

Alternative Images for The Future of Cities

UH Futures Gathering:
*City Making in the 21st Century –
Designing Urban Futures*
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Mental Time Travel

- A method for intuitive “remote viewing” images of plausible alternative futures
- Where you see and *feel* the likely impacts different scenarios and/or outcomes of choosing one strategy or path of action over another
- Can be used iteratively for impacts on self, team, company, customer, competitor, ecology
- A journal article that tells you how to do it:
[Mental time travel: A practical business and personal research tool for looking ahead](#), (O. Markley, *Journal of Futures*, 2007)

Agenda

- Introduction
- Found media images of the past & future of “civilization” (root definition: living in cities)
- Archetypes for visioning
 - Scenario archetypes
 - Wild-Card archetypes
 - Panarchy & the Cycle of Adaptation
- Specific scenario sets for visioning
- Mental Time Travel process for visioning
- Experiential visioning of the future of cities
- Sharing / Q&A

First, a bit of history...

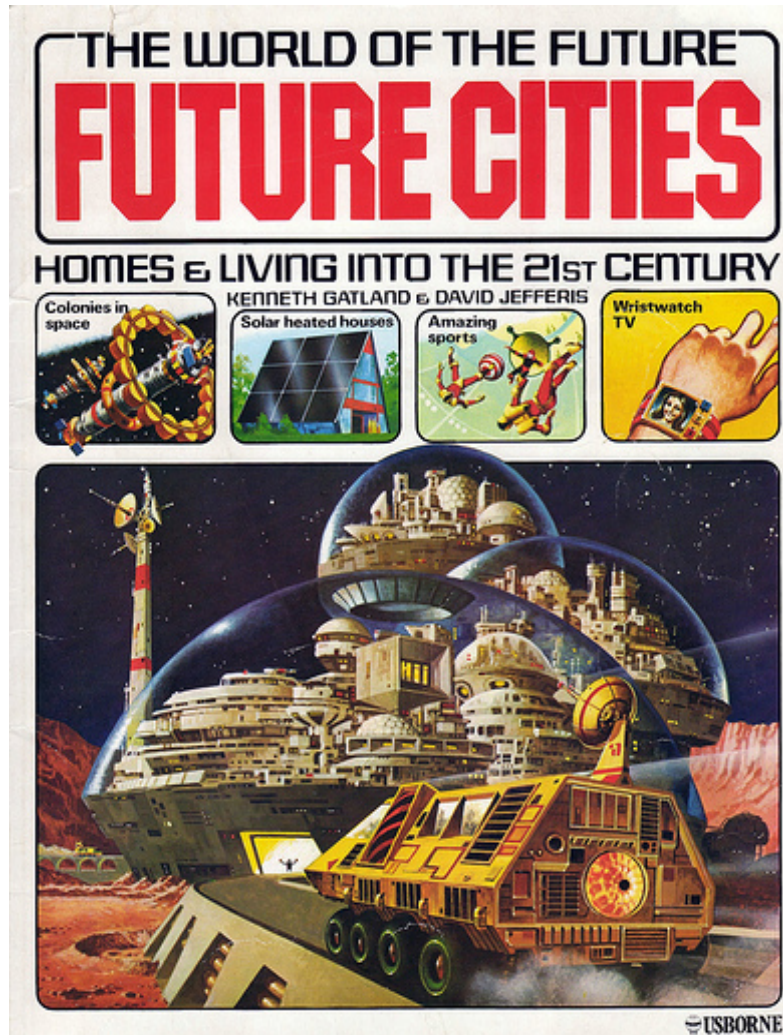
“The Edifice” sequence from Saul Bass’
Oscar-winning short, *Why Man Creates*.

4 min. video at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=3nHOWkfGFsk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nHOWkfGFsk)

What type of help
is most needed?

(Obviously) Alternative Futures Research




Christopher Barnatt
www.ExplainingTheFuture.com
on
“Future Cities”


5:18 min. video at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=NmRoc7_jVdo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmRoc7_jVdo)

A “Best Practice Benchmark” for Futures Students?




