



Women & Environments

international

WOMEN, ECOLOGY & ECONOMIC CHANGE

Pathways to an Egalitarian and Sustainable Economy

ECOFEMINIST ECONOMICS

THE AIM IS LIVELIHOOD

An Interview with Activist Hilikka Pietila

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES OF VALUE

WOMEN & MICROCREDIT AROUND THE WORLD

Projects, Challenges and Successes



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Managing Editor: Regula Modlich

Design: Barbara Bailey, Red Setter Studio

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Cover Art: Shlomit Segal

Editorial Board: Suzanne Farkas, Noreen Farooqui, Gaye Frances, Regula Modlich, Michelle Murphy, Dajana Simic, Sandra Tanny, Katherine Verhagen, Irene Wamala; **Advisors:** Sherilyn MacGregor, Ellie Perkins, Joy Woolfrey; **Assistants:** Rachel Robb, Heather Rudynski, Emma Thacker, Kate Hodgson

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Women & Environments International is a unique Canadian magazine, which examines women's multiple relations to their environments - natural, built and social - from feminist perspectives. Since 1976, it has provided a forum for academic research and theory, professional practice and community experience. By volunteering their time to the collective editing and production of Women & Environments, Editorial Board members contribute to feminist social change. The magazine is associated with the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies at New College, University of Toronto.

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Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies,
New College, University of Toronto, 40 Willcocks St.,
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phone: (416) 978-5259
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Our Fall 2002 issue **9/11 and Beyond: Women Rebuilding Communities in Conflict Zones** will feature the latest issues in the area of conflict resolution and community rebuilding in conflict zones; this includes physical, social, environmental, and emotional rebuilding. The events of last fall have fundamentally altered and enervated the context of human rights, poverty and development resources and national agendas. Circumstances are changing so rapidly that a gender-based collection of articles focusing on post-9/11 developments would make a valuable contribution to our social discourse. For further information, contact issue editor Suzanne Farkas, e-mail: sfarkas@interlog.com.

The Spring 2003 issue, aiming to **Build the Network for Feminist Change - A Network Directory and Index**, is long overdue. Submit your name and names of other great women and women's groups on our website, www.weimag.com to participate. They will be listed and possibly interviewed in the Directory. The issue will also feature several articles on women and their communities. For further information contact us, e-mail we.mag@utoronto.ca.

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SPECIAL ISSUE on Women, Ecology and Economic Change

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Ellie Perkins teaches ecological economics and environmental economics in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. She is completing a three-year research networks project on feminist ecological economics, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

ON THE COVER

Shlomit Segal works as a graphic designer for the City of Toronto Planning Department. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University, where her master's project was to write and illustrate a *Guide to the Uncounted Economy: An Alternative Look at Economics, the Natural Environment and Unpaid Work*. *Women & Environments International* is fortunate to be able to reproduce the block prints which Shlomit originally created for that project, both on the cover and throughout the magazine.

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Historic Connections: Women, Ecology, and Economic Change

The topic of this issue encompasses both practical and theoretical approaches to economic transformation. As the articles in this issue demonstrate, there are fundamental connections between the problems of economic injustice towards women, ecological degradation, social unravelling in both North and South, global economic inequities, and unstable political and environmental systems worldwide. Failure to recognize and value the social and environmental inputs which underpin the global economy is not sustainable, and this failure calls into question the legitimacy of economics and of economic policy. Women's poverty worldwide, and the suffering of countless women and children, are one aspect of this untenable situation. Ecological destruction and escalating environmental crises are another. An alternative economic vision which goes far beyond money-based valuation and markets – one which speaks of “provisioning,” not just production, consumption and distribution – is powerful and compelling as an economic paradigm for the 21st century.

Although it was only in the late twentieth century that writers in the North and West were forced to acknowledge the intimate interconnections between women's and nature's treatment in the globalized capitalist economy, elements of these ideas have a long pedigree. For example,



TRISTAN

the French socialist Flora Tristan (1803-1844) explained women's economic inequality as rooted in both property relations and workplace and educational discrimination. She saw gender inequality as fundamental to both capitalism and patriarchy, and argued that equality for women without economic transformation would help only upper-class women, while improvements for the

working classes would not ensure gender equality – both being inextricably connected and equally necessary.

Harriet Hardy Taylor Mill (1807-1858) called for the elimination of “men's monopoly over employment,” and explained the connection between the gendered structure of the labour market and power relations in the home, reinforced by socially-developed gender roles. She denounced the dominant sex-role ideology and the sexual division of labour, stating, “The social problem of the future (is), how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership of the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour.”¹



SHEPPARD

Kate Sheppard (1847-1934) argued for the recognition and value of unpaid work, the sharing of income in the household, equality in the labour market, and economic independence for women. She made many arguments for properly valuing unpaid work.

Clementina Black (1853-1922) advocated improved childcare methods, crèches at workplaces, more efficient housekeeping systems, and domestic science as ways of enhancing women's work both inside and outside the home. She saw housework as a form of “penal servitude” and made a distinction between “vital labour – the labour that does and makes – and deadening labour – that labour that merely repeats without producing anything.”²

Beatrice Potter Webb (1858-1943) emphasized the importance of child-rearing and women's work in undergirding society. In the 1923 book *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization* (authored with her husband Sidney), they stated:

The capitalist has to pay the whole cost of the machine and even more, whilst the human instrument, though much more-cost-

ly to produce, can be had for nothing. His mother's pains and risks and housekeeping, his father's labour, his education at the cost of the ratepayers, the common resources placed at his disposal by municipal and national Communism...all these are the prime cost of the man before he presents himself at the factory gate begging for a job; but the employer acquires him as an instrument of production for nothing.³

Under the subheading of “The Ruin of Natural Resources,” the authors declare:

The profit-maker proceeds with his destructive process from continent to continent. Natural resources are abundant and cheap: in many places they are costless...Who can measure the diminution in health, in happiness, in morality and in intelligence – all factors in human productivity – caused by the profit-maker by the defilement of air, water and land, and the destruction of all amenity and beauty in the surroundings of millions of his fellow-citizens?...With future values, the rightful inheritance of future generations, the capitalist is naturally wholly unconcerned.⁴

They also criticize the power of the property-owners to affect the natural environment:

The most striking manifestation of this power is the steadily increasing ‘industrialising’ of a



WEBB

countryside, ending in the creation of an urban slum area, by the continuous pollution of the water and the atmosphere, the destruction of vegetation, the creation of nuisances, the erection of 'back to back' dwellings, in row after row of mean streets. The devastation wrought in this way, in some of the most fertile and most beautiful parts of England and Scotland, as also in the United States, is, as we now know, comparable only to that effected by a long-drawn-out modern war."⁵

They point out how only the "leisured rich" are able to escape from this pollution, while the labourer is excluded from natural spaces "by the property rights of the very class of persons who have rendered his place of abode abhorrent to him."⁶

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) recognized the home as a "centre of production" which, like others, could be analyzed by economists. She saw homemakers as simultaneously managers and labourers, operating under poorly-acknowledged contractual conditions, and she decried the inefficiencies and waste of labour inherent in much household work. Communal kitchens and shared housework and child-care facilities would help to address these inefficiencies, she felt, while also minimizing the use of materials in housing construction – an environmental consideration with a modern feel. She criticized the traditional family unit as "guilty of gross self-indulgence and self-preoccupation, of frantic consumerism, of immoral insularity and aloofness from the world around it."⁷ Like Harriet Mill, she deconstructed the traditional justifications for women's subordinate role in the household and the labour market. She was a vegetarian, and environmental considerations permeate her utopian writings.

Eleanor Rathbone (1872-1946) argued that a "family allowance" system, rather than equal pay for women or higher "family wages" for men, would be a more just and efficient way of achieving economic equality for women and higher living standards for workers. Her book *The Disinherited Family* addresses the remuneration of women's domestic labour, the notion of children's benefit to society overall, and



CARSON



GILMAN

the psychic costs of women's economic dependence.

Ruth Alice Allen (1889-1979) discussed the relationship between family and gender relations and labour markets, and placed women's production at the centre of economic analysis. She wrote a book on *The Labour of Women in the Production of Cotton*, and other works on labour history and gender.

Margaret Gilpin Reid (1896-1991) was a pioneer researcher on consumer and household behaviour, arguing that housework must be recognized as productive work with associated labour costs. She defined household production as the provision of goods and services that could be substituted for by market-produced goods and services, and she considered several different methods of valuing such activities.

Rachel Carson (1907-1964) and Esther Boserup (1910- 1999) documented the implications of agricultural and industrial growth on the environment and for women. Countless women in both North and South have borne the burden in their own lives of the gendered and environmental effects of economic expansion, contributing to the resonance of these connections for those who have been able to comment, write and theorize about them.

Sociologist Jesse Bernard has described women's unpaid work as the foundation on which the entire economy rests.⁸ Hazel

Henderson's analysis of economic patterns emphasizes the ecological shortcomings of current understandings of economics. And of course Marilyn Waring and Hilka Pietilä, whose ideas are discussed elsewhere in this issue, have emphasized both gender and ecological questions throughout their work.

The themes discussed by these foremothers of feminist and ecological economics include the need to recognize the value of household and unpaid work; the relationship between socially-constructed gender roles and workplace discrimination; the massive waste of resources and labour in nuclear-family households; the challenge of achieving economic equality for women; and the centrality of non-market activity and unvalued or undervalued services, including ecological services, in underpinning all economies.

These themes, and their interrelationships, echo throughout this issue. ❧

¹ Dimand, Robert W., Mary Ann Dimand, and Evelyn L. Forget (2000). *A Biographical Dictionary of Women Economists*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, p. 95.

² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³ Webb, Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1923). *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*, Westminster, UK: The Fabian Society and George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., pp. 90-91.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-96.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁷ Cited in Polly Wynn Allen (1988). *Building Domestic Liberty: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Architectural Feminism*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, p. 76.

⁸ Bernard, Jesse (1972). *The Future of Marriage*. New York: World Publishers, pp. 43-44.

Further Reading

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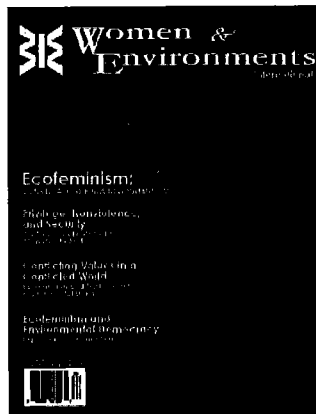
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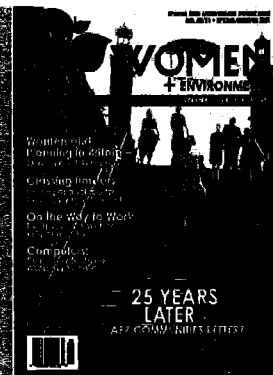
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Ecofeminist Economics

Women, Work and the Environment

Mary Mellor

Introduction

Ecofeminism has a major contribution to make to our understanding of the current destructive relationship between humanity and nonhuman nature. As its name implies, ecofeminism brings together the insights of feminism and ecology:

FEMINISM is concerned with the way in which women in general have been subordinated to men in general.

ECOLOGY is concerned that human activity is destroying the viability of the global ecosystem.

ECOFEMINISM argues that the two are linked.

Women have been viewed as inferior to men in most human societies – I would even go so far as to say all. However, not all women are subordinate to all men and many men are oppressed through class, caste, 'race' or ethnic discrimination. Women also dominate each other. Therefore, the key issue for ecological economics is not sex-gender difference but the gendering of human societies.

For ecofeminists the most important aspect of the present global economy is that it represents a value system that subordinates both women and nature and sees itself as superior to traditional subsistence economies. The modern economic system is based on a dualistic hierarchy of values mainly expressed through money/profit but also as prestige. External to these values are the unvalued or undervalued, the resilience of the ecosystem, the unpaid and unrecognized domestic work of



women, and the social reciprocity in communal societies as represented in non-market economies.

The link between women's subordination and the degradation of the natural world lies in women's centrality to the support economies of reproduction, unpaid domestic work and social reciprocity - i.e.

the home and the community. The unvalued economy is the world of women, of women's experience – a WE- economy. The valued economy, on the other hand, is male-dominated, representing men's experience – a ME-economy.

Ecofeminist political economy offers an explanation of how destructive economic

systems are constructed and sees the WE-economy as the basis of an alternative, non-exploiting, sustainable economy. Because the ME-economy has largely left women behind, in the lives and experience of women lies the possibility of an alternative path. Throughout history, women have formed the backbone of economic and social systems, although their work has been largely unacknowledged.

Women's Work

Women have always worked. In modern economies they are particularly exploited as low-wage labourers, while in the early industrial economies women and children filled the first factories. Women currently have lower pay and less job security than men, even as globalization mercilessly exploits women as cheap and expendable workers.

Women are also on the boundaries of economic systems, since they usually have two lives: one within the valued economy as workers, consumers, and professionals, and one without - the world of women's work. It is generally accepted that women workers with families have two shifts, the first at paid work and the second at home with domestic work (unless their social position enables them to employ other women to do it).

Yet it is important to make a distinction between the work of women and women's work. The work of women is what they have done throughout history (including being Prime Minister of Britain), while women's work is a particular type of work that would be demeaning for a man to do on a regular basis (unless he was already demeaned on the basis of class, caste, "race," or ethnicity). Women's work is the basic work that makes other forms of activity possible. It is caring work done for others that secures the human body and the community, and is usually routine and repetitive, involves watching and waiting, is often emotionally stressful, and is embedded and embodied.

When women's work is taken into the valued economy, its pay rates and work con-



ditions are poor (nursing, catering and cleaning). Thus an interesting question about women's work arises: why is it not valued? And why have women's economic activities been lost to history, so that there are no monuments to the woman weeder, grinder, spinner, and water-carrier? Though the modern economy idealizes man-the-breadwinner, a more accurate historical understanding would direct us to revere woman-the-breadmaker who has planted, harvested, and ground the grain.

Studies of women's activities in hunter-gatherer and early agricultural societies show that women's work was much more important than that of men in the provision of calories. Yet if this is the case, how have men come to dominate valued economic systems? The answer lies in the process by which economic systems are constructed, for economic systems do not relate to human labour directly. Rather, they relate to valued labour, and the processes of valuing and male-ness are connected: men do not obtain value because they work; they work because they obtain value. The more work is valued, the more male-dominated it becomes. The more necessary and unremitting it is, the more female-dominated work becomes.

Gendering Economies: Time, Space & Altruism

Valued economic systems are created through a distinction between human activities where some are counted while others are not. Furthermore, the more time an activity takes and the more spatially limited it is, the more likely it is to be excluded from economic value. Men have largely claimed social space and time, while women have been engaged in domestic responsibilities and the routine and necessary labours of life close to home.

Women's work in the unvalued economy is thus based on boundaries of space and time:

LIMITED SPACE: Women's work is close to home. Her duties mean that she cannot move far from her responsibilities.

UNLIMITED TIME: Women's work never ends. Its routine nature means that it recycles endlessly and it must be done when needed - day or night.

UNREWARDED/ALTRUISTIC: Women do not get any tangible benefit from this work, although they may find it intrinsically rewarding. They usually put their own needs last in the family.

The valued economy is quite the opposite:

UNLIMITED SPACE: Mobility is all and goods fly around the world regardless of seasons or local availability. Companies make a fetish of moving their senior staff every few years, if not months or days.

LIMITED TIME: The working day has a beginning and end. There is a distinction between paid and unpaid time (leisure). In fact, many women take paid work to get time for themselves, even if the work is low paid.

REWARDED: Work is rewarded by pay and prestige.

Women's Work as Imposed Altruism

Why do women do women's work? Why throughout history have they not refused? Part of the reason is that if it is not done,

suffering will ensue quite quickly. We can see the problem of street children in societies where women no longer have the resources to cope.

Women in this sense have been altruistic, for they have worked throughout history for little recognition. However, this is an imposed altruism. Most women feel they have little choice but to do this work, although it might be experienced as an expression of love and duty. Yet for many women this work is done out of fear of violence and/or lack of any other economic options.

