

## Thomas Homer Dixon

Person: Thomas Homer Dixon

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Description Thomas Homer Dixon is Director of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Toronto, and is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto. His work is richly interdisciplinary but is primarily concerned with globalization, environment, and technology, particularly as these forces can be seen as violently impacting diverse ecologies. Dixon's first book, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (1999), charts the links between environmental strains (such as massive population growth, dwindling natural resources, and urban fragmentation) and violence and social unrest in monetarily poor countries. *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* exposes the global economic and policy factors (unequal distribution of wealth and ecological negligence of corporations) that inevitably lead to civil conflict. As a former White House advisor to the Clinton administration, Dixon is uniquely experienced in adapting theoretical political-scientific scholarship to urgent global situations. He has stated that one of his main objectives is to produce critical books that engage not only other academics but also policy-makers and general readers. His work, *The Ingenuity Gap* (2001), explores the concept of "ingenuity" (the need for, and power of, innovative cultural ideas) with specific attention, for example, to how such resourcefulness may assist in addressing serious social issues including AIDS, climate change, over-consumption, and mass poverty. Despite Dixon's tendency for dire pronouncements and observations, this latest book, like his world view, is ultimately optimistic about our creative and ecological future. As might also be expected given the nature of his work, his writings have sparked considerable debate and sometimes opposition.