ExplainingTheFuture.com®




A Future Shaper's Toolbox by Christopher Barnatt





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[25 Things You Need to Know About the Future](#)
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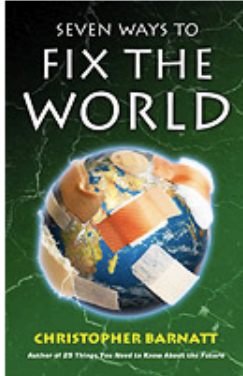


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[Seven Ways to Fix the World](#)
CHRISTOPHER BARNATT
Author of 25 Things You Need to Know About the Future



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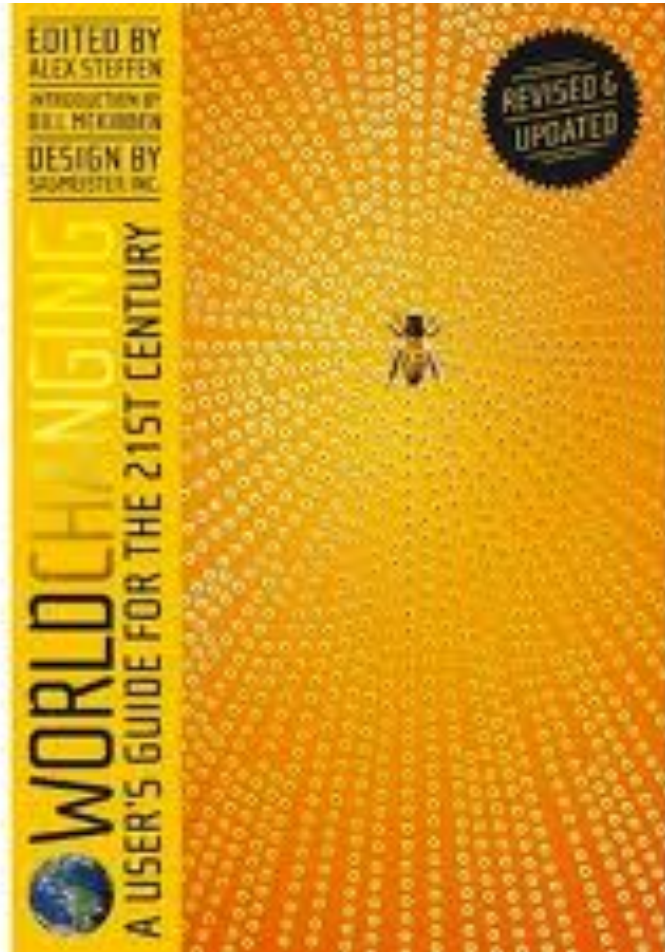
Alex Steffen

on 'The Shareable Future of Cities'

