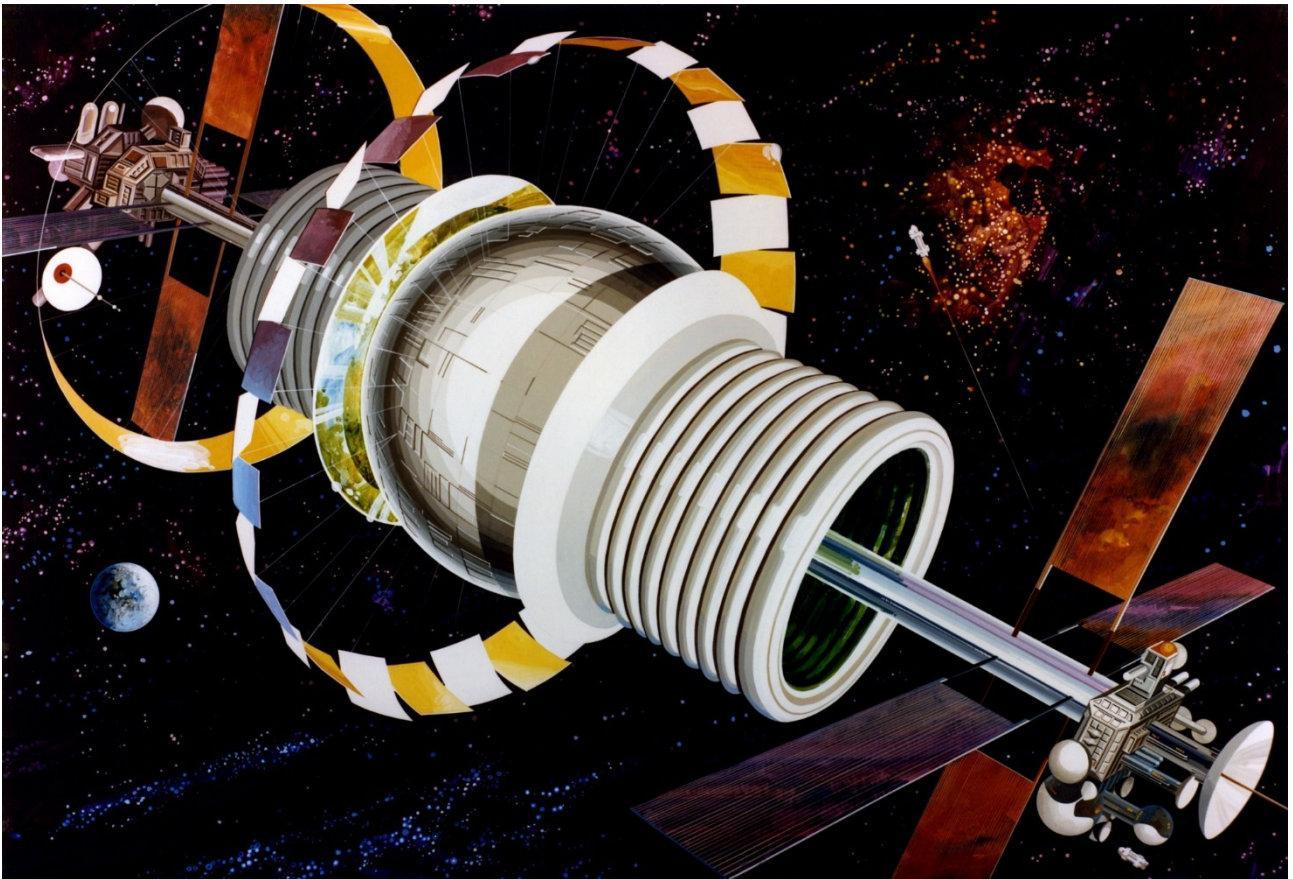


GERARD K. O'NEILL WAS NOT HONORED AS DESERVED, SO FAR... BUT MAYBE IT'S NOT TOO LATE!



SRI NEWSLETTER – April 26 2026
by Adriano V. Autino

While doing research during the works of the SRI 4th World Congress, I am trying to deepen my knowledge of the immense work done by Gerard K. O'Neill and his Space Studies Institute (SSI) during the second half of the past century.

Gerry took the work where Tsiolkovsky, Oberth, von Braun, and others had left it, on the great theme of rotating habitats in free space. And more, the SSI, founded by him, has developed an incredible amount of very high-profile studies about space manufacturing ^[1], covering many aspects of living in free-space habitats. Not only scientific and technical issues. According to the O'Neill teachings—as his main references, like Krafft Ehrlicke and others, had done—human requirements, attention to life and health protection, human rights, and social needs informed all of the developed studies and conceptual design.

Great outreachers like Isaac Asimov, Arthur Clarke, and Stanley Kubrick were ready to follow O'Neill and promote his concepts in their artworks and in their interviews to TV and media magazines.

Not so the space agencies. While making studies and keeping research activities on the O'Neill's themes, his "Islands" in space never got real priority in NASA's plans. Supporters of space expansion, including those with influence at the agency, have not pushed this issue hard enough. More than 50 years after the publication of the High Frontier^[2], no experimentation with simulated gravity was initiated, or even just planned.

Many trillions of dollars are being wasted each year on death weapon systems! Our civilization seems unable (culturally? morally? both?) to properly honor its highest profiles and to allow them to help real sustainable development.

Humanity has now initiated to ask artificial intelligence oracles for giving responses to many high-profile and trivial questions. Yet, we are still not able to use some responses given by some very great human intelligences, like Gerry O'Neill.

Isn't that a shame? Shouldn't we get down to working flat out to recover this huge delay??

Institutions are reluctant to move from the old space exploration-only paradigm to the new one, encompassing space settlement. Yet, history is moving ahead. The ARTEMIS and the ILRS coalitions are working to establish permanent human bases on the Moon and to kick off the cislunar economy.

Shouldn't O'Neill's concepts and the SSI's works be part of such a great development??

We, at SRI, are doing our best. And we call the whole space community O'Neill's pupils to join us in this worthy activity.

In our SRI 4th World Congress (SRIC4), taking place virtually from 30 June to 4 July, we have several sessions and panels discussing simulated gravity and free-space habitats. Hopefully we'll come up with good proposals and planning for the next 5 years.

Also see this documentary: "Colonies in Space - The High Frontier: The Untold Story of Gerard K. O'Neill"^[3]

Register for the SRI 4th World Congress, to take place virtually from 30 June to 4 July 2026!

<https://spacerenaissance.space/sric4-registration/>

Let's work together to make a great congress!

[Join the Space Renaissance!](#)

¹ <https://ssi.org/ssi-conference-abstracts/>

² O'Neill, Gerard K. "The High Frontier: Human Colonies in Space" <https://www.amazon.com/High-Frontier-Human-Colonies-Space/dp/1686872720/>

³ "Colonies in Space - The High Frontier: The Untold Story of Gerard K. O'Neill" <https://youtu.be/TGtbHn76HwU>