Men have justified women's imposed altruism by claiming that women are naturally suited to women's work because they are naturally caring and nurturing. Many ecofeminists have sympathy with this view and speak of an ethics of care that can be extended to the natural world. However, I would argue that this ethic is related to women's work rather than to women themselves.

This is clear in prosperous economies, where many women are increasingly refusing to undertake women's work. Marriage and birth rates are falling dramatically where women have clear economic choices. For example, Italy's birth rate is 1.3 percent - well below replacement level - and women claim they won't have children because men do not help domestically. In Japan many women are refusing to marry, particularly when men behave in traditional ways.

Women are also challenging men's assumption that they have a natural right to socio-economic domination. Where professional positions depend on academic qualifications, women are competing very actively with men. However, for ecofeminists the future does not lie with women playing the male game even if that does have the side effect of reducing population rates. A country with a small or negative population growth at a high level of consumption is much more problematic ecologically than a country with a high population growth and low consumption. If women simply join men in the high production-consumption stakes, this will compound the ecological problems we face.

The ME-Economy: Externalizing Women and Nature

The case for linking women's work with the ecosystem is that they are both externalized by male-dominated economic value systems. Women's work is not valued because it is associated with the most basic needs of human existence, and the natural environment is also the basis for human existence. Why, then are these both externalized? The answer lies in the nature of the ME-economy, which is disembodied from the daily cycle, the life cycle and women's work. It is disembodied from the ecological framework.

In the ME-economy there is no space for the young, the old, the sick, the tired, or the unhappy, except as consumers. They are seen as a burden on the welfare state, which itself is seen as a burden on the so-called wealth-creating sector. Thus they disappear into the world of women, home, and community.

Furthermore, the ME-economy is unconcerned with the loss of resources for future generations; loss of habitat for other species; loss of biodiversity; loss of peace, quiet, and amenity - unless it can



be sold. The ME-economy is thus a DIS-EMBEDDED system, which bears no responsibility for the life cycle of its environment. It is disengaged from ECOLOGICAL TIME - the time it takes to restore the effects of human activity, if there is even the possibility of renewal and replenishment within the ecosystem.

The valued economy can also be seen as disengaged from BIOLOGICAL TIME - the time of replenishment and renewal for the human body in its daily cycle and life cycle. It is therefore not unexpected that such an economic system should disrupt biological and ecological systems. Destructiveness is central to its fundamental structure.

How then did such a disembodied and disembodied system emerge?

Women's Work as the Bridge Between the ME-Economy and the Ecosystem

Ecofeminists see women's work as the 'bridge' between unsustainable economic systems and the embedded nature of human existence.

The gendered nature of human society means that women in most societies throughout history have done the routine work of the body, whether as food growers or domestic workers. Dominant men have distanced themselves from these roles and taken roles with higher status, whether as ritual leaders, traders, or war-makers.

In most societies there is some version of the 'men's house,' a separate place or set of activities which are barred to women. Within this space men concoct the elaborate socio-political 'games' that maintain their dominance. In modern societies women have stormed these men's houses: law, business, medicine, politics, the military - but only on male terms. As Audre Lorde and other feminists have argued, you cannot use men's tools to break down the men's house.



My basic argument is thus that male-dominated socio-economic systems have not accepted the embodied and embedded nature of human existence. Instead, this has been rejected and despised as women's work. Value systems have therefore been erected on a false base. The modern economy does meet many of our basic needs but that is not its primary purpose. It bases its value on profitable financial exchange or prestige occupations, not sustainable provisioning on an equitable basis. The command economy of the Soviet Union was little better even though it tried to meet basic needs, for it valued male militarism and monumentalism equally highly. Women continued to carry the double burden of work and the ecological consequences were appalling.

We cannot however, look to women or to nature for the answer. If women step in and sort out the ME-economy's mess they are again doing women's work and no wisdom will have been gained. Rather, it is the responsibility of dominant men and the few women who have joined them to recognize the false base upon which historic systems have rested. This understanding will be triggered by the instability and unsustainability of the ME-economy, for falsely grounded economic systems have built-in contradictions (as Marx has pointed out).

Men and women can then jointly construct new socio-economic structures that are egalitarian and sustainable. But where to begin? Though a number of greens suggest returning to a subsistence economy, I am not sure this is practicable for urbanized and industrialized societies. We should certainly support existing subsistence economies to retain their skills and resource base. However, I would envisage most people living in an economic system based on an equitable division of labour

and mutually achieved sufficiency, rather than peasant-style self-sufficiency.

Ecofeminist Economics: Getting from There to Here

The central feature of the modern ME-economy is the fact that it is beyond the control of even those who benefit from it. In a very real sense it is always THERE, somewhere else (national, trans-national, global) and never HERE, where we live. Although most of us take the THERE economy for granted, very little of it is HERE within our control. This is fundamentally undemocratic and makes us behave in unsustainable ways to secure our livelihood.

What would an ecofeminist economy look like instead?

1. There would be a shift of focus from disembedded and disembodied structures to patterns of work and consumption that are sensitive to the human life cycle and to ecological sustainability.
2. Local production would be oriented to local needs using sustainable local resources with minimal waste.
3. Basic food provisioning would be local and seasonal. Food would be grown locally where possible, but direct purchasing arrangements could also be agreed upon with local farmers. Farmers' markets would be encouraged where they do not already exist.
4. Provisioning of necessary goods and services would be the main focus of economic systems, not money-making. It should be possible for people to live and work entirely within a provisioning system.
5. The emphasis would be on useful work

rather than employment. That is, people would not need to do harmful work in order to have a livelihood. Any additional profit-based economic activity would be subject to stringent resource/pollution and labour exploitation rules.

6. Work and life would be integrated. The workplace and living base would be interactive. People of all ages and abilities would share activities. Households would vary from single person to multi-person.

7. Necessary work would be fulfilling and shared by both genders. Work and leisure would interact. Festivals and other celebratory activities would regularly punctuate productive work.

8. Inter-regional and international trade would be seen as a cultural as much as an economic exchange. Travel would be undertaken for education and communication rather than consumption.

9. Personal security would rest in the social reciprocity of a provisioning WE-economy rather than in money accumulation systems, particularly in old age.

Building an economic system which truly values women and nature requires clear vision and understanding, as well as much political work, beginning in the local communities where everyone lives. ❧

Mary Mellor is a professor at Northumbria University in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, U.K., where she directs the Sustainable Cities Research Institute. She is the author of *Breaking the Boundaries: Toward a Feminist Green Socialism* (Virago, 1992), *Feminism and Ecology* (New York University Press, 1997), and *The Politics of Money: Towards Sustainability and Economic Democracy* (with Frances Hutchinson and Wendy Olsen), forthcoming from Pluto Press.

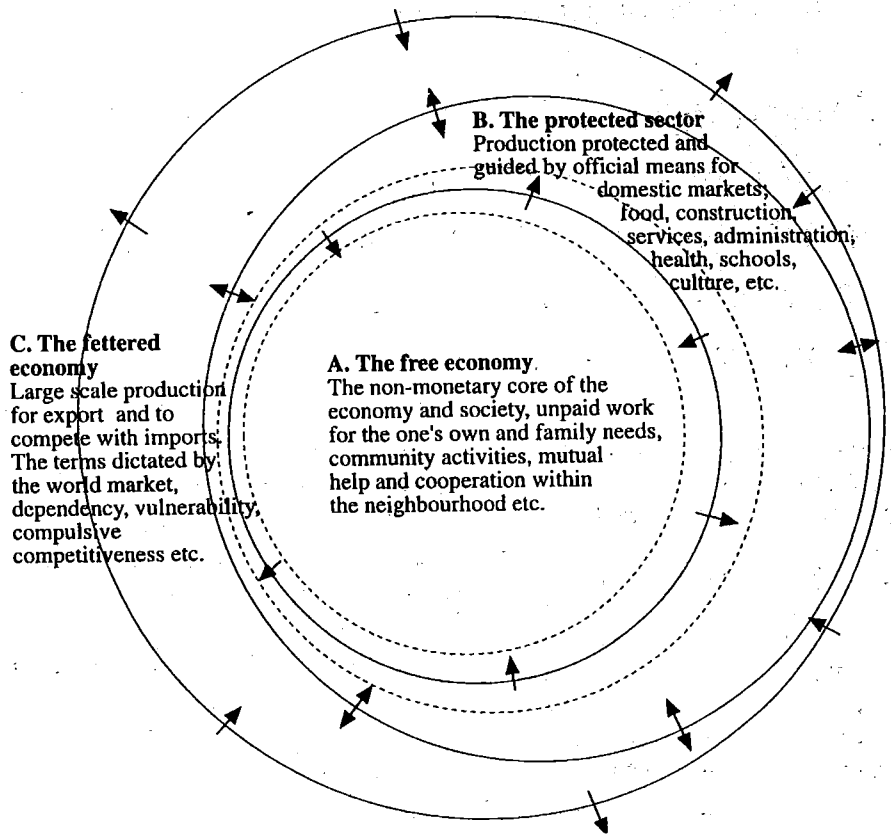
This paper was presented in May, 1999 as part of a public lecture series on ecological economics sponsored by Fundacio Bancaixa in Valencia, Spain.

"The Aim is Livelihood..."

An Interview with Hilikka Pietilä

Hilikka Pietilä has been an activist for women's rights, peace, global human rights, and economic justice for decades. Her 1983 paper, "Revival of Non-Monetary Economy Makes Economic Growth Unnecessary", written with University of Joensuu economist Kyosti Pulliainen, contains a path-breaking alternative economic model depicted visually as three concentric circles (see diagram). At the centre, the "free" economy is the domain where economic activity takes place without any exchange of money, in households, families and communities. This sector includes child-rearing, household work, subsistence food production, construction, maintenance and repair of home-built goods, volunteer work in neighbourhoods, elder care, home nursing, etc. Surrounding this "free" economy is the "protected" sector where nationally-determined rules and policies defend private property, protect consumers, regulate food and drug safety, provide public services, support farmers, and otherwise reign in market excesses to some extent, while nominally promoting economic prosperity and social welfare within the nation. Beyond this lies the realm of economic activity which is "fettered" to the global marketplace, where prices, exchange rates, and trading rules are set by the world market, and local firms and individuals' economic actions are constrained and directed from outside.

The implications of this model, in an ecological sense, are that the "free" sector, which is fairly limited in space and depends on the local environment for many of its inputs and outputs, is much more likely to be sustainable and ecologically-sensitive than the other two circles – where the exigencies of "nature" are blended with and counterposed to many other factors in determining production



decisions and market outcomes. As Hilikka Pietilä writes, "It is in the vital interest of humanity to preserve living nature, the biosphere, in optimal shape for life, cultivation, and healthy human habitation.... The living potential of nature is the interface between economy and ecology, human culture facing the ecological laws".¹

The concentric-circles model was cited by Marilyn Waring in her 1988 book *If Women Counted*, and Hilikka Pietilä's economic visioning since then has included papers in the journal *Ecological Economics* and in books on community development, women's international organizing within the United Nations, and at many international conferences. She is a tireless international advocate for

global income redistribution and economic justice.

Ellie Perkins interviewed Hilikka Pietilä in June, 2001 in Oslo, Norway, where both were attending the annual conference of the International Society for Feminist Economics (IAFFE).

Ellie: I'd like first to ask you about the background to your concentric circles model.

Hilikka: [In] the late 70's and beginning of the 80's, there were those who were concerned with the problems of international relationships and the inequality between rich and poor countries in the North and South. There was a lot of discussion about how to stop the growth in the North, how

to stop the rich from becoming richer in order to let the poor grow.... To find the arguments and ways which would prove, for instance, in a country like Finland, that the growth in the rich countries is not necessary.... It's an issue we can manage so differently. Not to [claim] that the nation-

That is the only way to survive. We have to grow. And they try to grow, and they've [expressed] this opinion to each other for so long that they all believe it. And still, in our societies, we see around us hundreds of small enterprises of women. All kinds of little shops and hairdressers and

some sensible purposes, but it's not a basic need for anybody. It's a world company now and they want to grow bigger and bigger.... [But] the growth is not automatic, and it's not necessary.

E: At this conference, though, many people have been talking about how the discipline of economics also fuels this growth.... That's one of the tenets of neo-classical economics, that growth is necessary in order to maintain the economy. So that illustrates, in contradiction to reality, the theory is that growth is important. I just want to ask you about how you think the discipline or the field of economics needs to change if we are going to have more sustainable, real-world economies in the future. Or do you think it's irrelevant? It could be that economics is totally irrelevant.

H: I think the whole existence of feminist economics is a kind of challenge, whether this kind of economics is useful or not. As I said, it's so obvious, for instance, that enterprises don't need to grow in order to survive. So it is clear, when one thinks for a minute, that [the] household is necessary to maintain this whole continuation of the human species. Now, the theories go in the direction where they try to do away with the household.

E: To pretend it doesn't exist or to kill it.

H: Yes, they don't want to think of any necessary work that's done there because they would like to sell all these services. They try to make us total pawns of markets, helpless pawns. If we let that happen, then the markets will legitimize their existence forever, because then human beings would not survive without markets. We are on that kind of path already. We are not strong enough against all this commercial manipulation which is taking place. I have really felt, for instance, in Finland now that there would be... a stronger movement of people who try to decrease their consumption. [But] that would be taken as a kind of... crime against the fatherland.

E: That leads me to the other question I want to ask you about local level economic institutions in Finland that you've done research on and how these are threatened by globalization. How community-based

They don't want to think of any necessary useful work that's done outside the market because they would like to sell all these services and products... They try to make us total pawns of markets.

al economy had to grow in order to provide all these police and public services we have built up and want to retain.... This limit to growth was a very big issue in the 70's. For instance, here in Norway, they made in 1972 a public opinion survey asking, "do we need economic growth, and do we need more consumption?" More than 70% of people said, "we don't need it, we have enough." So we don't need to grow all the time.

E: But even if people feel that way, what can they do about it? It seems there's no way to stop the economy from growing.

H: The economy does not grow automatically. For sure, nature is growing automatically... but the economy does not grow like that. It's a man-made phenomenon.

E: It seems to be assumed that the growth will happen.

H: They try to make us believe so, so that we wouldn't try to do anything about it. It's one way of making people feel powerless.... But we can stop the growth of consumption, each in his or her own life.

E: Despite the fact that there are many people who live in a simple way and see that as a goal, still the economies keep growing, the ecological degradation keeps happening, and the gender roles don't change very much.

H: Men [have said] for 30 years at least, if the enterprise does not grow, it will die.

help centres, and there are plenty and they exist for decades and they don't die and they don't grow.

E: Because they're providing a useful service that's appropriate for the community.

H: The aim of women is not to prove their growth or strength; the aim is livelihood, for themselves and their families.

E: Sufficiency.

H: Yes. To maintain family. This is so clear that if we take five minutes in each of our surroundings, we can point out several of these enterprises. On my street in Helsinki, there is a little flower kiosk at the corner, which came there when the building was finished 35 years ago. It's still there.

E: Is it run by a woman?

H: It's run by a woman.

E: The same woman?

H: I think it changed once. This is so clear. We don't need to do research, we can just look around. We have, for instance, in Finland, this crazy Nokia, which is producing mobile telephones and filling the whole world with these mobiles and they have been growing and growing. Originally this enterprise started 50 years ago to produce rubber boots.... Rubber boots are very useful, but the mobile telephone is just a toy.... It can be used for

economies and economies of sufficiency are threatened by not only the EU but the World Trade Organization (WTO) and globalization in its entirety. When free trade allows imports of food and other things, cheaply produced elsewhere, it can put people out of work and endanger the stability of local and national economies.

H: I think there are two different processes. One is the self-initiated activities of the local people which we had for 20-30 years, which was really an uprising in a way against the culture which was about to deprive the countryside, the people, of the way they were used to living. Very much cultivating their surroundings and not gathering enormous amounts of property, but just enough to make a reasonable, dignified life. And that movement was functioning for a long time very much based on the voluntary, unpaid work of the people. It was their strength, because that was their own resource, that was in their own hands. They didn't need anything from anyone.

E: Right, no money was involved?

