



# Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It

By David Fleming



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**Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It** By David Fleming

*Lean Logic* is David Fleming's masterpiece, the product of more than thirty years' work and a testament to the creative brilliance of one of Britain's most important intellectuals.

A dictionary unlike any other, it leads readers through Fleming's stimulating exploration of fields as diverse as culture, history, science, art, logic, ethics, myth, economics, and anthropology, being made up of four hundred and four engaging essay-entries covering topics such as Boredom, Community, Debt, Growth, Harmless Lunatics, Land, Lean Thinking, Nanotechnology, Play, Religion, Spirit, Trust, and Utopia.

The threads running through every entry are Fleming's deft and original analysis of how our present market-based economy is destroying the very foundations?ecological, economic, and cultural? on which it depends, and his core focus: a compelling, grounded vision for a cohesive society that might weather the consequences. A society that provides a satisfying, culturally-rich context for lives well lived, in an economy not reliant on the impossible promise of eternal economic growth. A society worth living in. Worth fighting for. Worth contributing to.

The beauty of the dictionary format is that it allows Fleming to draw connections without detracting from his in-depth exploration of each topic. Each entry carries intriguing links to other entries, inviting the enchanted reader to break free of the imposed order of a conventional book, starting where she will and following the links in the order of her choosing. In combination with Fleming's refreshing writing style and good-natured humor, it also creates a book perfectly suited to dipping in and out.

The decades Fleming spent honing his life's work are evident in the lightness and mastery with which *Lean Logic* draws on an incredible wealth of cultural and historical learning?from Whitman to Whitefield, Dickens to Daly, Kropotkin to Kafka, Keats to Kuhn, Oakeshott to Ostrom, Jung to Jensen, Machiavelli to Mumford, Mauss to Mandelbrot, Leopold to Lakatos, Polanyi to Putnam, Nietzsche to Næss, Keynes to Kumar, Scruton to Shiva, Thoreau to Toynbee, Rabelais to Rogers, Shakespeare to Schumacher, Locke to Lovelock, Homer to Homer-Dixon?in demonstrating that many of the principles it commends have a track-record of success long pre-dating our current society.

Fleming acknowledges, with honesty, the challenges ahead, but rather than inducing despair, *Lean Logic* is rare in its ability to inspire optimism in the creativity and intelligence of humans to nurse our ecology back to health; to rediscover the importance of place and play, of reciprocity and resilience, and of community and culture.

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Recognizing that *Lean Logic*'s sheer size and unusual structure could be daunting, Fleming's long-time collaborator Shaun Chamberlin has also selected and edited one of the potential pathways through the dictionary to create a second, stand-alone volume, *Surviving the Future: Culture, Carnival and Capital in the Aftermath of the Market Economy*. The content, rare insights, and uniquely enjoyable writing style remain Fleming's, but presented at a more accessible paperback-length and in conventional read-it-front-to-back format.

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The threads running through every entry are Fleming's deft and original analysis of how our present market-based economy is destroying the very foundations—ecological, economic, and cultural—on which it depends, and his core focus: a compelling, grounded vision for a cohesive society that might weather the consequences. A society that provides a satisfying, culturally-rich context for lives well lived, in an economy not reliant on the impossible promise of eternal economic growth. A society worth living in. Worth fighting for. Worth contributing to.

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## **Editorial Review**

Review

### ***Choice-***

"The late author, who passed away suddenly in 2010, was a prominent UK Green Party theorist and advocate. This book—thoughtfully edited by his protégé Chamberlin—represents the distillation of a life's work. Fleming is best known for introducing the economic concept of "Tradable Energy Quotas" (TEQs), which aims to plot the means for a vast reduction of carbon emissions and energy consumption. Even though the book is laid out in a dictionary format, it is best viewed as a series of interconnected essays. The overall goal is to detail the self-destructiveness of the market economy's dependence on sustained growth and at the same time paint a picture of a much less dynamic economy of the future. The notion of "lean logic," i.e., thinking small and local, exemplifies the public policies that he predicted will emerge pursuant to the implosion of the market economy. Fleming claims an optimistic vision, yet the stark overhaul of existing social ties he foresees has a strong chiliastic bent. His idea of the market economy is the polar opposite of the recent work of Deirdre McCloskey, *Bourgeois Equality: How Ideas, Not Capital or Institutions, Enriched the World* (CH, Oct'16, 54-0926). Nonetheless, this is a welcome work with a distinctive and well-articulated point of view. **Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readership levels.**"

