



A Rough Ride to the Future

James Lovelock

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The bestselling author of *The Revenge of Gaia* and the great scientific visionary of our age presents a radical vision of humanity's future.

Now in his 95th year, James Lovelock has been hailed as “the man who conceived the first wholly new way of looking at life on earth since Charles Darwin” (*Independent*) and “the most profound scientific thinker of our time” (*Literary Review*).

A Rough Ride to the Future introduces two new Lovelockian ideas. The first is that three hundred years ago, when Thomas Newcomen invented the steam engine, he was unknowingly beginning what Lovelock calls “accelerated evolution,” a process that is bringing about change on our planet roughly a million times faster than Darwinian evolution. The second is that as part of this process, humanity has the capacity to become the intelligent part of Gaia, the self-regulating earth system whose discovery Lovelock first announced nearly fifty years ago.

A Rough Ride to the Future is also an intellectual autobiography, in which Lovelock reflects on his life as a lone scientist, and asks eloquently whether his career trajectory is possible in an age of increased bureaucratization.

We are now changing the atmosphere again, and Lovelock argues that there is little that can be done about this. But instead of feeling guilty, we should recognize what is happening, prepare for change, and ensure that we survive as a species so we can contribute to perhaps even guide the next evolution of Gaia. The road will be rough, but if we are smart enough, life will continue on earth in some form far into the future.

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