H: No money – well, very little money was involved. They could organize some things when they needed some money.... But, now even this movement, unfortunately, and I'm very sad about it, has been corrupted because after we became a member of the EU.... policies coming from the EU, intentionally or not, have tamed the movement by channelling some money according to certain policies of the EU that go beyond Finnish policies.... And, I think now they have become dependent on outside money. I was so enthusiastic about the movement and I proposed an alternative Nobel Prize for them.... In '92 we received the [Right Livelihood Award].

E: What's the name of the movement?

H: It's the Finnish Village Action Movement. It was about this time in '92 that the campaign against EU membership started in Finland.... It was impossible for us, the resistance movement, to be able to win that battle.... But the other story in the countryside is the fate of agriculture. And that is exactly what is not only going to be corrupted; it's going to

die. Because we live in nature where we have very distinct seasons. We have wonderful spring and summer, when all of nature is just exploding... And then we can grow food and we can have cattle on the greens and everybody is happy. But we cannot compete with the countries where they grow all year round.... We can make a farm as perfect as ever, we can use all the mechanical tools to make production more effective, but we still don't get more than one harvest a year because 2/3 of the land is covered by snow and ice, and that's that. That's why the international agriculture trade between the different parts of the globe is absurd. It's just absurd, because it's not possible. The globe is not giving equal options for production. That is something Mother Nature would not bring to the negotiation table at the WTO. Her terms are not flexible. Now, still those crazy persons negotiating these trade agreements and policies simply deny this... One does not need to think more than five minutes to understand that it is absurd. And still they push and push and say that, for instance, in Finland we should make our agriculture more competitive.... They can use more machinery, they can produce with less labour, but they cannot change the climate. So how does it help?

E: Another thing I wanted to ask you about is your work for the United Nations and about women's role in the UN and also the UN's potential for improving gender equity [and] environmental economic sustainability in the world. You must have some faith that the United Nations can play a useful role in both of those areas.

H: The UN has been doing a lot for the advancement of women.... Women don't have much power in the UN either, but still

women have influenced that institution... since 1919 when the League of Nations was formed. So that is one story; but the other story is environmental issues and what the UN has been doing or not doing. I think these are issues of very much a related nature.... [The] gender perspective... and the environment perspective,



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they both penetrate everything that is going on in this world. And they penetrate everything that is done in the UN.

E: It seems to me that of the major international organizations, the UN is the one that goes farthest in that direction. It goes way further than the WTO or the World Bank or almost any national government, in integrating women's concerns and environmental concerns into its whole program of action.

H: The field of advancement of women and integrating this gender perspective is very much in the beginning because the issue of gender perspective only came into the picture in the Beijing conference in the Platform for Action, which was adopted in 1995. But it is well on the way. I don't think the environmental perspective is as much on the way.... Women can influence the governments on their own faith, and women have done this enormously effectively and they have had a

UN resolutions and UN adopted programs don't become true if people don't make them true at the national level. The UN can't go into countries and implement

double strategy. If they don't get something forward at the national level, they internationally cooperate beyond their governments and they bring it up to the international level, then they produce at the UN a wonderful program like Platform for Action from the Beijing conference and they go home and say to the government, "you have adopted this program, you better implement it." But women have used this strategy for their own sake, not for the sake of nature. Not for the sake of the environment. And no one else has any such strategy for the environment either. [Nonetheless], there is a fairly strong environmental movement in the world, and I think it's gaining strength.

E: I think they tried very hard in Rio in '92, and the Osaka experience is just so discouraging because even when governments adopt a platform that's fairly pro-environment, they just ignore it. Movements at home are not strong enough to

counter those against implementation.

H: Yes, that is it exactly.... Because UN resolutions and UN adopted programs don't become true if the people don't make them true at the national level. The UN cannot go into countries and implement. They always depend on the government's policies to become true or not.... And there's this globalized economy now, because the companies have conglomerated themselves into such power blocs, governments are just helpless.... And that's why the governments try to make groups like the European Union, but the European Union is implementing structural [adjustment]² policies in Europe instead of helping the European government to resist.

E: So structural adjustment comes full circle? It comes to Canada? It comes to Europe?

H: It comes to the industrialized countries now.

E: Even to the US, although they don't

call it that. Last question: ...if you know some young women who want to be involved in changing the status quo and making the world a better place, what should they do? Where should they put their energy?

H: ...I think first they have to do their homework. They have to make it clear what is going on. Because the better you know this, the better you can see the points you can influence. You can intervene. I believe in awareness. I don't believe in mass movements which are just screaming some slogans ...although the mass manifestations may be impressive, and of course they are good to have sometimes to show that... we don't accept what is going on in this world.

E: Yes.

H: But it is still not enough. We need more and more. All people should try to work on these things in their own minds in order to really be aware of what's going on in this world, and ask themselves.... What are the values we are for? \square

¹ Pietilä, H. (1997). "The triangle of the human economy: household-cultivation-industrial production. An attempt at making visible the human economy in toto." *Ecological Economics* Vol. 20 No. 2, February 1997, p. 114.

² "Structural adjustment" refers to policies which aim to cut government expenses by reducing spending on welfare, education, health care, transit, and other public services, thus decreasing the capabilities of governments while increasing the role of private enterprise.

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Markets or Discourse?

A Green Feminist Alternative Value Process

Ellie Perkins

Feminist economists have been at the forefront in pointing out that markets are often inefficient at allocating goods and services, and inappropriate for estimating their value. This paper explores an alternative allocation and valuation methodology for collective or widely-used goods, services and assets called "discourse-based valuation," which is receiving attention from ecological and feminist economists.

Why is Discourse-Based Valuation Needed

Many market prices for goods and services show gender (and other) inequities related to power dynamics in patriarchal society.¹ This is why nurses, daycare workers and secretaries must fight lengthy battles for pay equity reflecting their level

of responsibility, and why neoconservative governments offload "caring services" formerly provided by funded public institutions to churches, volunteer organizations, households, and underpaid marginal/immigrant/racialized workers. Collusion and abuses of market power provide evidence that many markets are far from efficient or fair. Inputs to the human economic system provided by "nature" have, of course, been expropriated without compensation as long as there has been economic activity, and outputs from the economic system have been similarly offloaded. For environmental goods and services which have no markets, it is standard practice to estimate proxy prices using quite bizarre methods: house price differentials in different neighbourhoods are used as a proxy for the value of clean air, scenic views, and other environmental amenities; the amount of money some



people spend to visit national parks becomes an estimate of the value of conserving nature and biodiversity; questionnaires are used to probe public support for hypothetical environmental protection measures;² estimates of the value of housework for national economies may be calculated using preliminary census or time-use survey information and the minimum wage. From a feminist and ecolog-

DIRECT DEMOCRACY IN ROSSLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA

The town of Rossland has instituted a political system which involves a much higher degree of direct democracy than exists in most municipalities. Voters can force the withdrawal of any bylaw before its passage by gathering the signatures of 20 percent of registered voters in the town and winning a referendum on the issue. Citizens can also propose any new bylaw which, if 20 percent of the voters sign a petition in support, is subject to a general referendum and must be enacted by the town council. Both of these features of the Rossland political system encourage dialogue among the town's residents and have led to broader citizen participation.¹¹

Of the thirteen referendums held in Rossland between 1990 (when its political system was established) and 1998, seven concerned financial issues and six related to other policy measures. Ten were initiated by council, and only three by citizens; this indicates that council soon grasped the value of the referendum as a tool for garnering political support for new initiatives.¹²

While the Rossland system may not be appropriate for other towns in all details, and moneyed interests with political power have the potential to hijack decision-making in any community, the point is that local communities can seek and find their own ways to make their governance more democratic¹³ and that a shift in the powers of different levels of government is warranted by globalization-related economic and political pressures.¹⁴

Gender considerations are only mentioned in the published materials on Rossland in connection with the outcome of a council election in 1999 in which "to get a few women on council, to shake up the old boys network, became a cause in the election"¹⁵. When only one woman was elected, but other faces changed, the "balance and cohesiveness" that had earlier characterized the council in its deliberations was gone, and the future of Rossland's system became "an open question."¹⁶

ical viewpoint, such "prices" are very problematic as measures of the value of both marketed and unmarketed things.

Since many public decisions involving environmental amenities relate to government-owned assets, not privately-owned ones, it is arguably inappropriate to apply market-based economic approaches which may serve for private and individual consumer-type decision-making, but which are not necessarily well-suited to the collective decision-making required in relation to public goods.³ Furthermore, the diversity of value-systems and personal views which exists in any community or jurisdiction can create a vibrant climate for understanding the implications of political decisions and finding flexible, creative solutions to political conundrums.⁴ There are long roots of these ideas in the political theory of "deliberative democracy" and the "public sphere".⁵

The measurement and acknowledgement of women's economic contributions is a crucial feminist issue. This goes far beyond "wages for housework," and requires deep understanding of the reasons why money values and standard estimation techniques are inadequate to measure activities which serve as the foundation of all economies, both in the North and the South. Demonstrating that fairer and more accurate techniques, such as discourse-based valuation, are workable and can meet feminist concerns regarding equity of all kinds, is an important empirical and theoretical endeavour.



Since market-derived prices are often completely inadequate for valuing the contributions of women's work, earth processes and ecosystem inputs to the economy, an alternative must be found if existing market-based systems are to be gradually transformed. "Discourse-based valuation" is one promising and increasingly-used alternative method of measuring and comparing the values of unmarketed goods and services, without depending primarily on prices. It legitimizes social and discussion-centred valuation processes while calling into question market-derived, centralized, and context-less values.

What is Discourse-Based Valuation?

"Discourse-based valuation" is a process which brings together all people or groups with an interest in the political decision for which a valuation of various goods and/or services is sought. By discussing their various perspectives on the valuation issues, participants can arrive at a common understanding of the factors which may lead to political outcomes which are acceptable to all.⁶ Valuation thus becomes a step along the way towards political consensus.

The characteristics of discourse-based valuation are as follows:

- 1) It brings together all constituencies concerned with the outcome of a particular political decision to consider collectively the options and trade-offs involved.
- 2) It requires a considered and concerted effort to include, respect, and give voice to ALL constituencies affected. Near the beginning of the process, participants take time to consider who is not present that should be present, and how best to include those missing concerns.
- 3) Government officials and agencies are committed to implement and act upon the decisions and outcomes of the discourse process.
- 4) It generally begins, and is most useful, at the local level. The particular form the process takes is determined by the participants.

PARTICIPATIVE BUDGETING IN PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL

The City of Porto Alegre, with 1.3 million inhabitants, in 1989 instituted a Participative Budget process in which citizens, meeting in groups by neighbourhoods and issue-interests, develop the budget priorities and elect delegates to draw up the municipal budget and check on the implementation of previous years' plans. This participatory system was implemented in conjunction with tax increases which were necessary to balance the city's finances, and it has brought about a dramatic shift in public interest and involvement in the political process, from widespread apathy to more than 100 thousand participants in the budget meetings.

The use of public funds has also changed as a result of the

Participative Budget. "Right at the beginning it became very clear that the priorities from the poorest regions, where most of the population lives, were very different from the ones with better financial conditions. In the poor sections, for instance, the basic sewerage system was the most needed and sought, while the rich suburbs were claiming for a cleaner city with more parks and boulevards."⁷ Public expenditures under the Participative Budget have emphasized basic sanitation, water and sewer infrastructure, street paving, draining, public lighting, and education. (See also "A Brazilian Neighbourhood Evaluates its Quality of Life" *WVE International magazine*, Issue 50/51).

- 5) It starts from local needs and priorities.
- 6) It explicitly acknowledges that valuation in money terms is problematic for many important goods and services, and emphasizes the issues of commensuration, compensation, and trade-offs among marketed and unmarketed things.

Discourse-Based Valuation in Practice

Examples of such participatory discussion processes used to make public decisions include representative citizen juries and citizen panels which are empowered to make complex land-use decisions in the U.K., the Netherlands, and other European countries; "direct democracy" initiatives in cities from Rossland, British Columbia to Porto Alegre, Brazil; and the myriad local sustainability indicators being developed by municipalities in conjunction with Local Agenda 21 (see boxes).

From a feminist perspective, of course, the questions of who participates in such discourse and on what terms, how the political playing ground is leveled, and what form "consensus" takes, are crucially important.⁷ While the inequities of capitalist, patriarchal societies cannot be eradicated simply through discourse, attempts to name and problematize them — and to diversify the race, ethnicity, class, and economic status of those discussing political decisions — have an important role to play in their demise. Feminist economics requires that any necessary common-denominator valuation process go far beyond market valuation to encompass the needs and views of all, especially those closest and most affect-



LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

An increasing number of local communities throughout North America and Europe are developing local sustainability or quality-of-life indicators, in which they identify and track the factors which are locally important for community well-being. Cities including Toronto, Halifax, Denver, Chattanooga, Seattle, and Philadelphia have begun to devel-

op such welfare indicators, in a process which involves grassroots participation and technical information and relies on public engagement. In Halifax, for example, a group of academics and local activists is developing a locally-applicable version of the Genuine Progress Index as a measure of the real values reflected in the local economy.¹⁶

ed, even if their political power is traditionally limited.⁸

From an ecological point of view, any valuation methodology is inevitably human-centred. Even discourse-based valuation can only include non-human interests insofar as some humans stand up for the importance of those values. While deep ecologists might wish for more emphasis on the interests of nonhuman "nature," and even future human generations are poorly represented in a discourse process, it remains the case that discourse-based valuation allows a wide diversity of viewpoints to be represented, so there is less likelihood that any perspective will be totally ignored.

Implications of a Discourse-Based Approach to Valuation

For academics, the implications of feminist contributions to economics are both demanding and exciting. We need to continue to press for the types of data and information needed to develop these ideas further; we must also construct and test valuation techniques which respect the politics of diversity. Theoretical work in feminist ecological economics is advancing the agenda of naming and quantifying gender-based and ecological 'externalities' and previously-invisible inputs to economic processes, and this work is crucial.

The blinkers of traditional economic concepts and their unquestioned use in policy circles will not be removed, however, without pressure from activists. Feminists, environmentalists, free-trade opponents and community development workers, among many others, can find much common cause in the work of insisting on the need for local political processes which give a voice to, name, and act on diverse realities. Technological advances make possible the generation and exchange of information and participation in decision-making to facilitate this; communities and political groups need to insist that their interests be prioritized.

Discourse-based valuation allows local governments to reduce expenditures on circuitous and inane economic valuation



techniques, while streamlining the political decision and public approval process. It is consistent with local democratization initiatives in response to globalization, and while it is no panacea, it represents a step toward more diverse and equitable public decision-making.

Despite its complications, discourse-based valuation is one means for people to express their different realities, work toward commonalities, incorporate them into political-economic decision processes, and possibly reduce markets' gender biases. Its successful use depends on the "political will" of the whole community. The kinds of decisions faced by even small communities are increasing in complexity due to globalization, which necessitates more flexible political decision-processes and may be a factor in the apparent recent expansion of more direct democracy at the local level. As opportunities for grassroots intervention in national political processes are limited by trade and finance agreements negotiated internationally, people in some municipalities are responding by taking steps to increase the role of public processes, especially at the local level.⁹

These preliminary thoughts about a more holistic approach to valuation underscore

the need for more holistic political processes as well. The unveiling of 'homo economicus' (economic man)¹⁰ and the democratization of valuation are both parts of an even more comprehensive project: the construction of more equitable and less patriarchal societies. ❧

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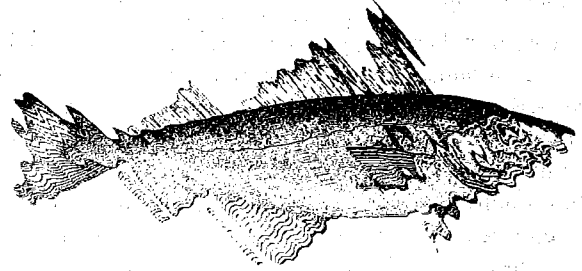
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Ellie Perkins teaches ecological economics and environmental economics in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. She is completing a three-year research project on feminist ecological economics, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference of the International Association for Feminist Economics in Oslo, Norway in June, 2001.