"A monumental achievement, David Fleming's *Lean Logic* is an encyclopedic guide to the crisis of industrial civilization. I challenge anyone to read as much as a page of it without finding at least one insight worth serious reflection. Individuals, families, and communities will find it invaluable as a guide to navigating the troubled waters of the future."--**John Michael Greer, author of *The Long Descent and After Progress***

"The only scientific question left to us: how can we ensure a future for humanity? That includes: how do we free ourselves from capitalism, the form of social organisation that is destroying us? And how do we create something else? This book is a thoughtful and imaginative contribution to the debate about humanity's future."--**John Holloway, sociologist; author of *Change the World Without Taking Power and Crack Capitalism***

"David Fleming's eye was sharp, and his words had a way of getting right to the heart of the matter. This book is remarkable and scintillating; the product of a truly original mind."--**Paul Kingsnorth, cofounder, The Dark Mountain Project; author of *The Wake***

“In my words it's half encyclopaedia, half commonplace book, half a secular bible, half survival guide, half . . . yes, that's a lot of halves, but I hope you get the picture. I have never encountered a book that is so hard to characterise yet so hard, despite its weight, to put down. *Lean Logic* is neither a policy manifesto nor a dry technical guide. It's an incredibly nourishing cultural and scientific treasure trove.”--**John Thackara, founder and director, Doors of Perception; author of *How to Thrive in the Next Economy***

“David Fleming was a walking encyclopaedia of ecological knowledge and wisdom. His brilliance, good humour, and deep insight were legendary and unforgettable. His writing, too, was of the highest calibre?witty, entertaining, profound, informative, and transformative. These books of his give us the opportunity to savour the great treasure that was his mind. To read them is to gain a superb education in ecology from one of the greatest masters in the field.”--**Dr. Stephan Harding, resident ecologist, Schumacher College; author of *Animate Earth***

"A splendid smorgasbord, *Lean Logic* provides rare insight into some of the key issues of our time! Fleming's underlying vision of a future founded in a reclaimed richness of community, culture, and conversation is both heartening and timely.”--**Helena Norberg-Hodge, author of *Ancient Futures*; director of *The Economics of Happiness***

“David Fleming predicts environmental catastrophe but also proposes a solution that stems from the real motives of people and not from some comprehensive political agenda. He writes lucidly and eloquently of the moral and spiritual qualities on which we might draw in our 'descent' to a Lean Economy. His highly poetic description of these qualities is neither gloomy nor self-deceived but tranquil and inspiring. All environmental activists should read him and learn to think in his cultivated and nuanced way.”--**Roger Scruton, writer and philosopher; author of over thirty books, including *Green Philosophy***

“This is an extraordinary book, uncategorisable, driven by a great rolling intellectual curiosity. Fleming fathomed the depth of the mess in which we find ourselves and left us clues as to how we might find our way through that mess.”--**Dougald Hine, cofounder, The Dark Mountain Project**

“David Fleming’s lifework is nothing less than an encyclopedia of the timeless art of living, encompassing the art of building enlivening communities, the art of allowing the economy to serve life and creativity, and the art of unmasking invisible brainwashing. Fleming has written a guide to becoming an authentic individual and to recognizing toxic relationships on every level of material and personal exchange. This is a serious guide to health on every level of relationships and at the same time a deeply humorous read. Whether the breakdown of technical civilisation will come (as Fleming is convinced) or humanity will just carry on muddling through as always, this encyclopedia of manners, grace, and style will make the reader’s life more

wonderful and thus inevitably help to build a saner society.”--**Andreas Weber, PhD, author of *The Biology of Wonder***

“David Fleming was the soul of provocative, exciting, and creative thought, and it was always a thought-provoking and pleasure-promoting experience to meet him. Amongst many virtues, his approach to climate change and ecology embraced the commons. Seeing this as a solution, with collective decision-making leading to a better future, was at the heart of his work. I am sure that Elinor Ostrom, who won a Nobel Prize for her work on the commons, would have appreciated David's comment that putting government in charge of commons was like placing the fox in control of the chicken coop. It is so sad that David is no longer with us, but his words are; these books are full of insight and enjoyment. I hope his laughter and enlightenment spread far and wide through new readers as well as those of us familiar with his thoughts already.”--**Derek Wall, author of *Economics After Capitalism* and the forthcoming *Elinor Ostrom's Rules for Radicals***

