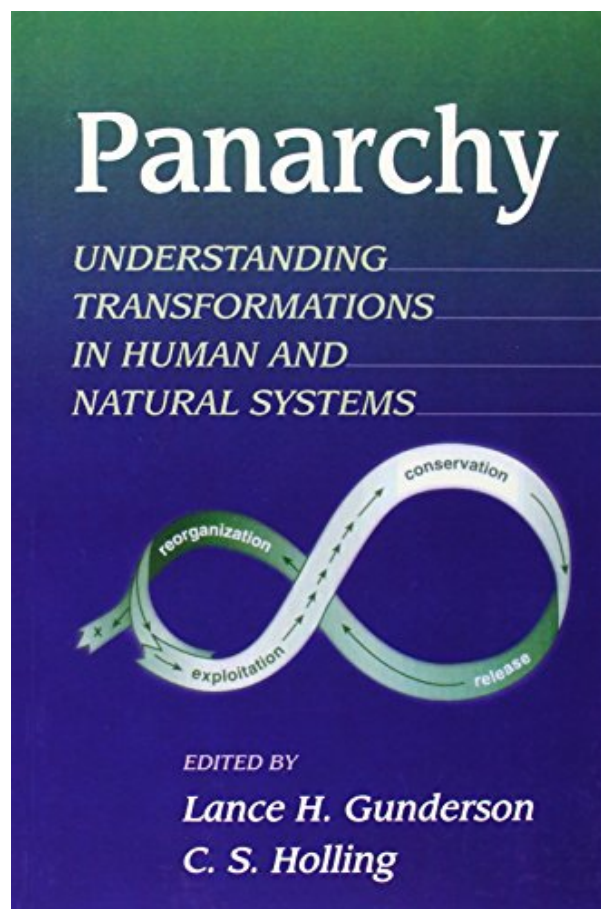


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*UNDERSTANDING
TRANSFORMATIONS
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EDITED BY

Lance H. Gunderson

C. S. Holling

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Review

"A wonderful and stimulating blend of theoretical and empirical perspectives on multiscale dynamic systems of humans and nature. This book brings together the diverse insights of some of the most creative and original thinkers on resilience and adaptive change in ecological and social systems, yet it is seamlessly integrated through coherent underlying principles. A triumph for Holling's seminal concepts, and for the Resilience Alliance." (Simon Levin Princeton University, author of *Fragile Dominion*)

"We denizens of the early twenty-first century have urgent need for an integrative theory that links changes in our global environment to underlying causes. *Panarchy* is the best presentation I've seen of the elements of such a theory, considering everything from ecosystems to political action. Anyone desiring a serious understanding of our global environment—and that should be all of us—will find no better starting point for their quest." (John Holland Professor of computer science and engineering and Professor of psychology, University of Michigan)

"Resilience, timing, adaptation—these are the three pillars upon which the emergent properties of interacting systems rest. When the systems are the economy and the environment, understanding of the relationships among these concepts is crucial. This volume does a better job of explaining how to manage both money and nature to ensure humanity's long-term future than any other work I know of. Read and reflect." (John L. Casti Santa Fe Institute, United States, and Technical University of Vienna, Austria)

About the Author

Gunderson is professor in the Department of Environmental Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

C. S. Holling has worked at the Institute of Resource Ecology, University of British Columbia, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Vienna, and the University of Florida. He is a coeditor of Columbia's Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Regional Ecosystems.

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The book examines theories (models) of how systems (those of humans, nature, and combined humannatural systems) function, and attempts to understand those theories and how they can help researchers develop effective institutions and policies for environmental management. The fundamental question this book asks is whether or not it is possible to get beyond seeing environment as a sub-component of social systems, and society as a sub-component of ecological systems, that is, to understand human-environment interactions as their own unique system. After examining the similarities and differences among human and natural systems, as well as the means by which they can be accounted for in theories and models, the book examines five efforts to describe human-natural systems. The point of these efforts is to provide the means of learning about those systems so that they can be managed adaptively. The final section of the book uses case studies to examine the application of integrated theories/models to the real world.

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