Lessons and Linkages

Building an Analysis of Gender, Globalization and the Fisheries

Martha MacDonald



GLOBALIZATION HAS AFFECTED fisheries worldwide, as well as the women, men and communities dependent on this resource. Fisheries communities around the world have had common experiences of stock depletion, lost livelihoods, deteriorating conditions of work and disintegration of communities in the wake of new technologies and new management and trade regimes. Though these developments have often not benefited women and their families, there has been little application of a gender and globalization analysis to the case of fisheries. Yet the fishery has long provided an interesting vantage point to explore processes of capital accumulation and relations of class and gender. Insights from previous work on gender and fisheries, globalization and fisheries, and gender and globalization can be a guide to develop a gendered analysis of fisheries workers and communities in the current context. Furthermore, linking the experiences of fishing communities worldwide would contribute to an understanding of globalization in general, its gendered nature and its failure as a basis for sustainable development – in human or ecological terms.

Lessons from Gender and Fisheries Research

As with other work on women and the economy, research on the fishery began by making women's contributions visible – documenting the importance of the unpaid

work of women to family fishing enterprises and communities. This work highlighted the relationship between unpaid and paid work, and the need for the contributions of women to be better recognized (whether in social security policy, development policy, or fisheries management policy). Research also focused on the gender division of labour in paid work - in harvesting, processing and distribution - and the gender inequalities that exist in wages, working conditions and access to income support. Issues of intra-household labour allocation, workload and access to income were addressed.

Research on these issues in the fishery has also often been situated in the context of restructuring in the industry. The industrialization of the Atlantic fishery in the post-war era brought women into the plants and changed family work and income patterns; given the gender division of labour in the industry and the community, the pressures of fisheries restructuring in the 1980s differentially affected men and women, as did the crisis and collapse of the groundfishery in the 1990s.¹

Researchers have clearly documented the gendered assumptions and impacts of a host of policies - whether it be access to the resource as a result of fisheries management regulations, access to new technology offered by extension workers, access to income security support, or access to labour adjustment support in the wake of the collapse of a fishery.² Policy is not gender neutral, as has been documented in

many fishery contexts and communities. The fight for women's fair access and participation has been ongoing. Women have pursued these aims through involvement in both local and international fishery organizations, often encountering resistance within these male-dominated groups.

Thus, a global analysis builds on the foundation of this past work on gender and fisheries which emphasizes making women's contributions visible in the context of ongoing restructuring, challenging the gendered assumptions and impacts of policy, and mobilizing women to work within and alongside fisheries organizations to have their voices heard.

Lessons from Globalization and Fisheries Research

At the simplest level, fisheries restructuring must be placed in the context of broader restructuring, for many of the trends in technology and markets are occurring across industries. A more integrated understanding of the global dynamics of the industry also needs to be developed, for changes in local fisheries or communities can no longer be understood without reference to developments in other countries and on the international policy front. Furthermore, fisheries technology moves rapidly around the world, displacing traditional methods and revealing the destructive nature of globalization. For example, competitive pressures and the application of increasingly sophisticated technology

result in stocks being exploited to near extinction. When this happens in a particular area, workers and communities suffer, but capital can move on – new species and new communities can be exploited. Companies have diversified and achieved flexibility while workers and communities have lost flexibility.

The case of fisheries highlights issues of resource sustainability and environmental destruction, and draws attention to the increased vulnerability of workers and communities affected by globalization. While traditional fishing practices conserved the resource, and integrated fishing into a coherent set of activities which provided livelihoods for households and communities, new technologies and an export-oriented fishery have led to increased specialization at the level of households and communities, and an inability to survive fluctuations in stocks or markets.³ Issues of food security arise when free trade in food threatens a country's ability to feed itself, and food safety has also become a concern, especially in relation to genetically-modified organisms and aquaculture products.

Lessons from Gender and Globalization

In considering the specific case of the fisheries one can learn from the wealth of research and writing on gender and globalization in recent years. Several key themes emerge from the literature.

Feminization/casualization of labour: Considerable attention has been directed to the role of cheap female labour in the flexibility strategies of corporations, particularly in the examples of labour-intensive export industries throughout the developing world.⁴ While wage labour provides women income and a measure of economic independence, it does not necessarily mean a net improvement in their well-being. Women often become "free to labour" when families lose independent access to productive resources, with obvious applications to the loss of community-based fisheries world-wide.

More recently, feminization has come to be associated with the general trend toward informal or casual work, which affects

both men and women. In other words, jobs have taken on the characteristics of low pay and insecurity traditionally associated with women's jobs.⁵ Precarious employment, deteriorating working conditions and weakening of labour standards have all been experienced in fishing communities in Atlantic Canada in the past decade.

Gender division of labour: Given the pervasive gender division of labour worldwide, women and men are affected differently by global shifts in production. First, there is the gendered nature of the work that is created and lost as the fishery restructures due to technological change, new species, and new products. Secondly, policy changes are also gendered, as shown by analysis of the differential impacts of trade agreements such as NAFTA⁶ and of labour adjustment policies,⁷ because of the gender division of labour.

Women's unpaid work: Economic restructuring has had severe consequences for the unpaid work of women – in households, communities, and subsistence production. Researchers have documented the increased workload of women due to cuts in health, education and social services as a result of structural adjustment policies and government downsizing.⁸ Others have documented the increase in the work of women to find firewood, clean water and other daily necessities in the wake of privatization of resources and environmental destruction associated with export-oriented production.⁹ Women also disproportionately bear the stress and emotional burden as families deal with the fall-out of livelihood loss, as was the case in the wake of the fishing moratorium in Atlantic Canada.

Access to resources: Attention has also been drawn to the unequal access of women to resources needed to survive in the global economy. These resources range from credit, to new technologies, to resource access and labour adjustment policy entitlements. With export fisheries development, for example, women may lose their access to common resources, since under some adjustment programs, women were disproportionately disqualified as 'fishers' and had difficulty accessing training programs.¹⁰

Gender relations: While globalization uses existing gender relations, as emphasized above, it also changes gender relations, in complex ways that can be either positive or negative for women.¹¹ Women may gain economic independence, and the market may break up some patriarchal traditions. On the other hand, women may lose traditional sources of power and traditional gender inequities may be exacerbated as families and communities respond to economic crisis and insecurity.

The need to engender macro economic analysis: Given evidence about the importance of gender as a key analytical factor at the micro levels of the household and labour market, feminist economists have been working to incorporate gender into macro economic analysis, which underlies national and international fiscal and trade policy.¹² These economists echo the concerns raised by women's movements around the world by arguing that economic models and policies must take account of intra-household inequalities in the distribution of labour and income, whereby women may disproportionately bear the burdens of export development and structural adjustment policies. They also address issues of sustainability in human and ecological terms, and argue that economic policy decisions are based on inadequate measures of economic reality. Since unpaid production is not counted, nor is the value of the reproductive labour of women that sustains the health, education and well-being of families and communities, the economic 'gains' from global development are overstated and the true costs are not measured.

Globalization, Gender and Fisheries Roadmap

The knowledge and experience gained in these research areas provides the foundation upon which to build an analysis of gender, globalization and the fisheries. One can imagine a set of roadmaps which depict local patterns and international linkages. For example, gender issues include the impact on women's resource access, opportunity to make a living, and burden of unpaid work, as well as the broader

implications associated with sustainability of resources, communities, cultures and livelihoods.

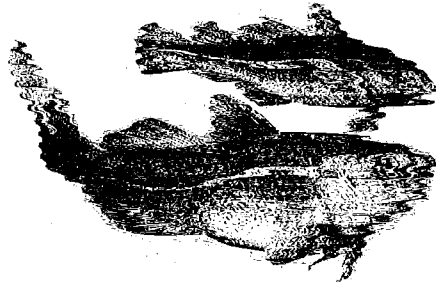
Each community analysis contributes to an international roadmap of the fisheries, with women clearly visible. For example, the change to an export fishery may eliminate women's traditional roles in marketing and processing, and break the geographic coherence of the harvest/process/consumption nexus which sustains communities. As well, geographic concentrations of harvesting and/or processing within a fishing region may develop, leaving many communities without their traditional resource base. The switch to new species may also alter the geographic location of harvesting and processing or the gender division of labour.

Links between various components in the industry chain need to be revealed for each fishery, as do links across species. As well, linkages around the world are especially critical - the picture of a particular community and region can only be completed with the knowledge of related developments elsewhere. Links with other sectors must also be mapped. For example, the expansion of either agribusiness or export fisheries may disrupt the traditional ability to combine small scale farming and fishing as a livelihood strategy. Independent producers are turned into wage labourers and watercourses are polluted, with impacts for women's work and well-being. Tourism also overlaps with the fishery in many parts of the world. Thus the future of fisheries world-wide is inextricably linked to other aspects of the unfolding globalization agenda.

Finally, a goal of the mapping is to show how fisheries are shaped by a diverse range of policies, from local and national fisheries policy (such as stock management regulations affecting access), to general national policies (such as unemployment insurance, trade, and labour market adjustment policies), to international agreements related to trade, investment and finances. The gendered impacts of these policies must be included in the mapping.

International trade policies will be increasingly relevant to understanding changes in the fisheries roadmap. For trade panels

make decisions that undermine our ability to independently regulate our resources and protect our communities.¹³ For example, the battle over agriculture around market access, domestic support, and export subsidies will establish whether food safe-



ty, food security and environmental sustainability have any legitimacy,¹⁴ setting precedents that will readily apply to fisheries. Another important trade issue concerns intellectual property deals such as TRIPS, Trade Related Intellectual Property agreements, whereby corporations can patent life forms and indigenous knowledge, which may have important fisheries applications. Negotiations around trade in services are thus crucial, as they affect the outlook for health, education, income support and other services in our communities. If these are privatized, or government policy is further restricted in these areas, rural communities and women will be especially at risk.

Challenges and Strategies for Action

It will take many people combining their pieces of the puzzle to operationalize this general framework for a gender analysis of fisheries in the context of globalization. The knowledge and experience of fisheries workers, NGO activists, and university researchers can all contribute to this analysis. However, research is not an end in itself. The goal is to better understand the processes that are so dramatically affecting the women and men in fisheries communities in order to improve their situation.

A global economy requires global analysis and action, because globalization delivers benefits to the corporate sector while

increasing inequality and insecurity for the rest of society. Though national governments claim a decreased ability to set independent economic and social policy, or regulate the market, they have actually set up the institutional supports for the global market - through agreements like NAFTA and organizations like the WTO and the World Bank - which in turn tie their hands. However, the globalization agenda and the loss of democratic control has met with mounting resistance world-wide, as demonstrated by the opposition to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), and in protests in Seattle, Washington, Quebec City and Genoa. Many of the issues in fisheries communities - resource depletion, environmental degradation, and loss of livelihoods in the name of export-development - are central concerns of the movement to alter the course of globalization.

Since international trade agreements play a key role in the future of fisheries communities, the experience and insights of fisheries workers and researchers can contribute to the mounting agenda against the agreements. The pressure to have negotiations made public must be maintained - beginning at the level of individual governments. Many fisheries workers and researchers have been active in efforts both nationally and internationally to challenge supply-side policies such as structural adjustment, privatization and deregulation. These efforts are crucial to resist one-size-fits-all economic, social, and environmental policy - nationally and internationally.¹⁵

In addition to participating in these broader efforts to restrict the power of global capital to shape the world, strategizing must be done around policy issues more narrowly related to fisheries and fisheries communities. Gender concerns have to be brought to the fore - whether it be in assessing resource management regimes (examining how women's access to the resource is affected), occupational health policies (getting health hazards for women workers recognized in Workers' Compensation programs), technology transfer or credit programs (guaranteeing access for women) or government fisheries adjustment and

income security programs. How and where can effective interventions be made?

Fishery workers, activists and researchers from the North and South have the chance to learn from each other. Pooling pieces of the puzzle from disparate communities leads to a better understanding of gender and the global fisheries, which in turn generates additional insights into the situations of women and men in particular communities. Furthermore, work on gender, globalization and fisheries communities reveals the destructive nature of globalization, highlighting sustainability issues and the erosion of non-market economic relations which are of importance far beyond this industry. ❧

¹ MacDonald, Martha and Patricia Connelly (1989). "Class and Gender in Fishing Communities in Nova Scotia." *Studies in Political Economy* 30, Autumn: 61-87; McGrath, Carmelita, Barbara Neis and Marilyn Porter (Eds.) (1995). *Their Lives and Times: Women in Newfoundland and Labrador*. St. John's: Killack Press.

² Connelly, Patricia, and Martha MacDonald (1992). "State Policy, the Household and Women's Work in the Atlantic Fishery." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26(4); Human Resources Development Canada (1996). "TAGS Household Study." The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy Background Paper. Ottawa: Evaluation and Data Development, HRDC; Muzychka, Martha (1994). "The Impact of the Cod Moratorium on Women in Newfoundland and Labrador: A Review of the Literature." St. John's: Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

³ MacDonald, Martha (1994). "Restructuring in the Fishing Industry in Atlantic Canada." In Isabella Bakker (Ed.), *The Strategic Silence*. London: Zed Books and the North-South Institute: 91-102.

⁴ Standing, Guy (1989). "Global Feminization Through Flexible Labour." *World Development* 17(7): 1077-95; Standing, Guy (1999). *Global Labour Flexibility: Seeking Distributive Justice*. London: MacMillan Press.

⁵ Vosko, Leah (1998). *No Jobs, Lots of Work: The Gendered Rise of the Temporary Employment Relationship in Canada, 1897-1997*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Graduate Programme in Women's Studies, York University, Toronto; Berik, Günseli (1999). "Globalization." In Janice Peterson and Margaret Lewis (Eds.), *The Elgar Companion to Feminist Economics*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁶ Cohen, Marjorie (1987). *Free Trade and the Future of Women's Work*. Toronto: Garamond Press. Gabriel, Christine and Laura MacDonald (1996). "NAFTA and Economic Restructuring: Some Gender and Race Implications." In Isabella Bakker (Ed.), *Rethinking Restructuring: Gender and Change in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

⁷ HRDC, *op. cit*; Muzychka, *op. cit*.

⁸ Elson, Diane (1991). "Male Bias in Macro Economics: The Case of Structural Adjustment." In D. Elson (Ed.), *Male Bias in the Development Process*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 164-190; Connelly, Patricia, Tania Lee, Martha MacDonald and Jane Parpart (1995). "Restructured Worlds/Restructured Debates: Globalization, Development and Gender." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, Special Issue: 17-38.

⁹ Agarwal, Bina (1991). "Engendering the Environment Debate: Lessons from the Indian Subcontinent." CASID Distinguished Speaker Series, No. 8, Michigan State University; Shiva, Vandana (1999). *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*. Boston: South End Press.

¹⁰ HRDC, *op. cit*.

¹¹ Benería, Lourdes (1999). "Globalization, Gender and the Doves Men." *Feminist Economics* 5(1) November: 61-84.

¹² Agarwal, Bina, Diane Elson and Caren Grown (1995). "Gender, Adjustment and Macroeconomics." *World Development* 23 (11) Special Issue; Benería *op. cit*; Berik, *op. cit*.

generation, generations at the mouth

Daphne Marlatt

clans of salmon, chinook, coho, gathering just off shore, backbones no longer intact, steam-pressured in millions of cans, picked clean barbecue leavings in a thousand garbage bags ripped open by cats, rats, they can't find their way back

what is the body's blueprint?

return what is solid to water, the first peoples said -
returned, every bone intact
generates the giving back of race, kind, kin

choked in urban outfalls, fished as they aim for rivers sediment-thick with runoff, *tamahnous* of the wild they hover, sonar streaks, impossible vision-glitches, outside pens where farmed look-alikes grow pale & drugged

kin, wild skin, wild & electric at the mouth where rivers disappear in the that that is not that, the chinook can't find their way back

come out of the blue, this flow, these energy rivers & wheels, radiant giving unlocked. & not this frozen, this canned product eagles once stripped, eagles, bears going, gone, hungry & wild outside shut doors where light pools & we pore over stock market news, refuse, refuse our interrelation, refuse to pour back

what is the body's blueprint? impermanent, shifting, energy blocks in its own becoming, a stream & streaming out to the void where rivers lose themselves

in the bardo as many beings, as waves, gather at any opening, those in-between, and not yet ones that face a river, of sperm to be here now, light pour, each fellow in its dying turn returns

what is the mouth of the river now? a toxic 0 of emptiness? teeming hole of every-becoming we create? re-entry, re-turn, verb-ing the noun out of its stuck edges and into occurrence, currents, *curra* - we've lost the verb in our currency, a frozen exchange streaming emptiness

curra (they're fishing in London now)

at the mouth of the river, clans of the possible are gathering, the chinook, the coho, rivering just off shore are us

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tamahnous - Chinook word for "spit"
Bardo - Buddhist term for the space of transition between life and death (the split region where the soul awaits rebirth).

