



‘Knowledge Culture’

What the 21st Century Requires of Us

“Culture as Innovation”

Turku

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Foresight Canada

FC's Status & Mission

*As a Canadian, not-for-profit,
networked, community of
interest & practice...*

*We nurture the utilization of
strategic foresight at a high
professional level in all types of
Canadian organizations.*

Our Orientation



We ARE Co-Creating Our Future

**The future is not some place we are going,
but one we are creating.**

**The paths to it are not found but made,
and the activity of making them changes
both the maker and the destination.**

John Schaar
White House Science Advisor to
President Nixon

What WE DO, Matters

Our world confronts rapid and potentially profound transitions...

It is increasingly clear that today's decisions could play a decisive role in determining whether the 21st Century offers **peace and prosperity** or **crisis and collapse**.

The Challenge of Long-Term Policy Analysis
Rand Corporation



Key Assumptions

**The 1st job of governance
is the rectification of names.**

Confucian saying

Culture

A human way of seeing, attending to, patterning, exploring, understanding, knowing, experiencing, intending and acting within a particular time and space that continues over long periods of time, is widely-shared, relatively coherent and largely unconscious.

Knowledge Culture_g

- Every culture is a ‘knowledge culture_g’
- It lives/dies by the reliability of what it takes as the basis of action:
 - **Knowing** – The work of developing reliable knowledge
 - **Knowledge** – That which is taken as known

Sustained Success (for a culture)

Requires:

1. Little change in its condition and situation over time

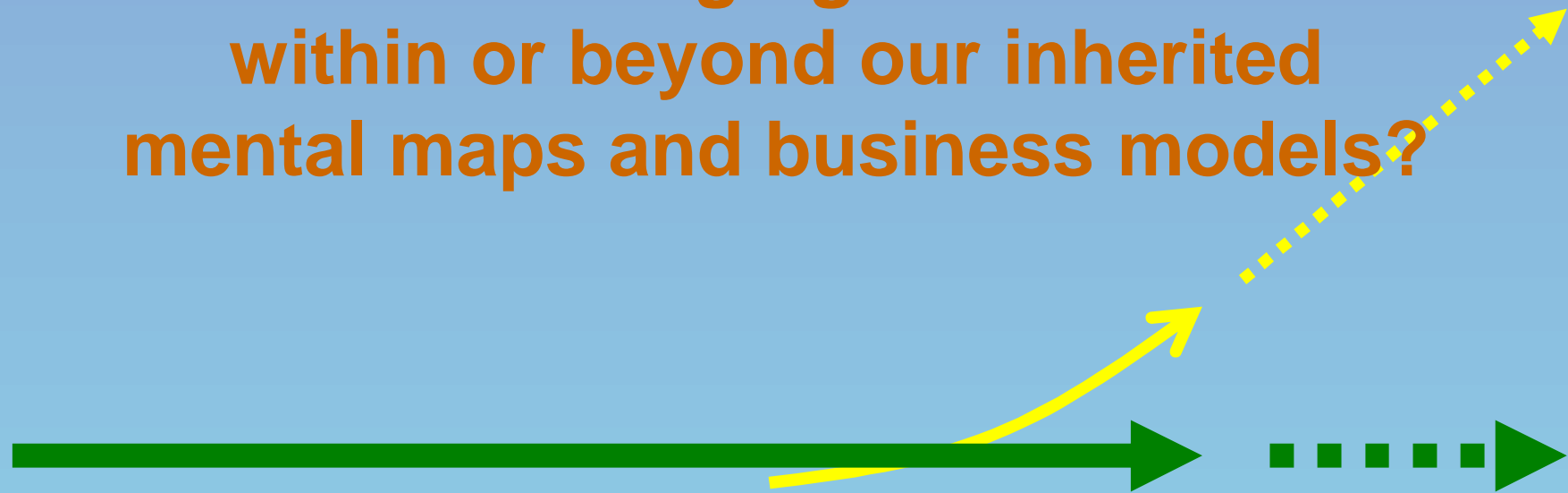
Or

2. A developed capacity to see, attend to, explore, understand and respond to the **novel conditions** emerging within or around it, and do so in a timely manner *as a whole culture, even if some evolution of the culture is required.*

The Big Strategic Question

“Just how different will the 21st Century be?”

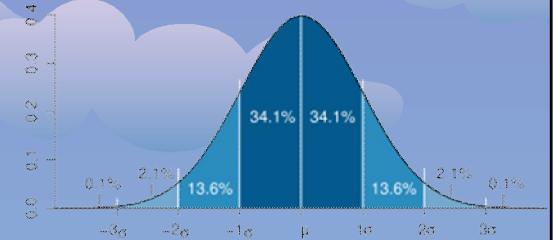
“Will the emerging conditions be within or beyond our inherited mental maps and business models?”