10:13 video at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjDjbJJlqZ0>

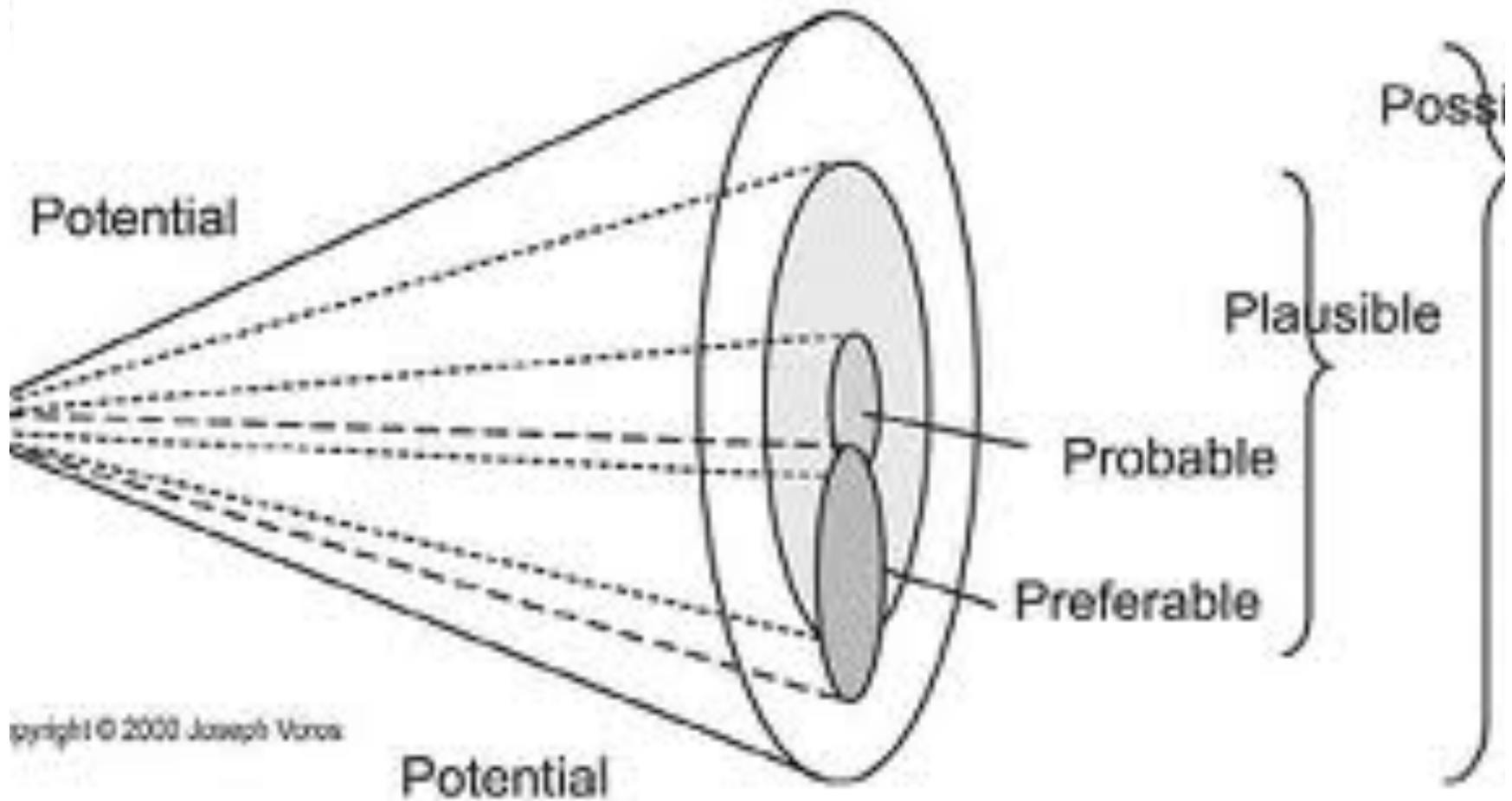
WorldChanging 2.0 - Another 'Best Practice' Benchmark for Futures Students?



Also see Steffen's
17:31 min. TED talk on
'World Changing'
at the lower side of page
in
<http://www.alexsteffen.com>

Archetypes for Visioning

Probability Cone of Alternative Futures



“Archetypal” Scenario Themes and the “Aspirational Futures” Method (Institute for Alternative Futures)

- “Jim Dator's Alternative Futures and the Path to IAF's Aspirational Futures” (Bezold, 2009)
<http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/14-2/E01.pdf>
- “Aspirational Futures” (Bezold, 2009)
<http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/13-4/AE06.pdf>

Sets of Scenario Archetypes

Dator (1977)

1. Continued Growth
2. Collapse
3. A Conserver Society
4. The Transformational Society

Bezold (2009)

1. Expected (PTE)
2. Challenging (fearful)
3. Aspirational (hopeful)
4. Audaciously aspirational (visionary)

Wild-Card Archetypes

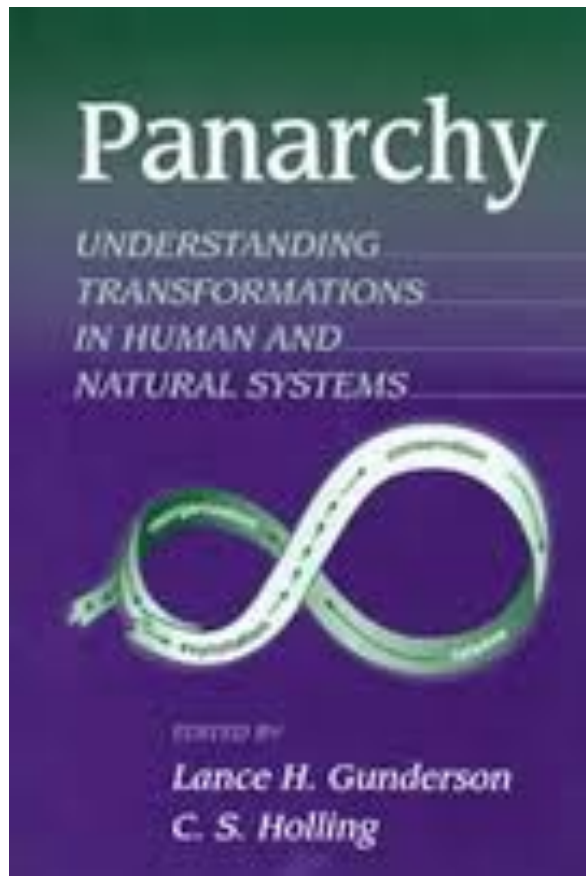
- Type I – Low Probability
High Credibility
- Type II – High Probability
Low Credibility
- Type III – High Probability
Disputed Credibility
- Type IV – High Probability
Agreed Upon Credibility

A good historical example is global warming and climate change.