¹³ National Action Committee on the Status of Women (1998). "Globalization: Some Implications and Strategies for Women." Toronto.

¹⁴ Barlow, Maude and Tony Clarke (2000). "The Battle After Seattle: A Working Paper for Strategic Planning and Action on the WTO." Available at the Global Trade Negotiations Home Page, www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade.

¹⁵ NAC, *op. cit*; Cohen, Marjorie (1999). "Rethinking Global Strategies," paper presented at the IAFFE Conference, Ottawa: Carleton University.

Martha MacDonald teaches economics at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Her research work focuses on community development and gender in rural, resource-dependent communities, especially in the Maritimes, and she is helping to develop a Genuine Progress Index for Nova Scotia.

STATEMENT FROM THE GENDER, GLOBALIZATION AND FISHERIES NETWORK

MAY 12, 2000

WE, THE WOMEN AND MEN OF THE GENDER, GLOBALIZATION AND FISHERIES NETWORK, HAVE IDENTIFIED concrete ways in which globalization has hurt women, their families, and coastal communities world-wide. Recurring themes that demand urgent action emerged from our research and testimony. We include Atlantic Canadian fishworkers, regional, national and international researchers and community development workers from Canada, First Nations, Tanzania, Chile, Gambia, Iceland, Mexico, USA, Norway, Brazil, India, Vietnam, Nigeria, Cuba, Spain, Denmark, the Philippines, and Thailand.

WE WANT TO PRESERVE THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF OUR CULTURES AND HERITAGE, AND ENSURE THAT PEOPLE who live in coastal communities have equal access, control, and preferential user rights of the coastal fishery. We insist that a clean and healthy ocean must have priority over the development of polluting industries.

WOMEN HAVE ALWAYS PLAYED A CRUCIAL AND ACTIVE ROLE IN FISHERIES AND IN SUSTAINING LIFE IN THEIR communities. Yet, in countries all over the world, they have been largely ignored. Women's political decisions must shape policy and we need to put warm hearts into decision-making bodies.

WE NEED TO STOP THE ENCROACHMENT OF INDUSTRIAL AND OTHER DESTRUCTIVE FISHERIES WHICH deplete marine life. We reject large tourist projects that push people out of traditional fishing grounds and communities. Tourism should complement the small-scale fisheries of coastal communities, leaving gentle ecological footprints on our landscapes.

WE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE WAY OUR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS GIVE UP TO MULTINATIONAL corporations their responsibility to protect citizens' rights and inheritance. These corporations control our resources and economies with insufficient responsibility to protect and conserve them.

WE SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE FISHERY. THE COSTS OF providing equitable access to the fishery must be borne by all citizens. In Canada, we also support the collaboration efforts of both native and non-natives to find ways to share the fishery.

DURING THE PAST WEEK WE HAVE BEEN MOVED BY THE REALITIES OF TECHNOLOGY'S DESTRUCTIVE IMPACTS on fishery resources and the ways it is forcing fisherpeople into bankruptcy. It is also eliminating jobs and livelihoods in both north and south, and threatening the health of fishworkers. Technology should be designed to produce not only a quality product but a safe working environment.

THE CONCERNS OF COASTAL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES MUST BE CENTRAL TO GOVERNMENT POLICY, fisheries management, and international trade agreements. Socially responsible policy would not abandon the health of our environments and people to unfettered international competition.

ONE OF WOMEN'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES IS TO HAVE OUR ISSUES ADDRESSED WITHIN EXISTING FISHWORKER organizations and government ministries. This conference formed alliances and promoted networking among academics and people living in coastal communities. We have made a commitment to share information and ideas, making them accessible and useful to everyone, particularly those coastal community peoples who are struggling to survive.

WE COMMIT TO RESEARCH THAT IS ETHICAL AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF COASTAL COMMUNITIES. We recognize the work and contribution of southern researchers, and together we aspire to create equitable south-north collaborative initiatives.

OUR VISION OF A SUSTAINABLE FISHERY IS BASED ON COASTAL COMMUNITIES WHERE RESOURCES ARE cautiously harvested using ocean-friendly technologies. It also promotes an environmentally and socially sustainable processing industry. We seek an industry which promotes local food security rather than the production of luxury delicacies for a global market. Fishing families must be able to afford to eat fish.

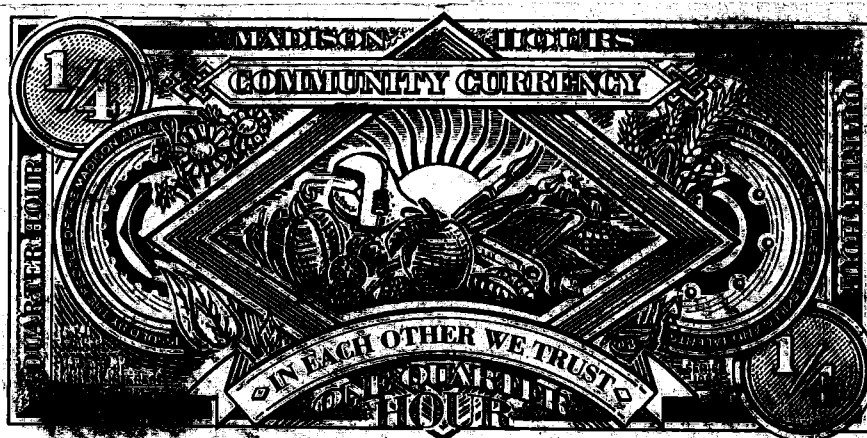
For more information contact: Barbara Neis, Department of Sociology,
Memorial University of Newfoundland (709)737-7456

Community Currencies, Value and Feminist Economic Transformation

Mary-Beth Raddon

THE PUBLICATION IN 1988 OF Marilyn Waring's book *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth* galvanized campaigns worldwide for measures of the value of unpaid work to be included in economic indicators. In *Counting for Nothing*, Waring argued that estimates of national income like the GDP are gender biased; their definition of production excludes those non-market activities—food preparation, housework, self-provisioning activities, child care, elder care, and so on—performed primarily by women for the sustenance of household members. The omission of household production from national income accounting, Waring argued, renders invisible the contribution of women's unpaid labour to the formal economy and to the daily and generational reproduction of human life. Policy makers, furnished with economic models in which non-market production is absent, concern themselves with market requirements but neglect to consider the requirements or labour conditions of household production.

Waring's work has taken a prominent place in the literature of feminist and ecological economics, furthering efforts to construct models of the economy that de-centre the market and give centrality to the "free" contributions of unpaid labour and self-organizing ecosystems. Waring's book was, foremost, a call to political action, and its arguments have led feminist and non-feminist women's organizations to join cause in seeing that unpaid work is measured and taken into account in policy decisions. Statisticians, economists and social theorists have taken up Waring's challenge to create new instruments for data collection, determine appropriate methods for imputing (estimating) money value, and devise indices of well-being as



alternatives to the GDP. These tools for quantifying the magnitude and monetary value of unpaid household work are enormously useful for feminist policy advocacy because they make the case that women's unpaid work is economically significant.

Twelve years after *Counting for Nothing*, Waring wrote a lengthy introduction to a second edition in which she took stock of such recent efforts to reform economic indicators. Here she raised concern about the enthusiasm that has developed for monetary imputation as the focus of revaluation strategies. Even in the first edition Waring registered ambivalence about imputation. Then, her hesitance revolved around whether statistical agencies should recognize a distinction between "production" and "reproduction," and how they should define the boundary of what may be monetized. She sought to use monetary imputation primarily to challenge the way official statistics depicted women, in the conduct of household duties, as non-productive, dependent, leisured housewives. Quantification and monetary valuation redefined household activities as "work," as "productive" and as part of the "economy." But, Waring wavered on the question of how far to extend these definitions. Can

monetary value be placed on the work of fostering inter-household ties, maintaining intimate relationships, and on the nurturing dimension of parenting? Moreover, is it possible to formally recognize and value the labor of childbearing, the work of human biological reproduction, within a statistical framework?

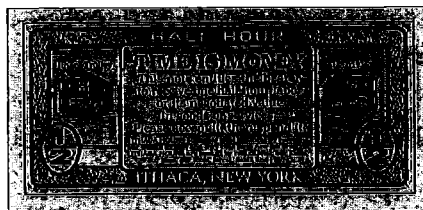
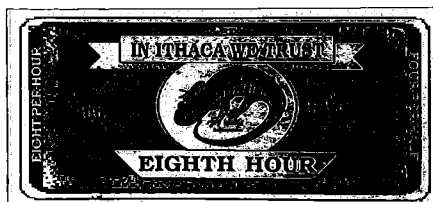
In the 1988 edition of her book, Waring stated her quandary: "While I knew that reproduction should not be imputed, I also know that we must insist that it be" (p. 232). More recently, she is less inclined to advocate "monetary imputation of all we hold dear," fearing how it may contribute to the "contagious outbreak of the illusion that everything can be reduced to a price" (1999, pp. xlviii, xix). Waring voices dismay that her appeals for imputation, aimed at "[mocking] the absurdity of the system...by obliging it to play by its own rules," may have the unintended effect of furthering the inducements for "all of life to be commodified in an economic model" (pp. 225, xxiv). So, even though imputation has provided statistical evidence of pragmatic use to feminist causes, such as the finding that the household sector greatly exceeds manufacturing as the largest productive sector in the economy, the exer-

cise itself suggests that the household is "only" another economic sector (p. xxix). It implies that the output of household labor is comparable to industries that damage human health and eco-systems, military industries and industries that super-exploit women and children. It is this outcome of statistical inclusion which Waring now finds "truly repugnant" (p. xxxi).

This dilemma relates to a crucial feminist question: how to counteract women's invisibility and, at the same time, revalue the "feminine"? The way the debate about monetary imputation is framed keeps in place a binary opposition between gendered concepts of reproduction and production, love and work, where money represents the "masculine" pole and marks the split. "Men's work" is valued in money, while "women's work" is not. What is to be done about this?

Two answers—to impute money value or to seek other, more qualitative indicators, as Waring now advocates—correspond with Julia Kristeva's description in "Women's Time" of two broad feminist strategies, which she refers to as "generations" or tiers. Bronwyn Davies, taking up Kristeva's analysis, labels the first generation "liberal feminism," in which women primarily seek access to the male symbolic order. The second generation, "radical feminism," calls instead for protection and celebration of femaleness through separation from the male order. Both approaches, argue Kristeva and Davies, are limited in their ability to fundamentally transform gender relations. On the one hand, strategies of accounting unpaid work aim for visibility and revaluation, but in constructing "women's work" as commensurable with market rationality, they legitimate the economic structures that subordinate women and the "feminine." Strategies to exalt the categories of "woman" and the "feminine," on the other hand, intensify the basic antagonism of the priced and the priceless, which also keeps gendered structures in place.

Kristeva urges the recognition of a third generation of feminism whose aim would be to transcend the dualistic frameworks that perpetuate gender hierarchy and the impasse of first and second generation fem-



inisms. She does not envision each generation superseding its predecessor in logical succession. All three can have parallel existence and build on the others' work.

I believe that the community currency movement is an example of a promising form of third generation feminist politics. Although community currencies cannot function as economic indicators on a national scale, they contribute to the imputation debate by showing that monetization is not always antagonistic to women's caring. Sometimes known as "barter" networks, community currencies such as LETS, HOURS and Time Dollars are projects of grassroots groups to generate local exchange using alternatives to the federal dollar, including paper scrip, tokens, and accounting systems of credits and debits. In such projects all three generations of feminist praxis are interwoven, as Kristeva suggests may be the case, but third tier possibilities are at the fore.

Community currency organizers are not engaged in politics of protest or separatism. Rather, their primary mode of politics is to build "community" around a full spectrum of exchange relationships resembling market transactions, barter and gifting. Practitioners conceive of the local money as a "complementary" currency, designed to overcome scarcity of the

national currency and to widen the mutual aid networks of separate nuclear families.

In the largest local money systems, such as HOURS in Ithaca, New York, products on offer include retail goods sold through storefront businesses, food, entertainment, rent and a full range of professional services. Prices for these items are often set in a combination of local and national currencies. The highest volume of transactions, however, comes from all manner of casual and personal services. Most trading activity can be seen as an extension of household activities and neighborly favours. The meanings of these exchanges are constructed in an intermediate terrain between gift and commodity, household and market, friendship and stranger-relations, where the boundaries of gender are fluid.

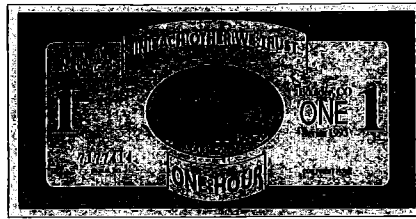
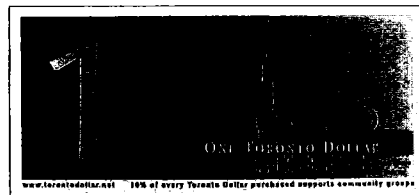
Community currencies operate on a scale of social relations which is intermediate between the intimacy of gift relations and the impersonality of market exchange. Work is accounted with some form of credit to ensure fairness and reciprocity. For women, this often means that skills and efforts once taken for granted are acknowledged. Many of the exchanges involve not just contributions of time and skills, but the teaching of skills to other members. Women participants become better able to identify their own needs and ask for other's services. Jane Wilson, co-founder of a women's skills exchange in New York City, explains in an interview how "Womanshare" creates community:

I feel that much of Womanshare is to move women forward successfully, to enhance them by taking a lot of the pressures off, so you can focus more clearly. And in a sense that is community building. The actual skills exchange always has a third component. If you come and help me organize you feel good... Because it's energized you. You have a connection and you are energized. So it's sort of "one and one makes three"... There's that component that in a straight [money] trade is not necessarily going to happen... I think that caring is the antidote to the crassness of our society. I really do. Everybody understands what the extended family is. Everybody understands what barn-raising is.

The formal aspect of Womanshare, the use of credits to keep track of the exchange of services on an equal time-for-time basis among a limited number of women, facilitates an informal aspect, what Jane Wilson calls the "third component," the energizing effect of establishing personal connections based on meeting concrete needs. The group makes conscious efforts to dissipate tensions between services for credit and acts of friendship. The "extended family" relationship of Womanshare members means credit and friendship do not have to be at odds.

This aspect of community currencies works in larger exchange networks as well. Intentionally limiting money to local circuits, or as Ross Dobson puts it, bringing money "home from the market," removes money's tendency to put distance between buyers and sellers. Community currencies are not anonymous instruments of power. As people pass the money hand to hand, tell stories about what it has bought, and, in some places, even sign the notes, community currencies come to represent and produce a sense of relatedness. The ability of communities to democratically create and govern their own money reveals to members that money has social foundations, and can be made obedient to community norms, such as gender equity. Local money projects reveal that all money is underpinned by belief. Paul Glover, who championed Ithaca HOURS, commented that the money's credibility followed from assertion, announcement and self-fulfilling prophesy. The money, he explained, was created in a "community magic act."¹

This brings me to a final suggestion for how community currencies can help re-integrate money value and the value of caring work: through attention to the spiritual meanings of money exchange. Recall the children's ditty, "Love is like a magic penny"—when you give it away you end up having more. The song asserts that love and money can be compatible, but only a magic penny is analogous to our capacity for abundant love. Money has religious origins long predating capitalism, vestiges of which are still visible in money symbols and lore.² Several recent writers have discussed the need to re-sacralize money.



