

THOMAS HOMER-DIXON

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# THE INGENUITY GAP

FACING THE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND OTHER CHALLENGES OF  
AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND UNPREDICTABLE WORLD

WITH A  
NEW AFTERWORD



# Ingenuity Gap How Can We Solve The Problems Of The Future

**Thomas Homer-Dixon**



## **Ingenuity Gap How Can We Solve The Problems Of The Future:**

**The Ingenuity Gap** Thomas Homer-Dixon, 2001-05-15 Human beings have been smart enough to turn nature to their ends generate vast wealth for themselves and double their average life span But are they smart enough to solve the problems of the 21st century Thomas Homer Dixon In *The Ingenuity Gap* Thomas Homer Dixon global guru the Toronto Star asks is our world becoming too complex too fast paced to manage The challenges facing us converge intertwine and remain largely beyond our ken Most of suspect the experts don't really know what's going on that as a species we've released forces that are neither managed nor manageable We are fast approaching a time when we may no longer be able to control a world that increasingly exceeds our grasp This is the ingenuity gap the term coined by Thomas Homer Dixon the critical gap between our need for practical innovative ideas to solve complex problems and our actual supply of those ideas Through gripping narrative stories and incidents that exemplify his arguments he takes us on a world tour that begins with a heartstopping description of the tragic crash of United Airlines Flight 232 from Denver to Chicago and includes Las Vegas in its desert a wilderness beach in British Columbia and his solitary search for a little girl in Patna India He shows how in our complex world while poor countries are particularly vulnerable to ingenuity gaps our own rich countries are not immune and we are caught between a requirement for ingenuity and an increasingly uncertain supply When the gap widens political disintegration and violent upheaval can result reaching into our own economies and daily lives in subtle ways In compelling lucid prose he makes real the problems we face and suggests how we might overcome them

**The Ingenuity Gap** Thomas Homer-Dixon, 2010-01-29 As crises multiply ingenuity lags This prescient classic explains why societies falter when problems outpace solutions and offers a roadmap to close the gap before risks from climate shocks pandemics inequality and AI spiral beyond control First published at the turn of the millennium *The Ingenuity Gap* by Thomas Homer Dixon anticipated the turbulent world we now inhabit pandemics climate disasters political polarization disruptive runaway technologies and escalating global instability With remarkable foresight Homer Dixon warned that the complexity of our problems would accelerate faster than our collective ingenuity to solve them and that failure to close this gap would leave societies fragile and exposed A quarter century later his vision has proven prophetic Homer Dixon takes readers on a global tour of ingenuity under pressure from the desperate improvisation of pilots fighting to land United Airlines Flight 232 in Iowa to the water hungry expansion of Las Vegas to a harrowing search for a missing child in Patna and the collapse of Canada's cod fisheries Vivid and far reaching it is a sweeping portrait of what happens when societies are stretched beyond their capacity to adapt and an enlightening case for why ingenuity is humanity's most vital resource Celebrating over twenty five years in print *The Ingenuity Gap* remains both a visionary diagnosis of our age and a call to reimagine how we generate creativity resilience and leadership in uncertain times

**Privatizing Peace: From Conflict to Security** Allan Gerson, Nat Colletta, 2022-06-08 *Privatizing Peace From Conflict to Security* pinpoints the weaknesses in the numerous peacekeeping missions of recent

decades as well as the blind spots in the thinking that guided them Even more significantly they clearly demonstrate the ways in which well meaning stabilization and reconstruction programs fail to accommodate the economic and social imperatives of war torn societies But this visionary work is not merely an indictment of First World myopia in the face of Third World devastation The authors offer cogent well thought out recommendations firmly grounded in current reality with a powerful determination to avoid the repetition of past mistakes Published under the Transnational Publishers imprint

**Feeding the Future** Andrew Heintzman,Evan Solomon,2006 Outlines practical solutions to global food supply problems in the twenty first century suggesting relevant ways to address key issues related to food safety conservation global trade and more Original *The Ingenuity Gap* Thomas Homer-Dixon,2002-08-13 Despite all of society s advances our problems proliferate Wars abound environmental degradation accelerates economies topple overnight and pandemics such as AIDS and tuberculosis continue to spread The Internet and other media help to disseminate knowledge but they ve also created an info glut and left us too little time to process it What s more advances in technology have made the world so bewilderingly fast paced and complex that fewer people are able even to grasp the problems let alone generate solutions That space between the problems that arise and our ability to solve them is the ingenuity gap and as we careen towards an increasingly harried and hectic future the gap seems only to widen As he explores the possible consequences of this gap Thomas Homer Dixon offers an absorbing assessment of the state of the world and our ability to fix it Culling from an astounding array of fields from economics to evolution political science to paleontology computers to communications he integrates his vast knowledge into an accessible and engaging argument This is a book with profound implications for everyone that we can ill afford to ignore