Source: O. Markley, [A New Methodology for Anticipating STEEP Surprises](#), *Technology Forecasting & Social Change* (2011).

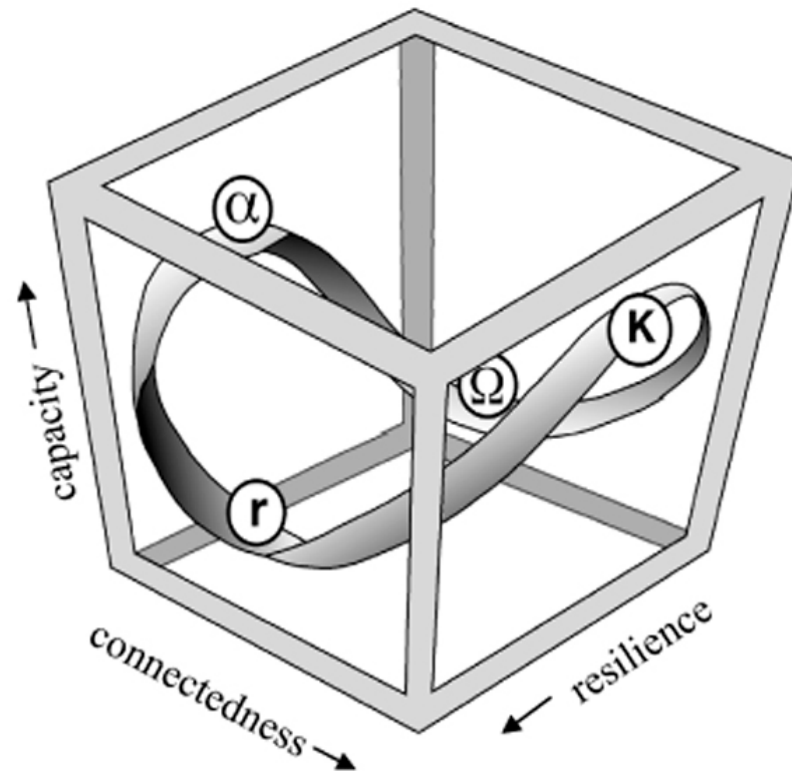
Panarchy & The Cycle of Adaptation:

A Type II Wild Card Theory of Overarching Importance for the Future of Cities



- *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems* (Gunderson & Holling, 2001)
- The Resilience Alliance
www.resalliance.org/

