

## Introduction to the Festschrift for Jim Dator

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It was our pleasure to collect these articles as a Festschrift for Jim Dator. This Festschrift is a celebration of the life work and influence of a man who is still very much alive and still thriving at 80 years of age. He will undoubtedly outlive some of his students, and hopefully the EverReady rabbit, as well. This is our congratulatory offering to our teacher and mentor, and these essays and articles represents three generations of futurists. This special edition contains essay contributions from two of his contemporaries, futures studies pioneers Eleonora Barbieri Masini and Wendell Bell. Masini, one of the first presidents of the World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF), shares details of her professional journey with Jim through four decades of work in the global futures studies community. Similarly, Bell shares anecdotes from his own experiences with Jim and the Manoa School. They are representative of the larger field of futures studies scholars, and of the WFSF, an organization to which Jim has devoted considerable energy over the past four decades (formerly President and Secretary General; now member of the WFSF Executive Board). Second-generation futurists Sohail Inayatullah and Christopher Jones share here their stories of coming of age in the Hawaii futures program and relate how Jim has contributed to and influenced their lives.

The second wave of Manoa School graduates is represented by Debora Halbert and Jordi Serra. Dr. Halbert not only reflects on the serendipity of ending up in the futures program, but also explores the future of the Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies (HRCFS) and futures studies in Hawaii. Serra takes his usual satirical and critical look at Dator, his followers, and students. Third wave/generation former students is represented by John Sweeney, Jake Dunagan, and Seong Won Park. Sweeney looks at Dator through the lens of existentialism and robotics. Dunagan explores Dator as a living embodiment of futures studies—assessing the extent to which the man practices what he preaches. We also offer you more academic pieces influenced by Dator’s vision: Seong Won Park on a more contemplative comparison of alternative futures and Chuang-Tzu. Shermom Cruz’s four alternative futures also offers an application of one of the central methods to come from the

Manoa School and Dator—the alternative futures perspective.

We see this special edition as a beginning of a Festschrift celebrating Jim’s life, vision, and the anniversary of the HRCFS. We hope to bring more scholarly research, essays, and examples of Jim’s students’ work in future editions of the *Journal of Futures Studies*. We’d like to thank the editorial staff of the *Journal* for their support for our effort. It would be tempting to end this introduction with one of Dator’s Laws, such as the Second Law: “any useful statement about the future should appear ridiculous.” But instead let us say that these essays express appreciation for a rare spirit whose work will reverberate forward in both humor and insight across all our futures, whether ridiculous or profound.

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