenn going into orbit to begin the Space Age. On January 1, 2009, he founded the Kepler Space Institute and then later that year, he compiled *The People's Astronomy* over three days. The story ended with his death on September 24, 2009.

The following collage, which Kirby created as a visual aid, is entitled *The Inspirimeter*.



It illustrates Richard Kirby's favoured track of human progress on Earth and into space. As a scholar, astronomer, and minister, Kirby brought his vision of the Solar System and the stars to young and old on Earth with this small book. Like Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* (1998), *The People's Astronomy* addresses the question, "Why should we go to space?"

Since they first emerged, humans have wanted to fly. The Greek myth of Daedalus's flight from prison to the Sun may be the first such story. Recorded history, science fiction, and the entertainment world continually focus on humans leaving Earth for good or evil.

Dr. Kirby, with KSI co-founder Edward Kiker, picked Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) to represent the Institute, which he hoped would develop into a university, because Kepler was the first to calculate the laws of planetary motion and his laws are still used today to calculate satellite orbits.

So why are Kirby's thoughts so important for the Space Age and why is the title of this article "Defrosting Frozen Wisdom?" Forty-two professionals who have dedicated their lives to flying and to space over the last 50 years since John Glenn orbited the Earth have collaborated in writing *Beyond Earth: The Future of Humans in Space*.¹ It is filled with both theory and detailed explanations for *how* and *why* humans will settle in space. It was this book that motivated Kirby to bring his life's thinking together for people everywhere. "Defrosting frozen wisdom" was Kirby's term for searching past wisdom in hibernation and applying it to the present and the future.

As Bob Krone observed in his introduction to the book, the ultimate answer to "why go?" is a desire for improved human evolution and even human survival:

Human space exploration and development will bring huge positive changes to our Earth and to the cultures, politics, and societies on Earth.²

Richard Kirby's ideas about these changes are visible in the extracts of *The People's Astronomer* that follow this introduction.

Working with Richard Kirby takes one on a path through forests of paradigms. He was one of Earth's most innovative thinkers.³

KSI's environment is "a sea of global problems—for many of which we believe Space resources have solutions."⁴

Whether you are an astronaut, a fourth grader, a "Woman of the Stars," a teacher, a pilot, an artist or musician, in government, industry or non-profit work, and regardless of where on this planet you live, you will find your personal hopes, optimism and capabilities expanding as you envision a better future through *The People's Astronomy*.⁵

The Story of the Space Age – So Far: The Second and Third Ages of Space

The phrase *the space age* was invented by a journalist in the same way the phrase *the atomic age* was invented: it described the most prominent

¹ Edited by Bob Krone (Toronto: Apogee Space Press, 2006).

² viii. The text can be found at www.bobkrone.com/node/206.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

achievement of the age. The space age is a human concept for human beings. It is not a description of something external in time. It is just a viewpoint. It served its purpose well. It took us essentially from Sputnik 1 to the present moment. More recently, a Congressman spoke of the second space age, when space is seen not for military purposes but for economic purposes; of movement from the public sector to the private. With our social quantum theory, we see a third possibility, and that is what I would call the third space age, somewhat like the Third Age of Middle Earth of *The Lord of the Rings*, the age of the people. This is not about representatives, either public or private, owning the stars, the vast reaches of heaven, and delivering the goods in a diluted form. It is about all the people becoming citizens of the cosmos, here and now, with a new attitude of freedom that comes from imbibing the vast potential of outer space to magnify the available resources for everybody.⁶

Astronomical Wealth Creation and Solutions to Economic Problems of Justice, Finance, Debt, Credit, and Employment

The heavens offer everything we need here and now, without our going any further into space to deliver the solution to our economic problems. The first solution is to banish forever the idea of economics as the allocation of scarce goods among competing wants.

No wonder economics was called the dismal science by many. We in the third space age go back to the time of Aristotle, who coined the word *economics*. It came from two simple words in Greek: *oikos nomos*, the law of the management of the home.

