



# Contributions of Academy-based FLAs to the Governance of Grand Challenges

---

**Forward Looking Activities Governing Grand Challenges**  
**Closing Conference European Foresight Network**  
**Vienna, Austria**  
**September 27-28, 2012**

**Ruben Nelson**  
**Foresight Canada**

# FC's Understanding

---

**Strategic Foresight is to Management as  
Management is to Administration**

# FC's Understanding

---

**Strategic Foresight is to Management as  
Management is to Administration**

Administration:  
Operations

# FC's Understanding

---

**Strategic Foresight is to Management as  
Management is to Administration**



# FC's Understanding

---

**Strategic Foresight is to Management as  
Management is to Administration**



# FC's Understanding

Strategic Foresight is to Management as  
Management is to Administration

**Longer, wider, deeper,  
integral grasp on reality  
that is functionally  
equivalent to wisdom.**

Strategic Foresight: Context

Management: Goals/Policy

Administration:  
Operations



# One Contribution

---

**Work with others to develop truly systematic  
and integral understandings of our  
pasts, presents and futures:**

**The long evolution of human consciousness,  
cultures and forms of civilization.**

**The human arts & sciences.**

# Letter to Her Majesty

---

So where was the problem? Everyone seemed to be doing their own job properly on its own merit. And according to standard measures of success, they were doing it well. The failure was to see how collectively this added up to a series of interconnected imbalances over which no single authority had jurisdiction...Individual risks may rightly have been viewed as small, but the risk to the system as a whole was great.

British Academy  
July 22, 2009

# Letter to Her Majesty – II

---

In summary, Your Majesty, the failure to foresee the timing, extent and severity of the crisis and to head it off, while it had many causes, was **principally a failure of the collective imagination** of man bright people, both in this country and internationally, to understand the risks to the system as a whole.

British Academy  
July 22, 2009



# A Second Contribution

---

**Work with others to articulate a powerful ontology and epistemology that enables us to establish the relative reliability of human knowing, i.e. to acknowledge the relativity and communality of all human knowing while avoiding certainty (objectivity) and relativism.**

# The Journey is Deeply Personal

---

“I have spent much of the last forty years endeavouring to understand world views other than those we in the West have inherited; and in the last several years I have been particularly concerned with the question of what is involved in the endeavour to understand, and to help others understand, an outlook different from the one that one already has.

One of the conclusions to which I have come is that in order to understand a different view – especially if it be radically different and/or profound, comprehensive, humane – *one must oneself become a different sort of person.*”

Wilfred Cantwell  
Smith

# What is Required of Us?

---

**The transition to a sustainable society requires a careful balance between long-term and short-term goals and an emphasis on sufficiency, equity and quality of life rather than quantity of output. It requires more than productivity and more than technology; it also requires maturity, compassion and wisdom.**

Beyond the Limits to Growth:  
Confronting Global Collapse; Envisioning a Sustainable Future  
1992

A photograph of a stone tower with a conical roof, situated on a rocky, grassy hill. The sky is clear and blue. The tower has several levels and a central opening.

# Over to YOU!

Our Future **is** in Your Hands, Minds and Hearts

# Thank you

# Contact

---

**Ruben Nelson  
Executive Director  
Foresight Canada  
29 des Arcs Road  
Lac Des Arcs, AB, Canada, T1W 2W3**

**+1-888-673-3537 = voice  
+1-403-673-2114 = fax  
[rubennelson@shaw.ca](mailto:rubennelson@shaw.ca)**