They urge a deeper appreciation for the way money connects people in relationships of trust and mutual satisfaction of wants when it is transacted on a human scale. Calls to re-sacralize money are encouragements to make money more meaningful, and to bring old meanings to consciousness, to reduce the gendered schism between the supposed moral order of the family and amoral monetary system. Money relations can be moral when submerged in a context that reveres the sense of relatedness. Then money is a symbol of the well-being and prosperity we can achieve through working to meet others' needs and our own. Through projects such as community currencies, the "magic" of money exchange and the sacredness of care-giving are revealed to have the same source: awareness of our fundamental human interdependence.

The debate about imputing money value to unpaid work raises polarized options: Should we try to remove caring work from the domain of female responsibility by measuring it with "masculine" measures? Or should we guard women's care and the intimate relations it sustains under the aegis of the "feminine," where it cannot be robbed of its heartfelt meanings, and reduced to cold hard cash? Community currencies provide a third avenue: reconstructing and revaluing money itself. Contradictory though they seem, all three

efforts are needed because the problem of the devaluation of women's work lies not only with the feminization of care, but with the series of social processes that split caring and money. Local currencies may be one place to seek the "magic penny" that rebalances gender relations as it re-embeds money in a broader set of values, which are the same values that motivate and guide caring work. These are, at minimum, the values of human relatedness and interdependence. ❧

¹ Boyle, 1999, p. 210.

² For example, the words "money" and "mint" derive from the Roman goddess, Moneta. Roman coins were minted in her temple. Moneta is one manifestation of Juno, the great Mother fertility goddess.

This article is illustrated with samples of local currencies from around North America

Mary-Beth Raddon recently completed her Ph.D. in sociology. Her thesis on community currencies as social experiments reveals how conventional money relations are gendered. She is currently teaching sex and gender at the University of Toronto at Scarborough.

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In the Field

Women and Microcredit Worldwide: A Spectrum of Possibilities

MICROCREDIT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT projects, which create opportunities for women to earn money while also fulfilling their many other unpaid responsibilities, can help women to raise their families' standards of living. Women often live hemmed in by time and money constraints which span the formal and informal sectors in economic terms: family and household

responsibilities leave little time for paid work; poverty increases the labour-intensivity and frustration of daily tasks; ecological degradation exacerbates this cycle. The following stories represent a sampling of ways in which women around the world are addressing these constraints, with lessons about the institutional and financial structures which can help them to do so.

CHALLENGES FOR MICROCREDIT IN SOUTH ASIA

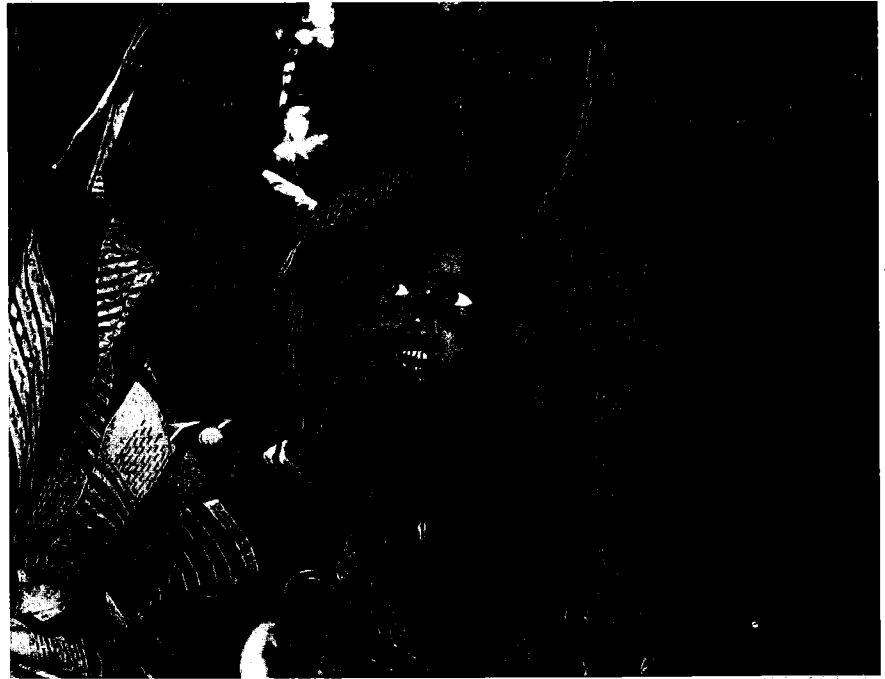
Bipasha Baruah

BY NOW IT HAS BEEN WELL established that along with education, the ability to earn and control income is one of the most powerful determinants of women's status within a society. In the early 1990s, decades of neo-liberal critique of the state, compounded by the failure of centrally planned economies around the world and the growing awareness about the 'feminization of poverty,' led to a new understanding that poverty did not respond to growth-oriented "trickle down" development efforts. This coincided with increased awareness of the dimensions and scale of the informal sector economy.

Microcredit was one of the tools designed to benefit large numbers of people, sometimes accounting for up to 90 percent of employment in a country, involved in the sector variously termed as "unorganized," "unprotected," "unregistered" or "informal." Organizations like the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh led the way in experiments involving small amounts of credit aimed at very poor people and demonstrated that the poor, especially poor women, were highly reliable borrowers. An alterna-

tive route of "bottom up" economic empowerment began to emerge and while it included the market-oriented private sector and the public sector, it also envisaged an expanded role for civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

This was based partly on the advantages attributed to these organizations as being less bureaucratic, less conservative, closer to their constituency and, therefore, more in touch with its needs and constraints. The face-to-face interactions between microcredit NGOs and their constituencies were



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also deemed to give them a greater advantage in promoting innovative participatory strategies and less scope for trivializing or avoiding the issue of women's subordination. In seeking to meet these important goals and to secure donor funding for what appeared to be very fertile ground for them, hundreds of NGOs joined the microcredit bandwagon in the 1990s.

Because so many microcredit programs and projects have mushroomed around the world, for the first time a substantial body of research has been generated that points to the limits of what microcredit has been able to accomplish. While some of these limitations may just reaffirm the complex nature of development work, NGOs in microcredit have found themselves especially vulnerable to a few glaring weaknesses. Many examples of poor practice have been reported in South Asia and some of them have threatened to reverse the positive accomplishments of the sector. There are widespread limitations and weaknesses that the sector must address to ensure its effectiveness and survival, which appear to be "common threads" in the literature on microcredit NGOs, at least across South Asia.

Financial Viability

From the beginning, NGOs including pioneers like Grameen have been dependent upon donor funding for their activities. Most NGOs in South Asia boast impressive repayment rates, sometimes as high as 100 percent, but because they're not registered as banks, the law does not allow them to take deposits from their borrowers. This makes NGOs ineffective at weaning themselves off of donor funding, especially since the cost of lending small amounts is very high and intense monitoring is required. The average microcredit loan in South Asia is still below US \$ 100.

Microcredit NGOs can explore different ways of addressing the issue of financial viability. Well-established NGOs can lobby governments in favour of allowing them to take deposits. Alternately, NGOs can become banks themselves. While this is perhaps feasible, some NGOs may resist adopting banking practices driven solely by



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efficiency, as this may be perceived to render the sector less responsive to the needs of its borrowers. Such NGOs may choose to remain NGOs while "graduating" their clients to formal financial institutions after allowing them initial access to credit and the opportunity to establish credit ratings.

Credit vs. Savings

This last alternative serves borrowers well since it provides them with access to savings accounts. There is much literature that supports that in many parts of South Asia the need for safe, liquid, interest-bearing savings instruments is much higher than the need for credit. Many female members of village banks in Bangladesh do not take loans at all, or take one loan, and then become inactive borrowers but continue to save. Many women in India and Bangladesh are known to even keep their passbooks in the banks to ensure that their families, especially their male kin, do not know about their savings. Many NGOs are addressing the issue of savings in innovative ways, for example through savings or "thrift" circles and cooperatives. Regardless of how it's dealt with, it appears that savings will move into a more prominent position in the future. NGOs that continue to emphasize credit to the exclusion of sav-

ings, in the interest of self-perpetuation or convenience, may not be serving their constituency well.

Impact of Microcredit on Long-term Poverty Alleviation

Several long-term studies have shown that although microcredit alleviates the immediate effects of poverty and also leads to significant increase in women's control over resources, long-term impacts like asset creation and the ability to withstand future economic or health-related stresses without falling back into poverty have not been widely observed. One of the first things NGOs can do to counter this criticism is to acknowledge the limits of what microcredit can achieve. In development work there is often an unfortunate "magic bullet" mentality that motivates practitioners to attempt to address complex issues of poverty, gender, class and caste with single strategic interventions. Instead of viewing microcredit as a panacea, NGOs could set modest utilitarian goals of helping poor people manage their day-to-day lives better than before. Additionally, NGOs can adopt advocacy goals and attempt to convince mainstream financial institutions to do more microlending.

Access to Credit

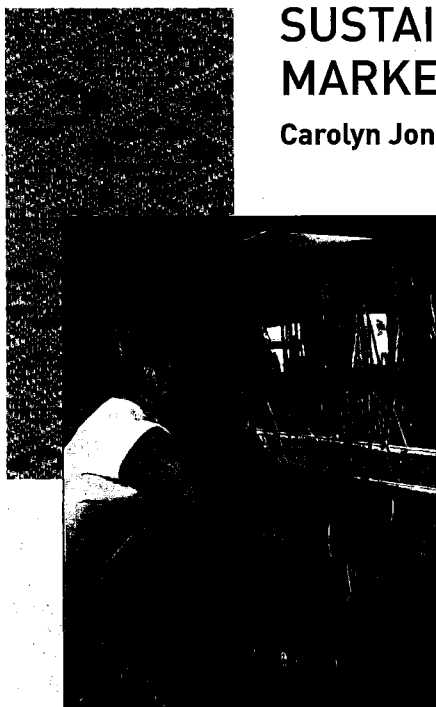
Outreach is another prominent challenge for NGOs. Skeptics suggest that the ability of NGOs to reach the poorest borrowers may be somewhat overrated. While the reach of NGOs is generally deeper than that of commercial financial institutions, it is also fairly narrow. In other words, NGOs reach some very poor people but not enough to be thought of as significant for poverty alleviation. This may partly be due to the pressures NGOs feel to be accountable to their donors by balancing financial viability and outreach. For example, to increase outreach many Indian NGOs have concentrated growth on highly populated urban areas where people may not need credit as urgently. At the same time, in order to maintain high repayment rates,

NGOs have shown a trend of moving up the poverty scale, away from the poorest borrowers. While compromises like these may help NGOs secure donor funding, they are in direct conflict with the ideology of the sector since they lead NGOs to ignore risk-prone, economically underdeveloped and isolated areas, where paradoxically the need for credit is the highest.

South Asian NGOs have played a prominent role in assisting the poor in improving their economic situation. Through innovation, experimentation and error, they have offered important lessons and also challenged prejudices about what is possible. Some have revolutionized the concept of credit and demonstrated that poor women are not just passive recipients of development but highly capable active agents of economic change. As more NGOs in South

Asia enter social, economic, educational and political spheres while steadfastly subscribing to their democratic grassroots ideologies, we can expect that they will continue to enjoy popular support from governments and donors. While this is promising, it is important to remember that given the diversity, plurality and scale at which poverty exists in South Asia, nothing short of multi-layered, multi-level, interlocking interventions directed by NGOs, the state, and possibly the private sector can be expected to bring about long-term economic empowerment.

Bipasha Baruah is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University. Her work focuses on gender and development. She has traveled widely in Asia as a project evaluator and consultant.



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS WITHIN GLOBAL MARKET PLACES: RURAL ARTISANS IN THAILAND

Carolyn Jongeward

THE CRAFTS SECTOR IS SIGNIFICANT to the informal economy of Asia, especially as rural non-farm employment. For many women, craftwork is a primary source of income that contributes to the economic viability of families and com-

munities. Artisans, who combine crafts production and trade with domestic and subsistence activities, are reaching wider regional and global markets.² Many community-based organizations are increasing the value of artisan activity by supporting the dignity and autonomy of artisans, continuity of indigenous knowledge and cultural diversity, and sustainability of local economies and communities.³

Sop Moei Arts is one such community development project, located in Pwo Karen⁴ hilltribe villages in an isolated mountainous region in North Thailand. The story of Sop Moei Arts stands out for three reasons: successful integration of projects for health, education, agriculture and income generation; high quality of artisan products; and commitment to ongoing learning and innovation. In the context of Sop Moei Arts, community building involves appreciating the value of age-old cultural knowledge, creating opportunities

for learning new ideas and skills, and connecting people in a remote region to the global marketplace.

The project, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), has evolved a culturally-specific income-generation scheme involving women and men who weave textiles and baskets using modified traditional techniques and designs. By trial and error, and through the dedication of foreign-born and local participants in the project, Sop Moei Arts has overcome problems related to textile design and marketability, market size, quality control, innovation and leadership.

The project began in 1977 as a mobile health clinic in the Sop Moei District, specializing in maternal and child health care. After ten years of effort, child malnutrition could not be reduced because the people had no money to buy food, and so SIDA provided a six-year grant in 1988 to help women earn an income using their indige-

nous weaving skills. According to terms of SIDA funding, the women were supposed to become entrepreneurs and sell their own textiles. However, after three years, when the Pwo Karen women tried to sell in local markets, they encountered enormous difficulties and they were competing for poverty wages. To avoid the collapse of the project, it was necessary for women to weave as a collective and find new ideas to make and add value to the textiles. When Sop Moei Arts began as community enterprise, they paid weavers four times the typical low rate for weaving in Thailand. But in order to bear the higher price, they teamed up with international designers to take inspiration from local textiles and create products for contemporary use. Gradually Sop Moei Arts has gained national and international attention for their high quality work and the money they earn from sales goes back into the community business and supports their local development initiatives.

The weavers now cover their costs and wages through sales revenues, and have not needed donor funding since 1995. All earnings cycle back into the community business and other local initiatives.

Increasing access to markets is a fundamental concern of artisan enterprises. In the early years as a member of the non-profit fair trade organization, the Thai Craft Association, Sop Moei Arts participated at ThaiCraft Fairs in Bangkok. In 1997, to increase their visibility and sales, Sop Moei Arts opened a shop in the nearest large town, Chiang Mai. The shop was a necessary extension of the weaving project because the expansion of markets was critical to giving more people in the villages an opportunity to participate and benefit. Gradually, by word of mouth or through magazine articles, more visitors came into the shop. In three years, Sop Moei Arts was becoming known, not only in Chiang Mai but also regionally. Although they don't have money for advertising, they have been featured in several Thai magazines, Japanese publications and *El Décor*. Journalists, impressed by the shop in Chiang Mai, have traveled to the villages with their photographers to record the story of Sop Moei Arts.



By means of exhibitions four times a year at the Hilton Hotel, and a small shop run by volunteers, Sop Moei Arts reaches the marketplace in Bangkok. More recently, a website promotes their work globally;⁵ and it reflects the same attention to detail and pride in the community as do their artisan products. Images and stories represent the work of Sop Moei Arts, including examples of textiles and baskets with the dimensions and prices. Of particular interest is the image of a wall hanging that won the Japanese Foreign Minister's Award at the Asian Arts Festival in 1998. The success of this textile, woven in the village and selected for exhibition at the Museum of Art in Fukuoka, Japan, thrilled the people of Sop Moei Arts. Reproductions of the award winning wall hanging are now part of a collection of 15 special artworks for sale in the shop or by Internet.

How to transform traditional local craft-work into contemporary products for urban markets is a consistent theme in the emergence of successful artisan enterprises. In order to distinguish its products from the many ethnic-inspired textiles for sale in Chiang Mai and the rest of Thailand, Sop Moei Arts has asked international textile and fashion consultants not only to come up with design ideas but also to teach the weavers how to look at their indigenous designs and reinterpret them for con-

temporary use. Significantly, their strategy has been to encourage the creativity of weavers to come up with modern interpretations of Pwo Karen patterns and products and also take inspiration from other Southeast Asian textiles.

