

## James Allen Dator: A Great Friend, Scholar and Teacher

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Jim Dator is for me a great friend, a great scholar and teacher.

In general terms I would say a great teacher in futures studies for many around the world, including myself. His teaching is centred in Hawaii as professor and director of Hawaii's Center for Futures Studies Department of Political Science, since 1972.

The term futures has been widely spread in the plural by Jim Dator, I would say, as the first scholar in the area, thus stressing the plurality of futures depending on the different choices or happenings in the present, as well as, many times, in the past.

Jim Dator is also Adjunct Professor in the Program of Public Administration, the college of Architecture and the Center of Japanese Studies of the University of Hawaii at Ma; Co-Chair, Space and Society Division, International Space University, Strasbourg, France, former Secretary and then President of World Futures Studies Federation, fellow world Academy of Art and Sciences.

He became Secretary General of the WFSF in 1982 at the WFSF meeting in Stockholm when I was president. WFSF held the next conference in Costa Rica in 1984 and a regional conference in Hawaii in 1986 and then the world conference in Beijing in 1988, always with Jim Dator as secretary general and myself as president. It was a very difficult conference to organize although we had the help of one of our Chinese members. Both Jim and myself travelled to China but more Jim than myself due to his relatively less distance from China than myself in Rome.

In Beijing's General Assembly Jim Dator was elected president of WFSF. The next conference was held in Budapest in 1990 and Jim Dator was confirmed president of WFSF and Pentti Malaska, from Finland, elected secretary general. Pentti was later president of WFSF. This year he has sadly died.

### **In WFSF Jim Dator and I worked very much together and with great understanding between us**

Jim Dator had also worked with a group of people working or interested in futures studies, including my self, that had met in Bucharest in 1972 where we, Jim and I as well as other future members, also started working on preparing the aims and legal bases for WFSF, he then participated in 1973 at the Conference held near Rome, in Frascati on Futures Studies which I organized with the support of IRADES, the institute where I was

working, and he brought from Hawaii and presented some unique films on Futures Studies which were a real anticipation, at the time.

Jim Dator from then on participated in all WFSF conferences and contributed to the formulation of FUTURES in the plural in WFSF name.

Jim Dator has also been teaching in different Universities of US and of the world including in Canada, in Tokyo Rikkijo University, in Korea working also for the government as well as on the future of Korea.

Jim Dator, studies and teaches also Political Science, governance, tourism and space thus showing his worldview and beyond, into space. Futures and beyond humans, are also his interests as shown clearly in his unique endeavours in his work, for example, on ethical relations between humans and robots.

Much of his writing and speaking has also been in Futures Studies and Political Science, thus enlarging his principle interests, even if he also goes beyond these.

Jim Dator has given conferences in many parts of the world ( in forty countries), as examples recently in Romania and Finland.

He has written many book and articles, on Politics of Futures and Political Futures Studies such as "Democracy and Futures" with Mika Mannermma, who sadly left us also this year, and Paula Tiihonen, 2006. He is Editorial Member in various well known futures journals and such as Futures, Foresight, and Technological Foresight and Social Change. Jim Dator also participated in the courses which were held by WFSF with at the Dubrovnik Center in the '70 and '80. I was one of the director's of the courses in futures studies and so was Jim Dator. The students came mostly from countries belonging to the region, at the time, called Eastern European countries such as Romania and Poland etc., but many also from the European Northern countries such as Sweden and Norway etc.

### **Many are his recent publications:**

With Jan Nunley, Many Parts, *One Body: How the Episcopal Church Works*. Church Press, 2010.

*Farthest shores: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century guide to space*. Toronto: Apogee Books, 2009.

*Democracy and Futures*. Helsinki: Parliament of Finland, 2006.

*Fairness, Globalization and Public Institutions: East Asia and Beyond*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006.

This is just a brief presentation of Jim Dator's many activities ,writings and teaching that offers a small picture of all his work. Very large are his activities related to teaching and lectures as well as his great capacity to clarify the area of futures studies with an ample descriptions as well as use of what futures studies really are.

I wish to personally add that Jim Dator has a great capacity of communication in person and in his writings and that his influence on futures studies and on those people that practice it, is very strong be it in research, in writings as well as in teaching futures studies.

I have known Jim Dator for many years, since the '70 and I keep learning from him and I am older than he is. I think I shall go on learning from him. I heard, on my computer, a lecture he recently gave in Finland and it is as usual interesting, easy to follow and stimulating for all that wish to go on thinking about futures in terms of studies, research, teaching and going beyond into thinking of humans and robots relations and humans and space exploration.

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I hope to go on in reading his writings and listening to his different approaches to futures be it in relation to humans, humans and space, humans and robots from different points of view such as ethical as well as artistic points of view.

This brief writing is insufficient in terms of all Jim Dator's capacities, I just hope to have given an idea of such capacities to people that might not have met him yet.