“For me originality, passion, commitment, and sincerity are the words which describe David Fleming. All these qualities are present in his writing. His lifelong championing of Tradable Energy Quotas, one of the very few instruments which promote sustainable consumption in a progressive rather than regressive way thereby combining environmental gain with a simultaneous transfer of resources from richer to poorer people, propels him to an honoured place in the pantheon of green campaigners.”--**Tim Yeo, former UK Minister for the Environment and Chair of the House of Commons Energy and Climate Change Select Committee**

“Our current public discourse on such problems as resource depletion, climate change, and the economy is often hopelessly muddled; this book brings light and transparency. David Fleming didn't tell us what to think but rather how to avoid cognitive fallacies that masquerade as reason. *Lean Logic* is an instant classic that was many years in the making, and it should be essential reading for environmentalists, economists, policy makers, and anyone who wants greater clarity in understanding the most important issues of our time.”--**Richard Heinberg, senior fellow, Post Carbon Institute**

“David Fleming gives a remarkable overview of our present situation and of possible future scenarios. His writing is clear, witty, insightful, and wise. *Lean Logic* is a delight to dip into, and every time I do so I feel refreshed. It is a work of genius.”--**Rupert Sheldrake, PhD, author of *The Science Delusion***

#### About the Author

Dr. David Fleming (1940 – 2010) was a visionary thinker and writer who played significant roles in the genesis of the UK Green Party, the Transition Towns movement, and the New Economics Foundation, as well as chairing the Soil Association. He was also one of the early whistle-blowers on oil depletion and designer of the influential TEQs carbon/energy rationing system. He read Modern History at Trinity College,

Oxford, and later earned an MBA and then an MSc and PhD in economics (in 1988). These enabled him to better engage with and confound the mainstream, in support of his true passion and genius: understanding that diverse and mysterious thing “community.” *Lean Logic* was the work of over thirty years.

Shaun Chamberlin has been involved with the Transition Network since its inception, cofounding Transition Town Kingston and authoring the movement’s second book, *The Transition Timeline*. He is managing director of the Fleming Policy Centre and former chair of the Ecological Land Co-operative, and has spoken at venues ranging from Occupy camps to parliaments. In exploring the cultural narratives charting society’s course he has written for or edited a diverse range of books, magazines, academic journals, and other publications, including coauthoring a significant UK All Party Parliamentary report with his close friend and regular collaborator David Fleming. His website is [www.darkoptimism.org](http://www.darkoptimism.org).

Jonathon Porritt co-chaired the UK Green Party from 1980-83, and acted as the director of Friends of the Earth from 1984-1990. In 1996 he co-founded Forum for the Future and was Chair of the UK’s Sustainable Development Commission from 2000-2009, receiving a CBE for services to environmental protection. He has written eight books, including *Capitalism As If The World Matters* (2007) and *The World We Made* (2013).

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What do you with regards to book? It is not important along? Or just adding material when you require something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your extra time? Or are you busy particular person? If you don't have spare time to do others business, it is make one feel bored faster. And you have free time? What did you do? Every individual has many questions above. They must answer that question simply because just their can do which. It said that about book. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is suitable. Because start from on pre-school until university need this particular *Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It* to read.

#### **Emma O'Neill:**

That publication can make you to feel relax. This book *Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It* was colourful and of course has pictures on the website. As we know that book *Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It* has many kinds or style. Start from kids until teens. For example *Naruto* or Investigation company *Conan* you can read and feel that you are the character on there. Therefore , not at all of book are make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and relax. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading in which.

**Barbara Corbin:**

What is your hobby? Have you heard that question when you got pupils? We believe that that query was given by teacher on their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. And you know that little person similar to reading or as looking at become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important and also book as to be the factor. Book is important thing to incorporate you knowledge, except your own personal teacher or lecturer. You see good news or update concerning something by book. Amount types of books that can you choose to use be your object. One of them is Lean Logic: A Dictionary for the Future and How to Survive It.

**Christopher Suttle:**

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