In May 2000 there were 60 textile weavers, on average 22 years old, working for Sop Moei Arts in seven villages. Although weaving is traditionally a women's activity and men would never have considered using the narrow traditional backstrap looms, about 12 men are weaving on large looms introduced by the project. And women are making baskets, traditionally the work of men. These changes are happening because of income earned through weaving activity. A woman working at the loom makes 6000 Baht per month (\$240 Canadian). Or she can earn up to 10,000 Baht if she wants to weave more. A man, hired to work on a farm, earns a maximum of 2000 Baht per month. Since women's income through weaving is much greater, men have begun to view weaving as an alternative kind of employment.

Sop Moei Arts now has three weaving instruction centers and a basketry workshop in widely separated villages. In villages where there is no weaving center, a structure has been built where three women can work together. Continually, more Karen ask to work in the weaving project. While at least 10 more looms could be put to use, Sop Moei Arts is cautious about taking on more people because they must be able to pay weavers right away upon completing their textiles, not five months later. And Sop Moei Arts is too small to afford to keep a large stock of unsold products. They need to match the market demand in order to sell things quickly in the shop and be able to pay the weavers well. However, recently six more weavers joined; their looms are built and they are ready to start weaving.

The income generated by artisans is having a significant impact on improving levels of health and education in the area. Artisans are paid 60% of the money from sales and their families benefit directly by having more money for food. 40% of Sop Moei Arts' income is allocated to a schol-

arship fund to help any Pwo Karen in the project area who needs financial assistance for education. This includes children who have to go to live in town to attend school beyond grade four or six, which is now available in many of the villages. It also includes students who attend high school and university, a significant accomplishment for villages where no one reads or writes. Increasing the possibility for continuing education outside their communities, Sop Moei Arts also hopes that students will return to assist the community development work in their villages. To this end, they ask university level students to come back and work as employees of Sop Moei Arts for a minimum of two years; otherwise their scholarships are considered as loans to be repaid over a period of time. Ultimately, the

goal is for Sop Moei Arts to be operated entirely by people indigenous to the region. Traditional methods and forms of craft reflect millennia of cultural adaptation and change that occur at the interface between cultures, generations, and creative individuals. The current intersection of the needs of low-income artisans in rural areas and the desires of urban consumers, often in far away places, has instigated both the organization of grass roots community enterprises and a wide range of craft adaptation and innovation. In a process that starts with the hands of rural artisans in Asia and finishes when a craft item reaches the hands of distant consumers there are possibilities for increasing awareness of economic connectedness and social responsibility in the global marketplace. ❧

¹ Fisher, T., V. Mahajan, & A. Singha (1997). *The Forgotten Sector: Non-Farm Employment and Rural Enterprise in India*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications

² Ganes, K. & E. Millgram (Eds.) (2000). *Artisans and Co-operatives: Developing Alternative Trade for the Global Economy*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

³ Jongeward, C. (2001). Cultural Harvesting: Artisans, Livelihoods and the Indian Ocean. In J. P. R. Tisdell & W. Wood (Eds.), *South Asia: Between Markets and States*. Canberra: Council of Canadian Academies. Available at: <http://www.cca.ca/institute/SimonFraser/Workshops>

⁴ One percent of the population of Thailand, Cambodia and nine groups known as hill tribes live in the area. The area is comprised of two linguistically distinct ethnic groups: 75% are Karen and 20% are Pwo Karen.

⁵ Sop Moei Arts. Online, World Wide Web. <http://www.sopmoeiarts.com>

Carolyn Jongeward teaches in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. She is a weaver, and conducts research on cultural and economic change in South and Southeast Asia.

DEVELOPMENT AND THE NATURE OF MICROFINANCE IN KENYA

Emily Kithinji

KENYA HAS HAD MORE EXPOSURE TO micro-finance than any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa, with micro-credit programmes dating back to the early 1980s. The implementation of economic liberalization and reform programs in Kenya in 1993 sparked an explosion of micro-enterprises, and most Kenyan households now depend on micro-enterprises for their income. However, except possibly for the Kenya Post Office Savings Bank, banks in Kenya have not paid much attention to the poor.

The traditional approach of getting credit from friends, relatives, shopkeepers and "merry-go-rounds" (Rotating Savings and Credit Associations or ROSCAs) is still largely practiced in Kenya, with ROSCAs being most common. A small group of individuals, mostly acquaintances, come together and contribute a sum of money to a common fund periodically—say, once a month. Allocation of the fund is mostly by lottery and each member of the group takes turns to use the funds. Sometimes, the organizer of the group takes the first turn. At the end of each cycle, members decide whether

to continue the operation and/or vote again. These groups have sets of etiquette and rules to govern them. They have been largely dominated by women but in recent years more men have joined self help groups, due to the hard times they are facing and the economic downturn.

In the 1980's, some specialized micro-credit organizations began operating, with the two main ones being K-RE, and Kenya Women's Finance Trust (KWFT). These organizations were also heavily subsidized at the time and used the integrated (credit and training) approach to assist micro-enterprises. Other prominent institutions that emerged were Promotion of Rural Initiatives and Development Enterprises (PRIDE), FAULU (Swahili for Success) and increasingly other institutions like National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) and CARE-WEDCO (Women's Economic Development Company). K-REP initially had a limited loan portfolio but focused more on lending funds provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development and other donors to smaller

organizations like NCCCK and KWFT. With time the approach began to be more focused and sustainability oriented, following more interest and knowledge about the micro-finance industry. Other activities like training were either dropped or transferred to other programmes. Many church based organizations died due to lack of funding, giving way to specialized, product-based institutions. Nevertheless, all the organizations continued to be reliant on donor funds although K-REP has since been licensed as a bank and now operates as a commercial institution. The Kenyan government even recognized the importance of the micro-finance sector in the nation's financial community in May of 1999.

An Association of Micro-Finance Institutions (AMFI) has been formed and was legally registered in March 1999, comprising 14 large MFIs that together are serving over 97,000 clients. Its members include institutions of different sizes and legal structures such as NGOs, cooperatives and village banks. Its mission is to develop a micro-finance industry and an institution-

al framework that serves poor and low-income people in Kenya. Its long-term objectives are to ensure that the micro-finance legislation is passed by parliament and to increase membership in the network among MFIs. AMFI was involved in the formulation and drafting of a micro-finance bill for Kenya. But while the sum of donor funding to Kenyan micro-finance organizations over the past 15 years is esti-

mated to exceed \$60 million, the impact of the micro-credit practitioners on the economic development of Kenya has been limited. Most Kenyan micro-credit programs have been slow to embrace more commercial practices and to make the transition to financial sustainability.

With the increase of demand on these institutions to become financially sustainable,

there has been a shift on emphasis from the very poor to the entrepreneurial poor. This shift has totally left out the very poor, which has defeated the initial goal of micro-finance for poverty alleviation. ❧

Emily Kithinji has worked as a microcredit facilitator and researcher in Kenya. She is now completing a master's degree in Environmental Studies at York University.

FOLLOWING BOLIVIA'S EXAMPLE: THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF MICROFINANCE

David Schwartz

THE MICROFINANCE MOVEMENT HAS been underway in Bolivia for at least 15 years. The commercialization of micro-finance has advanced to such a point in Bolivia that it is no longer primarily a donor-driven movement but an industry. An enormous share of Bolivia's households—to date perhaps as many as a third, with perhaps more—have for the first time gained access to reliable sources of finance for their businesses through micro-credit. The majority of these borrowers and entrepreneurs are women.

As NGOs, microfinance providers are often unable to expand fast enough to meet the overwhelming demand for credit, and they are legally restricted from offering full financial services to clients, particularly savings services. These factors have been instrumental in creating the desire and rationale for a more commercial approach to small-scale lending.

Bolivia boasts the first successful transformation of an NGO into a bank. Banco Solidario, S.A., or BancoSol, started operations in Bolivia in February 1992 as the first private commercial bank in the world that caters specifically to microentrepreneurs. The example set by Bolivian NGOs becoming licensed financial institutions has become a kind of standard to which many microfinance institutions aspire, or toward which donors push them. The number of

NGOs worldwide following this path is still fairly small, however, many of the best-performing microfinance institutions are contemplating following BancoSol's example. In fact, several transformations have occurred in various locations around the world, including K-REP Bank in Kenya, Mibanco in Peru, BancoAdemi in the Dominican Republic, ACEP in Senegal, and Aceda in Cambodia. Some microfinance promoters are starting new institutions as financial institutions (for example, Banco Solidario in Ecuador), or they may assist existing banks to launch microfinance operations (for example, Centenary Bank in Uganda). There is a definite shift towards the market-driven approach in the micro-finance sector, especially in Bolivia.

Competition among microfinance providers has become fierce and new entrants to the sector have emerged. Mainstream banks now make some loans to microenterprises and supply savings services for some micro-level clients. Fondos Financiero Privados (FFPs) are formal financial institutions whose minimum capital requirements are lower than those for commercial banks and who are not allowed to provide certain services banks provide. The government created this category in 1994 especially to accommodate the emerging microfinance sector. There are still microcredit NGOs operating in Bolivia, although most aspire

to become FFPs. Credit cooperatives are also active throughout the country.

The Bolivian microfinance landscape has dramatically changed, and the implications of this are increased competition, market saturation and the closely linked problem of "over-indebtedness." Bringing poor people into capitalist markets by granting credit, combined with a whole assortment of external factors, may actually force loan recipients deeper into poverty.

This was documented in the general economic crisis that occurred in Bolivia in 1999. Over-indebtedness combined with an economic recession beginning in Brazil, which dried up the markets for small Bolivian textile producers and other trading entrepreneurs, led to a 'debtors revolt,' and in 1999 Bolivia suffered its first serious economic setback in fifteen years. The results included a decline in the number of clients, rising average loan amounts as microlenders went upmarket (seeking wealthier clients), the highest delinquency in the history of Bolivian microfinance, and a dramatic fall in profits. BancoSol's return on equity dropped from 29 percent in 1998 to 9 percent in 1999.

Increased competition has led microfinance providers to race towards financial viability and thereby away from the need for donor funds. However, in becoming financially viable, there may be a trend in which micro-

finance institutions are seeking better off borrowers, and therefore not servicing the poorer individuals. The transformation into licensed banks certainly provided microfinance providers with much needed funds to expand their business to more clients, but in times of economic recession and a highly competitive environment, it appears that

they are being forced to become like typical banks and offer similar services. This creates a tension in which banks such as BancoSol are moving away from their intended mission—providing services to the near poor and the very poor. In times of economic recession or currency devaluations by neighbouring countries like Brazil

or, at present, Argentina, microcredit borrowers in Bolivia's informal sector can be badly hurt. ❧

David Schwartz is conducting research on microcredit in Bolivia for his Master's in Environmental Studies degree at York University.

RE-CLAIMING SPACE...REFRAMING RESISTANCE: THE WOMEN OF FATHET KHEIR WILL LEAD THE WAY

Karim Tartoussieh

EGYPT HAS BEEN UNDERGOING AN Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program since 1991 to boost its economic growth and achieve macroeconomic stability. This has resulted in the reduction of social expenditures and subsidies. Egypt is also experiencing global trends like the urbanization of poverty and the feminization of urban poverty. It is estimated that 20% of Egyptian households are headed by women. In response to these difficult conditions, the NGO Fathet Kheir (which means "Window of Opportunity") came into being.

Fathet Kheir is based in El Hadaba El Wosta in Moqattam – a low-income area of Cairo which is lacking in physical and social infrastructure – and it responds to the needs of this area. The community of El Hadaba El Wosta in Moqattam is comprised of half a million people, most of them victims of the earthquake that hit Cairo in 1992. One of the common patterns within this community is the prevalence of female-headed households due to the sickness or death of the traditional male breadwinner.

Fathet Kheir is an Egyptian Community-based NGO that was initiated in April 1999 by a group of Egyptian youth. Fathet Kheir launched a culturally-adjusted Grameen-style micro-credit program in 1999. Female breadwinners are able to take out small loans amounting to 250 Egyptian pounds (around 55 US dollars) to start up

income-generating activities. A volunteer is assigned to a group of three loan recipients to offer technical and personal advice if required. Parallel to this, Fathet Kheir provides other services: a medical emergency fund, educational fund, sewing workshops, illiteracy classes, and other supporting functions.

For the past year, there has been a move away from traditional urban income-generation projects to new types of income generation activities such as rabbit breeding, mushroom cultivation, and food industries. Fathet Kheir's women loan recipients themselves articulated the need for such "productive" micro-business. During a gender and community arts workshop series that Fathet Kheir implemented during the summer of 2001 for women loan recipients, participants in a participatory needs assessment session unanimously voiced their willingness and desire to start

up income-generation projects related to food production. Their rural roots and their dissatisfaction with their current income-generation projects (mostly involving trading in consumer goods) were the main reasons for these women's preference for urban agriculture activities. They indicated that the major impediments to pursuing these activities are access to land and credit. Consequently, Fathet Kheir established an urban agriculture micro-lending program to finance agri-food income generation projects. Although the program is still in its infancy, it is gaining wide support from Fathet Kheir loan recipients and the NGO community in Egypt as it is the first program of its kind in Egypt. ❧

Karim Tartoussieh is a Masters degree candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Canada. His work centres on the potential of micro-credit in Egypt and other countries.



This is the first report on the work of the Huairou Commission. Developments around this important women's organization will become a regular feature in our magazine.

Huairou Round-Up

Sheryl Feldman

AT LAST, THE PROOF IS IN. ACCORDING TO BARBARA Crossette, UN Bureau Chief for the *New York Times*, the last decade of UN research has demonstrated that "When women's influence increases... it strengthens the moderate center, bolstering economic stability and democratic order."

Awareness at the top now coincides with what grassroots women have been demonstrating at the bottom – that their perspective on and participation in community affairs are essential to economic, political and social well-being; that thoroughgoing, applied respect for women is the cheapest, most sustainable way of raising "family incomes, education, nutrition and life expectancy."

Members of the Huairou Commission, an international partnership NGO, have made it their business to support grassroots women's efforts to become more powerful and effective members of their local, national and international communities since 1997. The creative challenges have been enormous: how to bring together some of the poorest, hardest working people in the world; how to cross barriers of time, language, culture, geography, economics, knowledge and absent infrastructure; how to surface, document and share their knowledge; how to be effective in the international system while remaining grounded in the grassroots. The challenges make the results all the more the impressive.

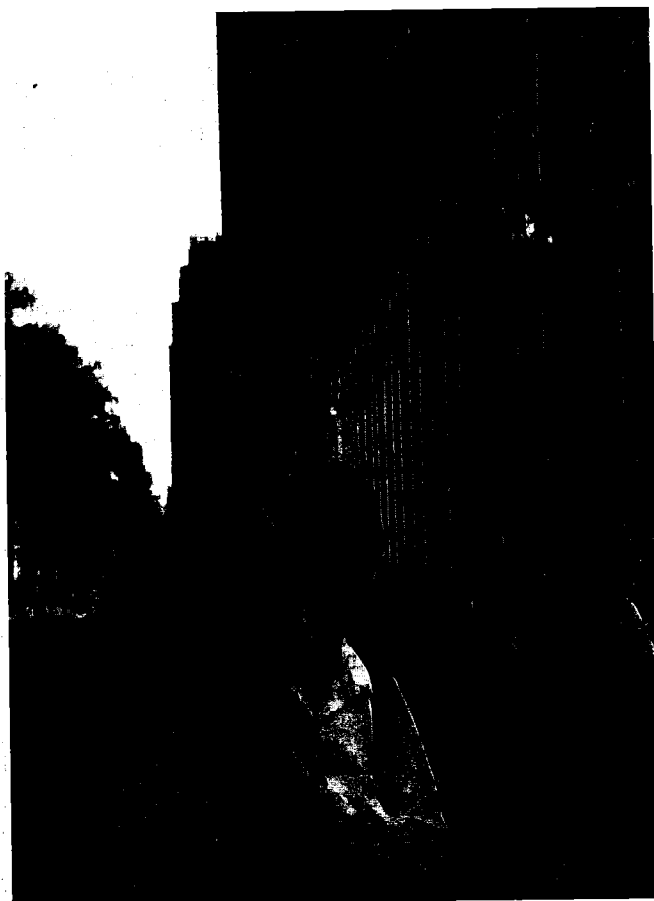
THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

A growing body of knowledge exists on grassroots women's practices.