The Cycle of Adaptation from Panarchy Theory

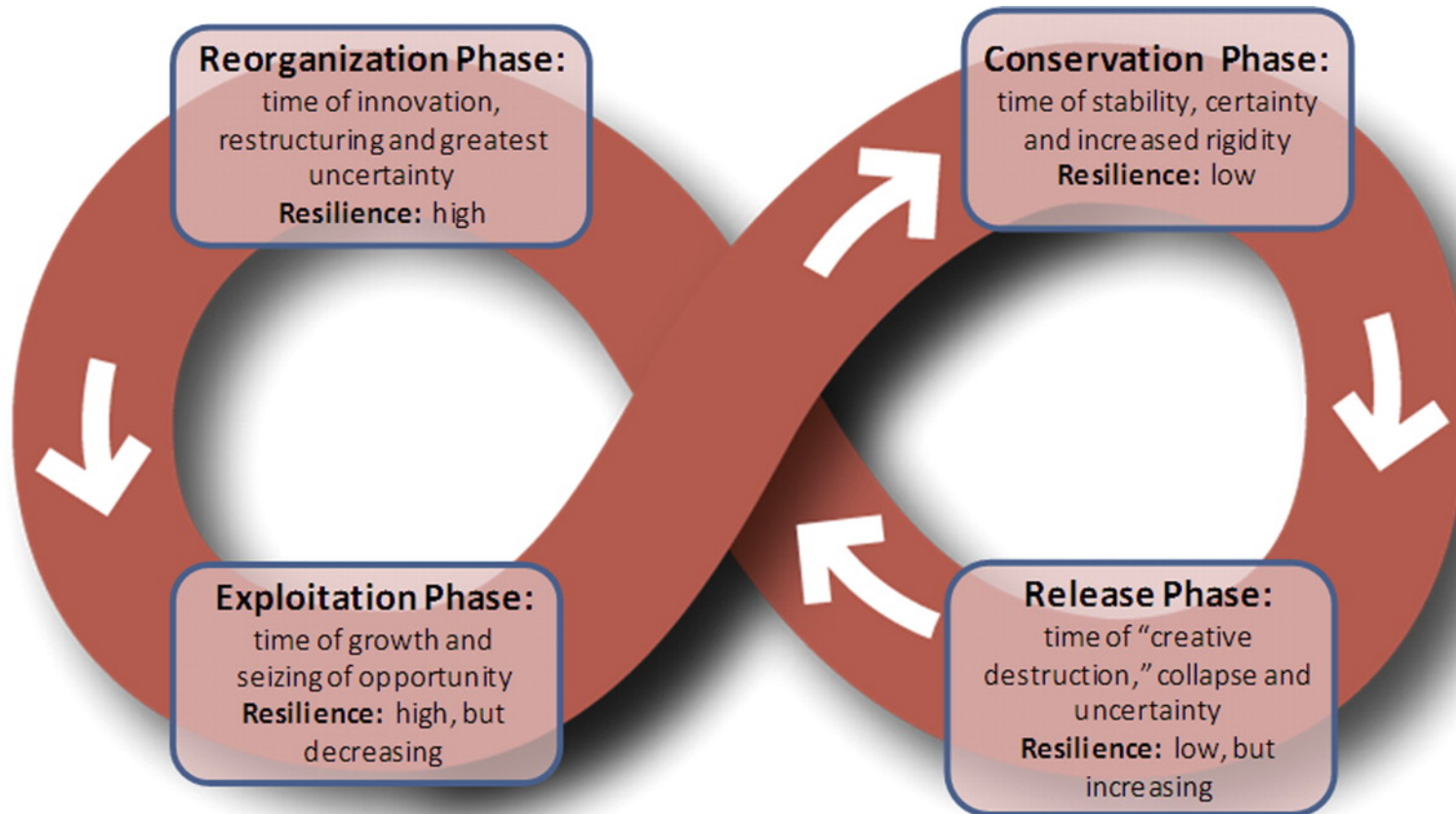


Source: *Panarchy*

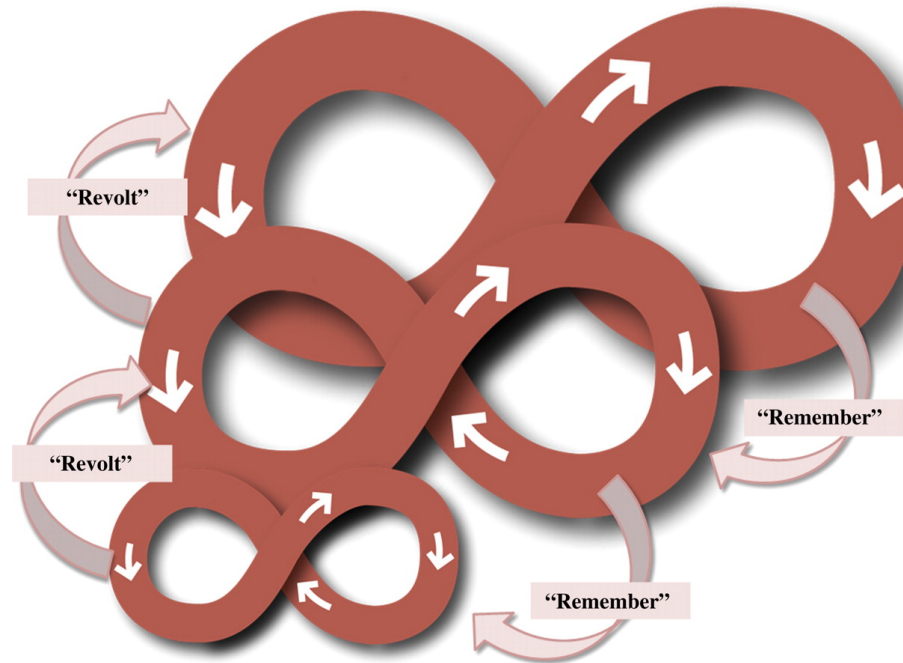
A Brief History of the America (R. Crumb)