Werner von Braun, the rocket scientist, famously said, "Earth is the cradle of humanity but one does not remain in the cradle." To grow up is to become a citizen of the stars and to contain within oneself the vast horizons of heaven, to be inspired by it and to replace the idea of economic science or monetary economics or political economy with the idea of infinite abundance. The gift of space is the vista of abundance.⁷

Government Gets Inspired by the StarLight: From Village to UNESCO and Back

The light of the stars has been an inspiration to countless people. Whether it is a particular planet like Venus, also known as Hesperus or Vesper, that causes people to meditate on the rhythms of life, or the planet Jupiter which has given us words like jovial, or whether it is the Milky Way, or whether it is the pattern of the constellations or the position of the North Star, or the precession of the equinoxes, or the regularity of Halley's Comet, these are sources of inspiration. In our work in social quantum theory at the Stuart C. Dodd Institute, over the last ten to fifteen years, we

⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷ Ibid., 6.

have tried to answer the question, “what is an inspired group?” Here is the great gift of the space age to us. Rather than to inspire a person we are now calling for communities like think tanks, but also schools and ultimately villages, cities and nations in the light of the stars our destiny, and our heritage to become starlit communities; embracing abundance rather than scarcity, so that government, by the people and for the people, is also government by the light of the stars for the people.⁸

Schools of the Stars: Kepler Space Institute and Educational Institutions under the Hypercosmical Reality

Kepler Space Institute is the first specific school of the stars. We anticipate that all schools should really become star schools, perhaps modeled on an orrery, a model of a solar system, rather than more conventional methods. We are at the very beginning of orbiting schools, of satellite schools, occupied by teachers, I mean, of schools on Mars. But we do not have to wait to leave the planet now. We have done that. What we need is to live as Spinoza the philosopher said, *sub specie æternitatis*, under, as it were, the imagery, the gaze, the attitude and the content of the eternal, another image of heaven. The eternal is the beyond time as well as the beyond earth. If we are beyond time then we are infinite in our resourcefulness. So our schools of the stars are not schools where we learn the old reading, writing, and arithmetic. They are schools where we learn social skills, they are schools where we learn about our own body functions, they are schools where we are equipped for a marvelous enjoyment of the journey through life as space citizens. This is tomorrow’s school today.⁹

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About the Authors: Richard Kirby was the co-founder in January 2009 and first President of the Kepler Space Institute. He was a mentor for Dr. Gordon Arthur, editor of this article. Kirby was a cosmic theologian and astronomical chaplain. His most important publications were *The Person in Psychology* and *Individual Differences*, both written with John Radford; *Christians in the World of Computers* with Parker Rossman; and *The Mission of Mysticism*. Kirby also co-wrote *Temples of Tomorrow* with Earl Brewer; *The Leadership of Civilization Building* with Richard J. Spady; and *Nurturing Civilization Building* with Barbara Gilles. His PhD thesis at King’s College, London in 1992 was on the theological definition of cosmic order. Kirby took the ordination course at General Theological Seminary in New York from 1982 to 1985, graduating with an MDiv, and worked in various Church ministries on both sides of the Atlantic for the next 10 years. While finishing his PhD in Christian doctrine and history, he developed a

⁸ Ibid., 47.

⁹ Ibid., 58.

theological think tank that became known as the Stuart C. Dodd Institute for Social Innovation. In 1988, Kirby co-founded the World Network of Religious Futurists. He became its chairman in 1993 and served in this capacity for 12 years, after which he became the organization's chaplain. In 2001 he formed the chaplaincy program for the World Future Society.



Gordon Arthur is the author of *Law, Liberty and Church: Authority and Justice in the Major Churches in England* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006); "The Development of Canonical Jurisprudence in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England", *Ecclesiology* 4 (2008): 308-25, and *On Frustrated Vocation* (Ilford: FeedARead, 2012) He gained a BSc in Physics from Birmingham University in 1984, an MA in Philosophy of Religion from King's College, London in 1998, and a PhD in theology, also from King's College, London in 2004. Gordon is Associate Editor of the *Journal of Space Philosophy*.



Editor's Notes: This is a special article for the *Journal of Space Philosophy* by two professionals who were present at the beginning of Kepler Space Institute. Richard Kirby and Gordon Arthur were the ones who said in late 2008, "We are launching on January 1, 2009. Rich Kirby and I were communicating by e-mail and phone almost daily through 2008 and 2009 until his unfortunate death on 24 September 2009. Only three hours before his death I was recording his spontaneous talk on the phone on the subject of "The Acceleration of Excellence." His delivery was his normal eloquence with no hint of problems. Three hours later Al Dolan called me to advise that he had been taken by a neurological seizure. Dr. Gordon Arthur was a Rich Kirby protégé who moved from England to Canada in 2006. Gordon is the professional editor responsible for the quality you see in all the issues of the *Journal of Space Philosophy*.

Bob Krone.