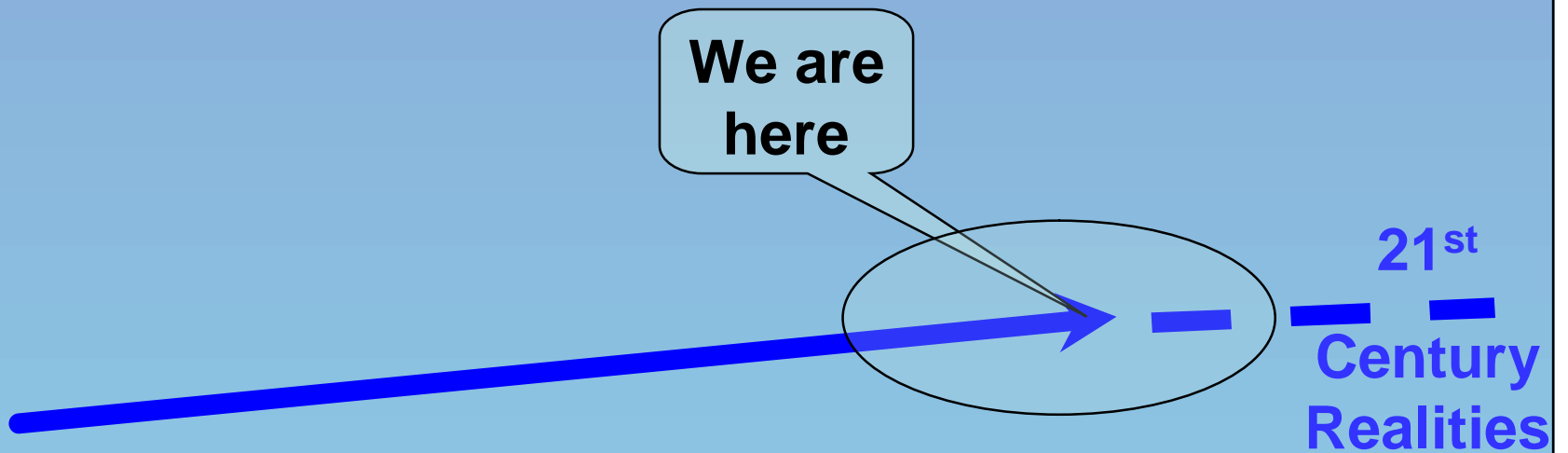
“Onward” or “A New Course”

The Dilemma of Democracies

- Democracies demand consensus
- Consensus views routinely miss deviations
- Democracies routinely miss deviations
- Not a problem as long as ours is NOT a time of fundamental cultural deviation
- The trouble is:
 - ∅ We agree that it is not (so we are not looking)
 - ∅ We have no capacity to tell us otherwise
 - ∅ The evidence is growing that it may well be



We All Seem to Assume...



