

From the Planners' Bookshelf...

Herman Kahn

Futurist

"Herman Kahn was a founder of the Hudson Institute and one of the preeminent futurists of the latter part of the twentieth century. He originally came to prominence as a military strategist and systems theorist while employed at the RAND Corporation." [Wikipedia](#)

The importance of Herman Kahn for cities and towns in America is his thought process. As a Futurist, he created and evaluated strategies that addressed incredibly serious issues, like thermonuclear war. He is credited with being the originator of scenario planning; a technique refined and employed to analyze contemporary issues by Peter Schwartz. See *The Art of the Long View, Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World*, Currency Doubleday, 1991.

City planning relies on a wide variety of thought processes; Herman Kahn provides a very sophisticated model.

Books by Herman Kahn

- **Thinking about the Unthinkable**
Herman Kahn
- **World Economic Development: 1979 and Beyond**
Herman Kahn
- **The Year 2000: A Framework for Speculation on the Next Thirty-Three Years**
Herman Kahn
- **The next 200 years: A scenario for America and the world**
Herman Kahn

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Born: February 15, 1922, [Bayonne, NJ](#)

Died: July 7, 1983, [Chappaqua, NY](#)

Education: [University of California, Los Angeles](#), [California Institute of Technology](#)

He became known for analyzing the likely consequences of [nuclear war](#) and recommending ways to improve survivability, making him one of three historical inspirations for the title character of [Stanley Kubrick's](#) classic [black comedy](#) film satire [Dr. Strangelove](#).^[1]

His theories contributed heavily to the development of the [nuclear strategy](#) of the [United States](#).