Simplified Cycle of Adaptation from Panarchy Theory



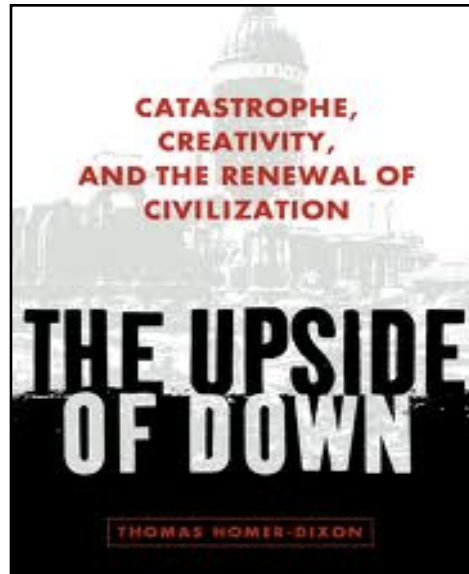
Nested Cross-Scale Interactions



Source: Resilience and regions: building understanding of the metaphor” (Rolf Pendall, et al, *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, (2009)

http://www.ipg.vt.edu/resilience/docs/PendallR_ResilienceandRegions_v1.pdf

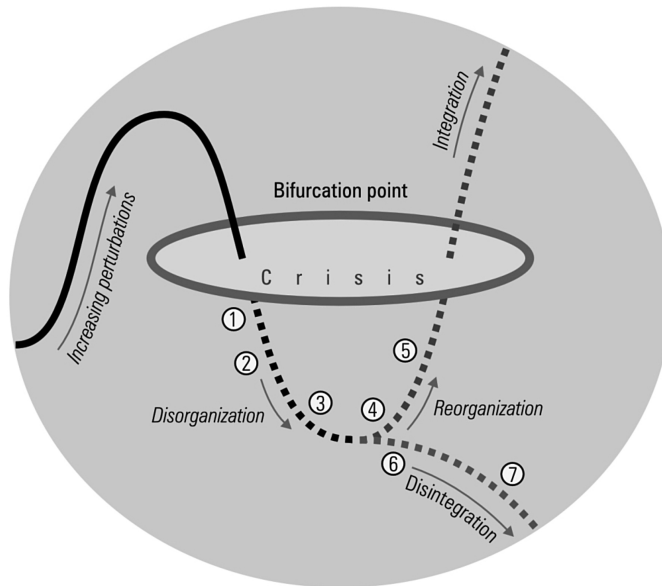
The Upside of Down: Catastrophe, Creativity and the Renewal of Civilization, By Thomas Homer-Dixon (2006)



Includes a good summary of Panarchy Theory, the Cycle of Adaptation, and plausible civilizational disintegration followed by reformation.

Also, see Homer-Dixon's [Our Panarchic Future](#), *World Watch* magazine (2008).

“Type II” Alternative Mega-Crisis Possibilities



The springboard effect helps systems reorganize

- ① People lose faith in the industrial system as crises worsen
- ② Human and economic resources are released from the system
- ③ Support increases for both inclusive (sustainable) and exclusive (ethnocentric) solutions
- ④ If sustainable solutions are supported, constructive reorganization begins
- ⑤ The reorganization of the global system accelerates
or
- ⑥ If ethnocentric values and structures dominate, conflicts over scarce resources intensify
- ⑦ Global civilization disintegrates

© BEST Futures, www.bestfutures.org

Source: “The collapse and transformation of our world” (Taylor & Taylor, 2007)

<http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/11-3/A02.pdf>

Five Archetypal Scenarios

1. ***“VUCA” world*** of rapidly increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity—an “Expected” or Present Trends Extended (PTE) future
2. ***Civilizational Disintegration***—a “Challenging” or worst case future
3. ***Reformative Civilizational Recovery***—an “Aspirational” or “Visionary” future
4. ***Civilizational Enlightenment***—an “Adaciously Visionary / Aspirational” or best case future
5. ***Singularity***—an alternative “Adaciously Visionary / Aspirational” future.

