

The Story of the Sky and How We Reached It
By Kane Agan

Too often it seems that the idea of space exploration is corrupted or discarded from public opinion based on three main contentions: it is a matter of the past, it is optional, it is useless. As Al Reisz clarifies in his informative and inspiring speech at the Edge of Chaos, space exploration is none of these things, nor can we afford to think of them in that way anymore. The increasingly prevalent truth is that space exploration is a necessity for our perpetuation as a species, and almost equally, the advancement of our knowledge. The reality of the situation is that space exploration gives back to humanity infinitely more than humanity puts into the practice. From space exploration we have seen the emergence of the modern technological era.



The advances made when humans were exploring space led to the development of microchips and the advancement and development of countless pieces of modern technology in the civilian and medical field. We have learned more about radiation and biotechnology in a more compact timeframe than we have in years of exploration on Earth. The poet Rumi once said "Only from the heart can you touch the sky." That may seem like an unconventional idea. To most of us, the brain seems the most important part of reaching the sky. Could it still be true that the heart can

reach the sky? Perhaps that question can best be answered by our speaker, the visionary Al Reisz.

One of the propulsion engineers originally responsible for manned space travel Reisz, points out, engineers like himself are only one pieces of the "series of unlikely and extraordinary events" that lead to humans reaching the moon. He lives his life as a contribution to human space travel, one of the most underrated philanthropies and with other space pioneers, continues to blaze into the mysterious, confounding future. While the Edge of Chaos is not shy to hosting speakers who are working their way in to the fabric of human history, Mr. Reisz is a true gem among them. While much of Mr. Reisz's story was of the past, perhaps the most enlightening and fascinating concepts explored were those of the future, as he discussed human's future in space. Perhaps living on Mars as early as 2030. Though he has decades of technical experience sending humans and rockets into space, he speaks with an almost child-like wonder, and yet conveys a sense of indisputable wisdom as he speaks of space, and all that we can accomplish from it. He cites the massive amount of human achievements that have come from space travel from nuclear energy to advances in medicine once thought impossible. Space travel presents a near impossible challenge, so perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that the benefits are so miraculous. And more are yet to come with more manned missions to space. He also cites numerous conversations with Niel DeGrasse Tyson, where they discuss the contact they believe humans will one day inevitably have with alien life. Both Reisz and Tyson believe that once we pass the interfering radiation field beyond our solar



system we may encounter another form of life. What a wonder that space travel can allow us the concrete benefit better lives on earth, and at the same time accomplish things we had only dreamed of.

So it is clear, then, that space exploration has to become more than a curiosity, it has to become a reality. It has to be more than the musings of a few idealists, and has to be made tangible by iron towers and roaring rockets. It has to evolve from the twinkle in a dreamer's eye, to the twinkle of distant stars, that man has never seen. Perhaps it will take more than the heart to reach the sky. But if we don't have our dreams to galvanize reality, or our reality to shelter dreams- if we do not have the divine relation of the two- the stars will remain untouched. Will we allow them to remain untouched?