**Environmental Change and Security Project Report** ,2001 **Fueling the Future** Andrew Heintzman,Evan Solomon,2005 A collection of essays that examines forms of alternate energy and promising new energy technologies which are cleaner safer and more reliable than oil *Journal of International Affairs* ,2002 **Issues in Science and Technology** ,2000 The Future Public Health Hanlon, Phil,Carlisle, Sandra,Lyon, Andrew,2012-03-01 This is a public health text aimed at bridging the gap between current public health values and skills and those required to tackle future challenges **Canadian Book Review Annual** Joyce M. Wilson,2002-06 **Long range planning** Strategic Planning Society,European Planning Federation,2002 **Speaking of Success** Pamela Wallin,2002-04-10 Here Pamela Wallin shares her own perspectives on success and also explores the diverse insights of her many and varied guests over the years This new paperback edition includes a new introduction by the author You will hear a vast and eclectic array of voices Inspired by thousands of hours of conversation Pamela has collected the evidence that living life successfully and with purpose may be simpler than it seems While success has many definitions she has discovered through these encounters that it s not about finding the Holy Grail of fame and fortune but rather about becoming a successful human being and finding new ways to measure your own achievements and contributions A refreshing and challenging look at the meaning of success

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**Science and Technology** ,2000 The Future Public Health Hanlon, Phil,Carlisle, Sandra,Lyon, Andrew,2012-03-01 This is a public health text aimed at bridging the gap between current public health values and skills and those required to tackle future challenges

**Canadian Book Review Annual** Joyce M. Wilson,2002-06 **Long range planning** Strategic Planning Society,European Planning Federation,2002 **Speaking of Success** Pamela Wallin,2002-04-10 Here Pamela Wallin shares her own perspectives on success and also explores the diverse insights of her many and varied guests over the years

This new paperback edition includes a new introduction by the author You will hear a vast and eclectic array of voices Inspired by thousands of hours of conversation Pamela has collected the evidence that living life successfully and with purpose may be simpler than it seems While success has many definitions she has discovered through these encounters that it s not about finding the Holy Grail of fame and fortune but rather about becoming a successful human being and finding new ways to measure your own achievements and contributions A refreshing and challenging look at the meaning of success

An Illustrated Short History of Progress Ronald Wright,2006 In these acclaimed CBC Massey Lectures Ronald Wright argues that each time history repeats itself the price goes up The twentieth century was a time of runaway growth in human population consumption and technology placing a colossal load on all natural systems He demonstrates how our modern predicament is as old as civilization a 10 000 year experiment we have participated in but seldom controlled Only by understanding the patterns of human triumph and disaster can we recognize the experiment s inherent dangers and shape its outcome Wright s provocative text evokes striking images across time and space starting with Paul Gauguin s painting *D O Venons Nous Que Sommes Nous O Allons Nous* Where do we come from What are we Where are we going three questions that perfectly summarize the focus of his lectures In this new edition illuminating illustrations and sidebars complement Wright s arguments and allow readers to witness further evidence supporting his cautionary tale pub desc *Global Issues and Change* Boyd Johnson (Ph. D.),John S Johnson (Ph. D.),2004 Adbusters ,2002 Confronting New Realities Juma Volter Mwapachu,2005 In 1986 Tanzania agreed with the IMF and the World Bank to pursue robust social and economic reforms in light of the serious decline in the performance of the economy with the objective of achieving sustainable economic growth At a political level a multi party system was introduced and the first multi party elections held since 1962 took place in 1995 and again in 2005 This book examines in considerable depth the political and economic changes that have taken place in this period of reform It highlights both the achievements and the challenges that remain particularly those brought about by new and dynamic phase of globalisation in areas such as trade and investment The author articulates perspectives on the democratisation and governance trajectories the country should pursue to attain a more prosperous economic status whilst sustaining the unity peace and diversity that have characterised the country since independence

**Making the Net Work** Vidhya Alakeson,2003 ICTs notably the Internet and mobile telephone are transforming the way we live and work our social relationships and communities even our impact on the environment They are changing the very nature of human communication Making the Net Work looks in detail at the defining characteristics of the digital society and suggests that ICT equips us better than at any previous point in the industrial age to face the challenges of sustainable development The authors explore four features of our digital society networks information trust and speed and conclude that the society thus described is ultimately one of greater choice and power for all For this reason adopting shared social values is crucial for sustainable development Making the Net Work asks for our participation and commitment to just such values and presents practical solutions and opportunities to involve businesses governments consumers and citizens alike Book jacket **IGCC Newswired** , Long Range Planning Society for Long Range Planning,European Planning Federation,1968

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