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Thinking in Systems

A Primer

Dear Editors,

Thomas Friedman devotes the final pages of *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* to thoughts about systems-thinking pioneer Donella Meadows. A short excerpt:

"...The remarks that Amory Lovins delivered at the memorial service for Donella H. Meadows expressed so many of my own hopes that I can't help but share part of it here. Meadows, the Dartmouth-based environmental expert and writer, inspired or taught many of my friends in the green movement.... she died February 21, 2001, and Lovin's remarks at her memorial service went like this: 'She was one of those promising specimens that are turning up more and more often in the search for intelligent life on earth –one of those much higher primates whose love, logic, radical stubbornness, courage, and passion awaken the rest of us to our ability and our responsibility to save the world ... She wrote three years ago, "By nature I'm an optimist, to me all glasses are half-full." Yet she didn't shrink from reporting bad news, always blended with encouragement about how to do better. She treated the future as choice, not fate, and she defined with luminous clarity how to do (as one sometimes must) what is necessary. She shared Rene Dubos's view that despair is a sin, so when asked if we have enough time to prevent catastrophe, she'd always say that we have exactly enough time –starting now.'"

Chelsea Green is honored to be publishing her last book. Please write or call if you would like to speak with the book's editor, Diana Wright or publisher, Margo Baldwin.

Best,

Katharine Walton
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"Dana Meadows was one of the smartest people I ever knew, able to figure out the sensible answer to almost any problem. This book explains how she thought... A classic." —Bill McKibben, author of *Deep Economy*



Meadows' work as a scientist, communicator, and leader in the sustainability movement earned her a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award, recognition as a Pew Scholar in Conservation and the Environment, and top honors from organizations like the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and the Conservation Law Foundation. Meadows is remembered for her weekly, nationally syndicated column, "The Global Citizen," which ran for 16 years and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. She was the founder of the Sustainability Institute and cofounder of the International Network of Resource Information Centers.



the politics and practice of sustainable living

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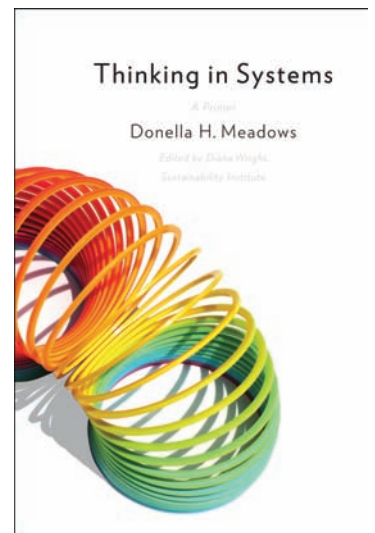
“Required reading for anyone hoping to run a successful company, community, or country... The best book of its kind.”

—Hunter Lovins, founder and President, Natural Capital Solutions

Donella Meadows' newly released manuscript, *Thinking in Systems*, is a concise and crucial book offering insight for problem solving on scales ranging from the personal to the global. Edited by the Sustainability Institute's Diana Wright, this book brings systems thinking out of the realm of computers and equations and into the tangible world, showing readers how to develop thinking skills that are critical for 21st century life.

A woman whose pioneering work in the 1970s still makes front-page news, Donella Meadows was a scientist, author, teacher, and farmer ahead of her time. She was one of the world's foremost systems analysts and lead author of the influential *Limits to Growth*—the 1972 book on global trends in population, economics, and the environment. It was translated into 28 languages and became an international bestseller, while launching a worldwide debate on the earth's capacity to withstand constant human development and expansion. The 30-Year update was published in 2004 and is a must-read alongside *Thinking in Systems*.

In her lifetime, Donella Meadows was a leader, motivating people at all levels of society, government, and business to think differently, understand systems, and strive for sustainability. She died unexpectedly in 2001 while she was finishing *Thinking in Systems*.



Thinking in Systems

A Primer

By Donella H. Meadows

Edited by: Diana Wright

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