

## Jim Dator, Living Make-Belief: Thriving in a Dream Society

**Author:** James Allen Dator **Publisher:** Springer, 2024 **Subject:** Futures Studies, Dream Society, Social Transformation

### About Jim Dator

Jim Dator (born 1933) is a prominent American futurologist and former professor and Director of the Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He is best known for developing the "Four Futures" framework, which presents four alternative future scenarios:

1. **Continuation** - Things continue largely as they are
2. **Limits & Discipline** - Constraints force more disciplined approaches
3. **Decline & Collapse** - Systems break down and fail
4. **Transformation** - Fundamental change leads to new paradigms

### Book Summary

*Note: This summary is based on Dator's established work in futures studies and the book's title themes, as specific content was not available.*

### Central Themes

"**Living Make-Belief**" appears to explore how societies construct and live within imagined realities that become foundational to their functioning. Dator likely examines:

- How societies create shared narratives and beliefs that shape collective behavior
- The role of imagination and "make-belief" in social organization
- The transition from industrial to post-industrial "dream societies"

### The Dream Society Concept

The "Dream Society" concept suggests a future where:

- Economic and social value increasingly derives from stories, experiences, and meaning-making

- Traditional material production gives way to the production of dreams, narratives, and experiences
- Communities organize around shared visions and imaginative constructs rather than just material needs

### Key Areas Likely Covered

1. **Narrative Construction** - How societies build compelling stories about themselves
2. **Future Visioning** - The importance of collective dreaming in shaping outcomes
3. **Social Transformation** - Moving beyond current paradigms to new forms of organization
4. **Technology and Society** - How digital tools enable new forms of collective imagination
5. **Cultural Evolution** - The shift from information-based to dream-based societies

### Relevance to Futures Studies

This work likely builds on Dator's decades of research in futures studies, applying his Four Futures framework to understand how societies can consciously create and inhabit preferred futures through shared imagination and belief systems.

### Contemporary Significance

In an era of rapid technological change, social fragmentation, and environmental challenges, Dator's exploration of "living make-belief" may offer insights into:

- How communities can create cohesive visions for the future
- The role of storytelling in social resilience
- Ways to move beyond current limitations through transformative imagination

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*For a complete understanding of Dator's arguments and methodology, the full text would need to be consulted. This summary is based on the author's established body of work and the thematic implications of the title.*