

# Contributors

**David Christian** began his career as a historian and scholar of Russian history; since then he has been one of the founders of the emerging discipline of Big History. In 1989 he began teaching the first course on the topic, examining history from the Big Bang to the present using a multidisciplinary approach with the assistance of scholars in diverse specializations from the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. He served as founding president of the International Big History Association. His best-selling Teaching Company course entitled Big History caught the attention of philanthropist Bill Gates, who is funding Christian's efforts to develop a program to bring the course to secondary-school students worldwide. He retired in 2021 and is now an Emeritus Professor of Macquarie University. His publications include: *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*, 2005; *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything*, 2014; *Origin Story: A Big History of Everything*, 2018; and *Future Stories: What's Next*, 2022.

**Anton L. Grinin** is a research fellow at Moscow State University and National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. With a Ph.D. in biology, his academic interests include bioethics, evolutionary and future studies, the history and philosophy of technology, and globalization. He specializes in the technological revolution unfolding in the 21st century, especially in cybernetics. These events will result in the profound transformation of the economy and society, posing ethical-legal and other risks. Anton also investigates correlations between the Cybernetic Revolution, Kondratieff waves, and issues of global aging. The author of more than fifty publications in Russian and English, including two monographs, he has won the Gold Kondratieff Young Scholars Medal and the Alexander Belyaev Literature Award.

**Leonid E. Grinin** is Director of Uchitel Publishing, Volgograd, Russia. Beginning as a teacher in rural schools, he founded his publishing firm to develop educational materials in the 1980s. He then completed a Ph.D. at Moscow State University and expanded Uchitel to serve a global market in Russian and English. A sociologist, philosopher of history, and economist, his work focuses on identifying regularities of macroevolution. Among his thirty monographs are *From Confucius to Comte: The Formation of the Theory, Methodology and Philosophy of History* (2012, in Russian); *Macrohistory and Globalization* (2012); and *The Big History of the Universe's Development: Cosmic Evolution* (2013, in Russian). Leonid co-authored *Great Divergence and Great Convergence: A Global Perspective* (2015) and co-edits the international journals, *Social Evolution and History* and *Journal of Globalization Studies*. A founding member and Deputy Director of the Eurasian

Center for Megahistory & System Forecasting, access to his portal, *Social Studies*.

**John Hasse**, Ph.D. AICP is a professor of geography and Director of the Geospatial Research Lab in the Department of Geography, Planning & Sustainability at Rowan University where he teaches various courses in geography, GIS and planning. Hasse's research interest focuses on land use geography and the interface of land use, environmental planning and spatial analysis. Hasse has taught courses in geography, planning and GIS where he integrates the big picture perspectives of geography and Big History with the applied tools of planning for designing a more resilient future land system. Professor Hasse integrates these same interests in his research where he has been conducting an on-going multi-decade analysis of urbanization and open space loss in New Jersey and studies the environmental impacts of future development buildout. Hasse has established the NJ MAP project, an award-winning online interactive atlas of New Jersey's environmental data. For the past decade Hasse has been teaching a course that tells the story of planet earth that integrates the time dimensions of Big History with the spatial dimensions of geography. Central to this work is the perspective of humans as the storytelling species.

**Gregg Henriques** is Professor of Graduate Psychology at James Madison University in the Combined Doctoral Program in Clinical and School Psychology. He received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Vermont and did his post-doctoral training at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a theoretical psychologist and has developed the "Unified Theory of Knowledge," which is a consilient scientific humanistic worldview to unify psychology. He is the author of *A New Unified Theory of Psychology* (Springer, 2011), and *A New Synthesis for Solving the Problem of Psychology: Addressing the Enlightenment Gap* (Palgrave MacMillan, November 2022). His scholarly work has been published in the field's best journals, and he has developed a popular blog on Psychology Today, *Theory of Knowledge*, which has received over nine million views. He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the 2022 President of the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration, and founded the Unified Theory of Knowledge academic society, which hosted the 2023 UTOK Conference, *Consilience: Unifying Knowledge and Orienting Toward a Wisdom Commons*.

**Gerard Jagers Op Akkerhuis**. Evolutionist and system scientist. Driven by a lifelong passion for evolution and complexity, Gerard studies the past, present and the future of the universe. A unique aspect of Gerard's work is the use of a modern, scientific version of the classical 'Scala

Naturae' called the 'Operator Hierarchy'. This hierarchy offers a fundamental mechanistic basis for the classification of objects in the world, connects the evolution of the abiotic world with that of the biotic world, and suggests extrapolations beyond the current horizon of evolution. This hierarchy also serves as a basis for defining the concepts of 'organism' and of 'life'.

Gerard received his masters in Wageningen (1986, Cum Laude), received his first PhD in Ecotoxicology (Wageningen, 1993) and, seventeen years later, his second PhD in philosophy (Nijmegen, 2010). Gerard has written over 100 publications and several books: "The operator hierarchy", "The pursuit of complexity", "Evolution and transitions in complexity" and "ScienceBites". He has been interviewed by a national newspaper in the series about "Controversial thinkers whose ideas can change our vision of the world". His work has been discussed on radio and television.

**Hirofumi Katayama** 片山博文 is professor at J.F. Oberlin University, Tokyo, where he specializes in environmental economics. He organized and teaches one of the first big history courses in Japan <<http://obhp.org>>. In 2019, he and Nobuo Tsujimura organized the first Japanese Big History symposium, Big History and Liberal Arts, hosted by J.F. Oberlin University. Hiro's goal is to construct a 'Buddhist Big History,' which is based on the respect for all life and existence. His publications include Politics of Climate Change over the Arctic: Preliminary Thoughts on the Global Commons (Bunshindo 2014) and Free Market and the Commons: An Introduction to Environmental Finance (Jichosha 2008). His e-mail address is <[katayama@obirin.ac.jp](mailto:katayama@obirin.ac.jp)>.

**David LePoire** researches, develops and applies science principles in environmental issues, Big History evolutionary trends, and particle scattering. He has a BS in physics from CalTech, a Ph.D. in computer science from DePaul University, and over thirty years experience at the Argonne National Laboratory in the development of scientific analyses, software, training, and modeling. His research includes Big History synergistic trends among energy, environment, organization, and information.

**Ken Solis** is a retired internist and ER physician with a master's degree in bioethics. His long trips to and from work over the years also gave him many hours to listen to lectures on other fields in the sciences, philosophy, and

history. By coincidence, he was teaching "A Brief History of the Universe" to adults before he encountered David Christian's big history lectures for "The Great Courses." His special interest in big history is what thermodynamics, information theory, and complexity science might reveal about how systems have, depending on the circumstance, progressed, regressed, and diversified over time. He has also applied these disciplines to the formulation of an information-centric ethical theory that was published in JBH.

**Tyler Volk**, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies, New York University. At the scale of 4 billion years, the scale of life on Earth, he looks for new models and draws links across various disciplines. Author of Quarks to Culture: How We Came to Be (2017) and Metapatterns: Across, Space, Time, and Mind (1995), here Volk, a self-described "patternologist," compares his tripartite system of dynamic realms with the working conceptual structures currently deployed in the field of big history.