Carry On... Onward

We do not seriously consider

21st Century
Realities

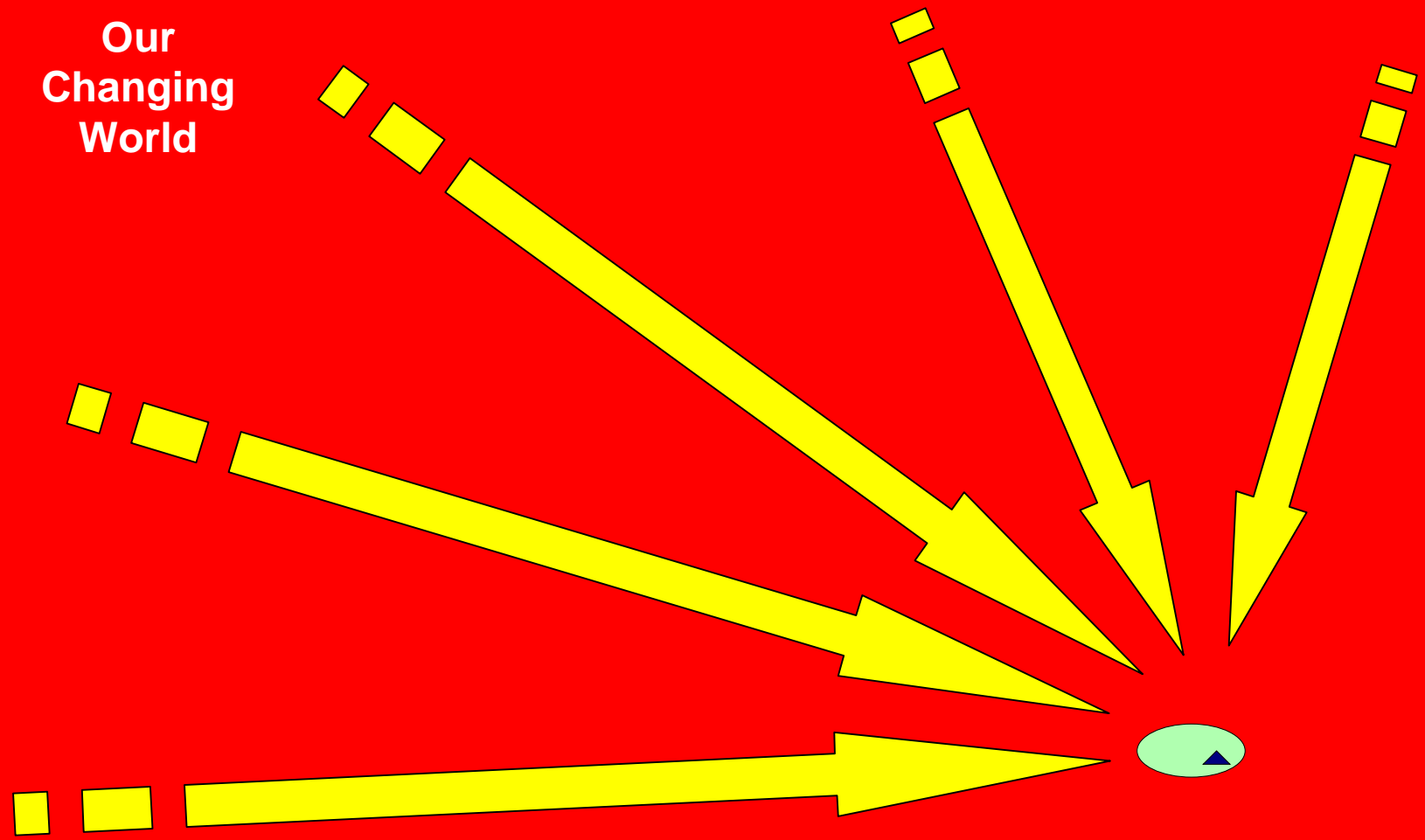
We are
here

20th
Century
Illusions

A Watershed – A New Beginning

21st Century Realities

Our
Changing
World



Foresight Canada's View

- Ours is one of the rare times during which **history is deviating from the path** it has been on.
- We face an essentially **unfamiliar** future.
- We are almost **wholly unprepared** – as persons, organizations, countries, and whole cultures.
- We must become **21st Century 'knowledge cultures'**

Record to Date

All cultures have died when faced with conditions that are sufficiently **novel** and **strategic** that the culture as inherited cannot see, attend to, explore, understand and respond to in timely and appropriate ways.

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Score

20

The Planet

0

Humans

Warning

**'The trouble with people is
not that they don't know,
but that they know so
much that ain't so.'**

Josh Billings

Requirement^{21st C}

An explicit, reflexive meta-capacity that is able to **identify** novel and **strategic** (trajectory-altering) **conditions** and **nurture** the ability of a **critical mass of opinion leaders** to learn to see, attend to, explore, understand and respond to the new conditions in appropriate ways.

Today

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Does any existing culture have such a capacity?



‘Knowledge Culture’

In the 21st Century

Knowledge Culture^{21st C}

A culture that explicitly understands that its future hangs on its capacity to govern its own evolution in a profoundly changing world by **continuously creating, accessing and utilizing** increasingly reliable **(and often disruptive)** information about its condition and situation in every situation and sector of its life.

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- **NOT about** extending or entering the Industrial Age by becoming more:
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 - ∅ Technologically savvy
 - ∅ Competitive

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Does any existing culture aspire to this capacity?

Shifts in Understanding

Dominant Assumptions Today

- Reality is given (get used to it)
- Knowledge created by individuals
- Knowing is an individual & impersonal process
Reflexivity not required
- Objective knowledge is an artefact
Certain
Impersonal
Privatize and capitalize on it
Knowledge transfer
- Technology is “just a tool”
- Only “use” of knowledge is ethical

Emerging Assumptions

- Social realities are co-created (get good at it)
- Knowledge created by communities
- Knowing reliably is an interpersonal/ community process
Reflexivity required
- Reliable Knowledge is an inter-subjective agreement
Always some degrees of uncertainty
Always somewhat-to-deeply personal
Share it openly
Knowledge digestion/embodiment
- Technology always carries consciousness
- Knowing is inherently ethical

Shifts in Practise

Dominant Practice Today

- Accept inherited cultural context, identity & project
- Increase capacity to produce, comfort and consume
- “It’s the economy, stupid.”
- Increase our competitive capacity and place.
- Focus on/support creativity, innovation, science, technology, investments
- Communities are incidental; ignore them
- Cash is King
- Consciousness is an epée phenomenon

Emerging Practice

- Q & transcend inherited cultural context, identity & project
- Increase capacity to co-create deeply satisfying futures
- “It’s the human future, stupid.”
- Increase our capacity to co-create cultures aligned with the 21st Century, openly/consciously.
- Focus on “initial conditions” required to learn and grow up as persons... whole cultures
- Communities are required, nurture them
- Strategic threats to the game are king
- Consciousness matters



Over to YOU!

Our Future **is** in Our Hands, Mind and Heart

Thank You!

Contact

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