Note: For additional detail and documentation of expert sources on each, please see the accompanying note:

[“Five Archetypal Scenarios”](#)

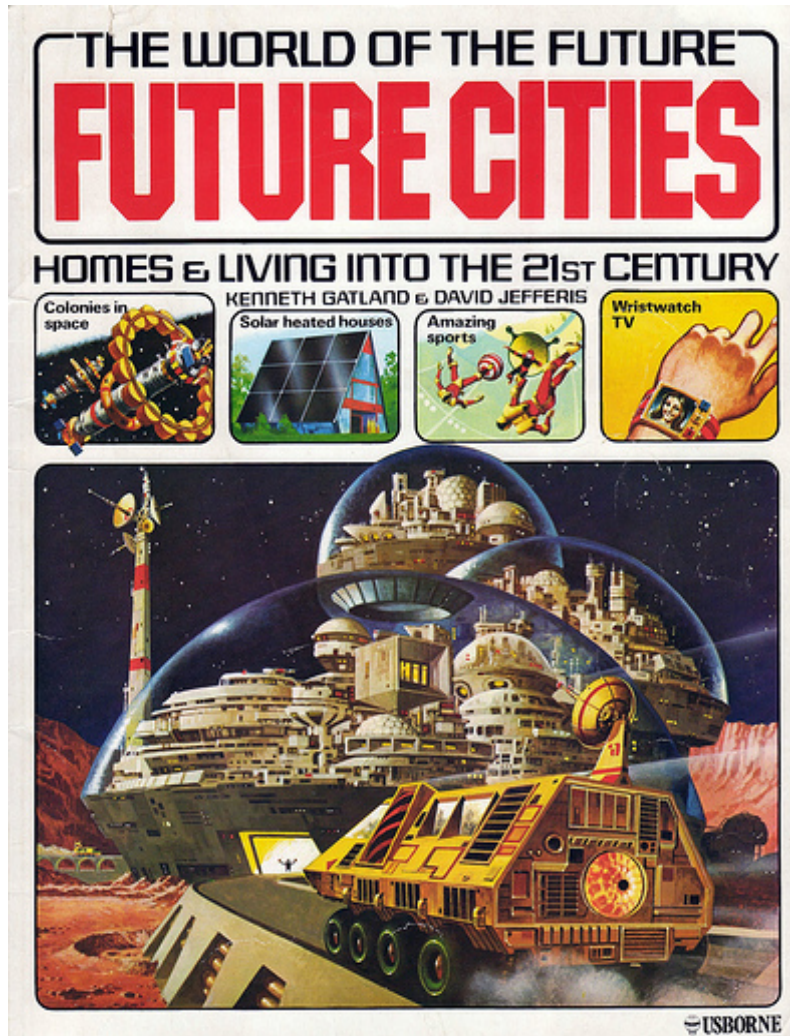
The Four Principal Scenarios from the National Intelligence Council's Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds

- ***Stalled Engines*** (the most plausible worst case where "all boats sink")
- ***Fusion*** (the most plausible best case where "all boats rise substantially")
- ***Gini Out-of-the-Bottle*** (far greater inequality as measured by the Gini Coefficient)
- ***Nonstate World*** (where networks thrive and NGOs, MNCs, individuals, and megacities take the lead in confronting global challenges).

Exploring Alternative Future Scenarios With Mental Time Travel

- Obtain a facilitator who can guide you in the exploration
- Choose a scenario you would like to explore
- Relax and open your imaginal senses
- Follow facilitator's suggestions for exploration and reporting out

Three Scenario Images to Ponder



Discussion Questions

Re: What you experienced...

- What was most surprising?
- What was most interesting?
- What are several good “take aways?”

Appendix

For a truly wild-card vision
re: The Future of Cities, see:

‘China's Future Cities’
 (“ghost” developments)

a 4:03 min video at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=dUHA8dynxJc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUHA8dynxJc)

From Penny Kelly, a psychic futurist
recommended by John Petersen

- ["New Worlds of Energy" with Penny Kelly,
March 19, 2013 – YouTube](#)

This 3-part video was recorded on March 19, 2013 in Austin, Texas, it is based on *Consciousness & Energy, Vol 2* (2012), by Kelly with William C. Levengood

- *Robes: A Book of Coming Changes* (1999)