

Immanuel Velikovsky's Worlds in Collision; Messiah or Madman?

By Neel Roberts

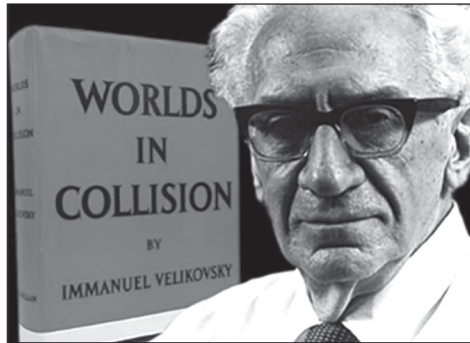
Immanuel Velikovsky is not as well known today as he was in the latter 1900's. In the late '60s, North American was in a "mini renaissance" with the peace undertaking of the hippies and those baby boomers later went on to run our society with some of those memories.

Dr. Immanuel Velikovsky was standing in traffic when the vacuum to his ideas sucked up much of his work. Velikovsky was trained as a medical doctor from his home country Russia but was a career Psychologist and author when he moved to the United States before World War II. He is best known for his New York Times bestseller 1950 book "World's in Collision" which topped the charts for eleven weeks while being in the top ten for 27 straight weeks.

He hypothesized that around the 15th century BC an electromagnetic derangement of the solar system caused Venus and Mars to approach the Earth closely, disturbing its rotation, axis inclination, and magnetic field.

While it raked in sales, his popularity hit decades later as the youth were experimenting with mind expanding drugs and Velikovsky's wild ideas fitted the psychedelic movement perfectly. If you watch his lectures of that era <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x369jad>, he captivates his audience like a spirit from the sky and even had the attention of Albert Einstein. Charles Leroy Ellenberger read the book in 1969 and became an instant top fan. A loyal advocate and confidant to Velikovsky for over 10 years, he started to change his mind with new evidence contradicting his earlier beliefs and by 1982 he turned into a critic of Velikovsky. At 83 years old, Ellenberger is still a staunch detractor and according to <https://www.velikovskyy.info> maintains "that Velikovsky's scientific claims were baseless."

The late paleontologist, biologist Dr. Stephen Jay Gould summed him up best.



"Velikovsky is neither crank nor charlatan -- although to state my opinion and to quote one of my colleagues, he is at least gloriously wrong."

Couldn't be put better. I personally don't find Velikovsky a messiah or madman but more of a classic "gonzo" journalist which should be protected as free speech. Let's face it if both Gould and Velikovsky were alive and saw the "off the chart" censorship we live in today, they'd be more alarmed at that and would likely unite against such tyranny. The '60s peace movement both these men lived through diametrically opposed this suppressive despotism and this is today's challenge. "The Best is Yet to Come!"

Sky watch for the next month: Download this month's sky free schedule at <http://whatsouttonight.com/Resources/202307julWOTSky.pdf>, <https://in-the-sky.org/newscal.php?month=7&year=2023&maxdiff=6#datesel>, <https://www.heavens-above.com/SkyChart.aspx>.

- 1 Venus at Greatest Brightness- Sunday, July 09th before sundown, look West as it will be up until 2316. https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20230709_11_100.
- 2 Dawn Pleiades and Moon Conjunction- Thursday, July 13th a few hours before dawn look NEE.
- 3 Mercury, Venus Mars set at dusk - Wednesday, July 26th after 21:30 look NWW as this trio sets into the night an

hour later. https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20230726_20_100.

- 4 Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower Peak- Sunday Jul 30th until the end of the month, look in the constellation Aquarius 1-2 hours before dawn as it expected debris from comet 96P Machholz will fall at a rate of 15-20 per hour and the near full Moon will reduce visibility. https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20230730_10_100.

For This Month's Events Check the Calendar- <https://calgary.rasc.ca/calendar2023.htm#Jul> and YouTuber Late Night Astronomy <https://www.youtube.com/@LateNightAstronomy/videos>

Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis- Milky Way Nights-

There will be an array of scopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the RASC Calgary. In the sky, to the near new moon, the dark sky condi-

tions are perfect for viewing the summer sky. Soaring above is the eagle constellation which brightest star is the young herdsman Altair who falls in love with Vega as she weaves the fabric of the universe. You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, indoor presentation and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions on Thursday July 13th to Saturday 15th, 2023, 11:00 p.m.-3:00 a.m. The entrance fee \$10 per person and can be purchased at <https://www.eventbrite.ca>. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca, (403) 931-2366. Their website <https://science.ucalgary.ca/rothney-observatory> is updated regularly.

Happy Long Days of Summer and Keep Reaching for the Sky!

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