- An international task force of grassroots women, academics, and activists identified and documented the practices of 48 different grassroots groups. The project, funded by UNDP/MDGD, is called "Our Best Practices."
- Grassroots women presented their practices to one another in Germany over a period of 4 weeks in 2000 and for one week in New York in 2001 at Grassroots Women's International Academies (GWIA).

Grassroots women issues and practices are gaining visibility.

- Two of "Our Best Practices" have been published in the book *Engendering Governance*.



- "Our Best Practices" submitted six grassroots practices to UN Habitat's Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme.
- Workshops on engendering local governance, women and land, debunking micro-credit, community education, disaster mitigation and women's safety were presented at several UN global meetings.

Grassroots women gain growing political influence.

- A global office was established in New York for access to United Nations Headquarters
- Regional networks were established or strengthened:
AFRICA: the AFRUS-AIDS network is now developing a program focusing on grassroots women & AIDS.

EASTERN EUROPE: SHINE network fosters growth of self-help communities.

SOUTH AMERICA: Women & Habitat network focuses on governance and security of tenure.

SOUTH PACIFIC: Network concentrates on peer learning and exchanges

SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST ASIA: AWAS strengthens relationships between grassroots women's groups and local governing groups.

- Huairou Commission members participated at annual UN meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Sustainable Development, as well as the Social Summit, Urban 21, UNCHS Local Leadership Program, meetings preparatory to Beijing+5, Istanbul+5, EXPO 2000 and certain World Trade Organization events.
- The Commission led the women's caucus at all major Habitat events.
- It was represented on the following policy making groups: Steering Committee, Habitat Good Urban Governance Campaign;
- It provided featured speakers in the UN General Assembly during Istanbul+5.

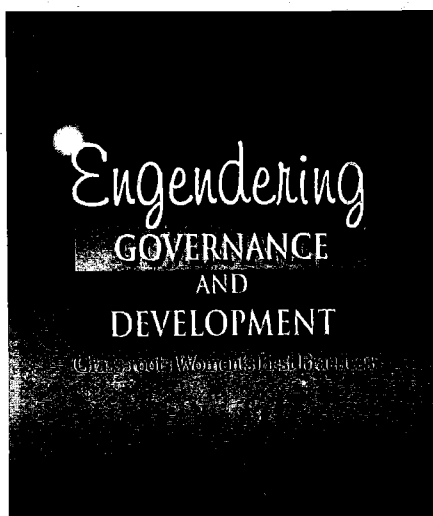
DEEPENING THE WORK

Today, The Huairou Commission has member organizations in 55 countries. As groups, they have become more explicit as to what they want to learn from each other; as part of a Commission, they have become more sophisticated about the relationships between grassroots women's work and the contexts in which it operates.

Drawing on these insights, the Commission designed its work for the upcoming year. It will continue to gather and document the good practices of grassroots women's organizations. The regional networks, described above, will continue their work. Huairou's international political practice will be highlighted by its participation in CSW, AWID as well as meetings around the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Meanwhile, the Commission will be engaging in 3 major campaigns, each of which has arisen directly out of its members' experiences in the last five years.

GRASSROOTS WOMEN AND DISASTER

If women's participation in India, Turkey, Honduras and other sites of disaster is any indication, disaster management may be



about to enter an entirely new era. In each of these instances, poor women responded to the tragedy of natural disaster by reconceiving and rebuilding their communities. So effective were they that the Huairou Commission has formed a group to further explore, document and analyze these women-centered, community-centered responses to disaster. The work will be done in collaboration with other stakeholders.

GRASSROOTS WOMEN AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Most basic to grassroots women's ability to bolster "economic stability and democratic order" is the role they play in local governance. Are they an integral part of the process of how neighborhoods are planned, water allotted, electricity distributed, buildings permitted, schools paid for and so on? With the support of Habitat, UNDP/MDG and USAID, the Huairou Commission will foster and document six Local to Local Dialogues between grassroots women's organizations and local authorities. It will form a global task force, host an internet discussion group and publish a newsletter to discover what works best.

GRASSROOTS WOMEN AND AIDS

In Africa, grassroots women live intimately with AIDS and its consequences. AFRUS-AIDS, an Africa/US women's partnership to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, is a broad coalition of grassroots and faith-based organizations. The Huairou Commission is playing a leadership role in this project, not only connecting grassroots organizations with American partners, but inviting them to share their methods of coping with AIDS.

The Huairou Commission welcomes new possibilities and new partners. For more information, contact:

Jan Peterson, Chair of the Secretariat

The Huairou Commission

249 Manhattan Ave

Brooklyn, New York 11211

Phone: 1-718-388-0215

Fax: 1-718-388-0215

E-mail: huairou@earthlink.net

Sheryl Feldman is a freelance writer who focuses on grassroots women and globalization. She is based in Seattle, Washington and can be reached by e-mail at sfeldman2@mindspring.com



FREE TRADE, FAIR TRADE AND WOMEN

Ruth Goldsmith

TAKE A LOOK AT THE LABEL ON YOUR t-shirt or jacket — chances are it was made in China, Hong Kong, Korea, India or Bangladesh. According to Sonia Singh, of the Maquila Solidarity Network, more than half the clothing purchased in Canada is imported.

Singh addressed a forum on Free Trade/Fair Trade at the Older Women's Network (OWN) Co-op on January 27 in Toronto. She said that under the North American Free Trade agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States, jobs in third-world countries such as Mexico have increased. Most of these jobs are held by women, who endure low wages, long hours, poor safety conditions and high production quotas. If they try to organize, they face violence from police or hired thugs.

"We are all linked to garment workers around the world," Singh said. "Free trade has impacted garment workers in Canada. Many unionized factories have had to close down."

Singh's concerns were reiterated by another panelist, Marnie Girvan of the Canadian organization MATCH, which supports women's groups around the world. "When the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organization decides to implement changes, women and children take the brunt of the economic results," she said.

Girvan emphasized that developing countries must be given the freedom to make

strategic choices in trade and investment policies. Their indebtedness causes cutbacks in education, medical services and infrastructure. "We have islands of wealth in a sea of poverty. We need globalization of responsibility," she said.

Further clarification was given by panelist Ann Emmet, of the Committee on Monetary & Economic Reform. "The world is made up of systems," she explained. "Ecosystems are diminishing in the goods and services that they can provide and in their capacity to maintain the level we are going to need."

"Corporate capitalism is our new world order," she said. "International capital is running the world. What we now have is a global police state."

Laurell Ritchie, of the National Action Committee Globalization Research Project, referred to the 1995 International Women's Conference in Beijing, where the Canadian government promised to do a gender analysis of their policies and programs. Since then, it is apparent that the gaps between those statements of principle and the current reality are huge.

Ritchie said that we now have a policy of 'profits over people.' Many social programs have been dismantled, due to cuts in public spending. In general, our global economy is being restructured to protect the interests of capital, she said.

The participants formed lively discussion groups, and proposed actions to be taken by individuals and organizations to

democratize global trade agreements, and to preserve national sovereignty within them. They approved an action plan that would include:

- Lobbying for full identification on garment labels of where the articles are made.
- Lobbying M.P.'s and political leaders with our concerns through a non-stop letter writing campaign.
- Participating in OWN's efforts to fight globalization and supporting organizations such as the Council of Canadians, the Ontario Health Coalition, the Voice of Women, and MATCH.
- Working and voting for politicians with integrity and vision on global issues.

The forum was organized by the Post-Beijing Working Group of OWN with the support of the Canadian Auto Workers Union; the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario; The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; MATCH; the Voice of Women; Canadian Pensioners Concerned; and the Maquila Solidarity Network. The panel discussion was moderated by Sharon Lewis, host of CBC Newsworld's *counter-Spin*. ❧

Ruth Goldsmith chairs the Communications Committee of the Older Women's Network, based in Toronto.

OWN's address is:
115 The Esplanade, Toronto ON M5E 1Y7;
or Email: info@olderwomensnetwork.org

FEMINIST ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS IN PRACTICE?

A Visit to the "Lagoa do Junco" Settlement in Tapes, Brazil

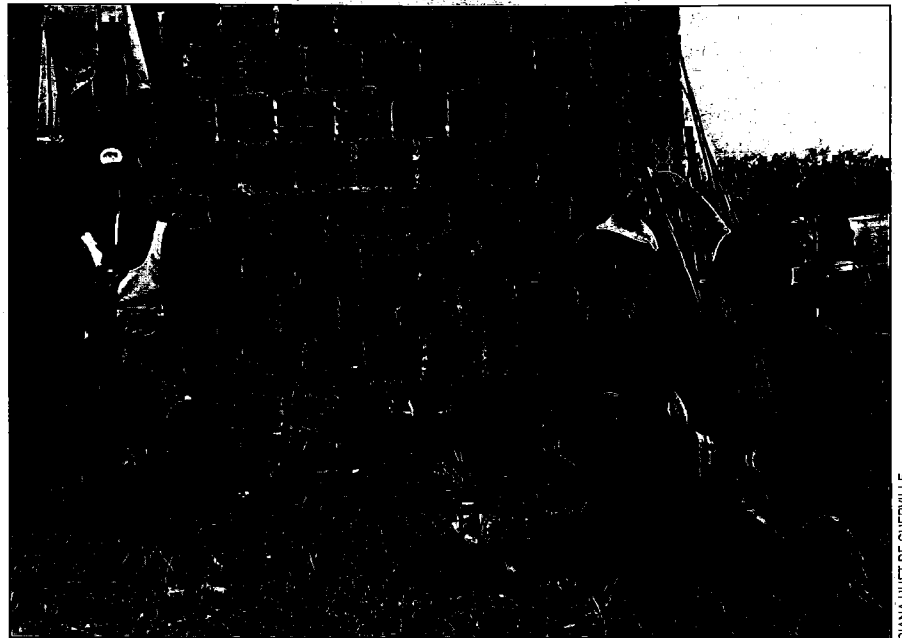
Diana Huet de Guerville

FROM JANUARY 31ST TO FEBRUARY 5th 2002, I was one of over 60,000 people who travelled to Porto Alegre, Brazil in order to attend the 2nd World Social Forum (WSF). The purpose of this now annual event is to provide a space for activists to share ideas, visions, and strategies in an attempt to develop and articulate alternatives to the current destructive world order, under the broad theme "Another World Is Possible."

Though many different social movements were represented at the forum, one of the groups with the largest presence was the MST (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra), or landless movement of Brazil. The MST is the largest social movement in Latin America, and has been active since the early 1980s in pushing for land reform, primarily by means of land invasions. Despite severe repression and the deaths of over 1,000 MST activists in the past 10 years, 250,000 families have succeeded in gaining title to over 15 million acres of land. In the process, the MST has also gained a great deal of international support and recognition, winning such honours as the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the alternative Nobel Prize), among many other accolades.

I had the opportunity to visit an MST settlement, in large part because of a tourist solidarity project initiated during the first WSF by the state government of Rio Grande do Sul. After the forum was over my Brazilian hosts were kind enough to bring a small group of us to the "Lagoa do Junco" settlement in Tapes, where two residents, Petra and Orestes, graciously showed us around.

During our tour we learned that the 35 families that occupied Lagoa do Junco received title to their land in 1995, and in



Petra and her two daughters take a break to drink chimarrão, the traditional drink of Rio Grande do Sul.

DIANA HUET DE GUERVILLE

1998 many of the settlers joined together to found COOPAT (Cooperativa de Produção Agropecuária dos Assentados de Tapes), an agro-fishery cooperative. COOPAT produces a wide variety of goods for both internal and external consumption, and in the past year has also initiated a project to cultivate rice organically, using fish in place of pesticides. In fact, as Orestes explained to us, ecological values are extremely important to them, so they use no chemical inputs in any of their production, and are working towards becoming completely organic in order to clean up the contaminated farmland.

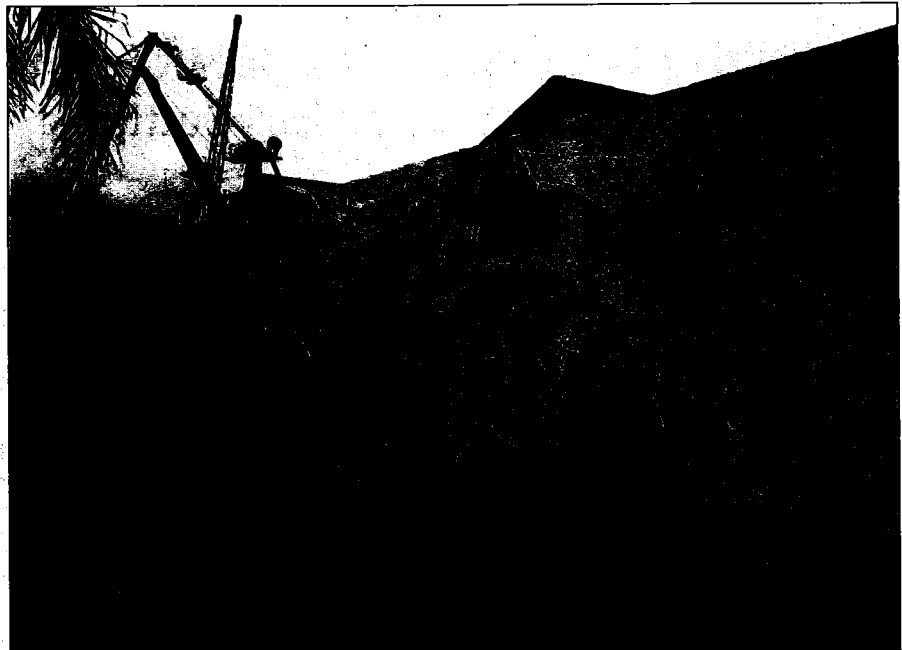
In talking with Petra and Orestes, it became clear to us that the MST is not a movement simply pressuring for land redistribution, but is also struggling for fundamental changes in the neoliberal socio-economic model that is currently destroying the livelihood of so many Brazilians. The MST seeks to create an

entirely different way of life based on social and ecological harmony rather than profit accumulation, such that taking over polluted and unproductive land becomes a means of regenerating the earth while simultaneously providing a healthy and dignified life for landless peasants. These values are evident in COOPAT's system of collective production, whereby land, capital, and work are all shared. Different groups are responsible for different sectors (for example, Orestes and Petra are part of the rice/fisheries unit), and decisions about how the cooperative should run are made collectively and democratically. Furthermore, the settlement itself is designed as an "agro-village," with a communal dining hall where all the residents gather to eat together and enjoy a vibrant community life.

All of this sounded wonderful to me from a social and environmental perspective, but as a feminist I was also curious about gender relations within the MST. I put the

question to Petra, who explained to me that women within the movement have been actively struggling for equality, and they've been quite successful at Lagoa do Junco. Petra and one other woman are the settlement's two representatives to the larger MST organization, and she says childcare is always provided at MST meetings so that women are never excluded on that account. Though she admits that much more work needs to be done within the broader organization (and society as a whole), she feels that women at Lagoa do Junco have an equal say in making decisions, and can perform any tasks that they are interested in taking on. When I asked her about meal preparation, she admitted that men will only cook if they absolutely have to. Nevertheless, it seems that the communal meals ease women's burden a bit in that regard.

My brief discussion with Petra inspired me to conduct a bit more research about gender issues within the MST, so I perused the official websites¹ with a feminist lens. I was pleased to discover that the MST recognizes the importance of women's role in the organization, and is thus committed to working for women's equality. For example, gender is counted as one of ten major social projects (others include the environment, education, youth, and health); and the MST created a National Collective for Gender to ensure that "discussions on 'Gender and Women's Issues' shall run across all MST courses and meetings" and involve both women and men.² In order to foster women's leadership, childcare is always provided, which could help explain



DIANA HUET DE GUERVILLE

Political art along the streets of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

why women fill 10 out of the top 22 positions in the organization. And in honour of International Women's day, many of the women in the MST gathered in various cities for the Third National Camp of Women Rural Workers, to "struggle against the economic model being implemented by the government of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, which marginalizes agriculture, bringing misery to the countryside."³

Given all this action around gender issues, and the fact that the MST (and the Lagoa do Junco settlement in particular) seems to prioritize ecological concerns within an alternative economic framework, could MST settlements be considered examples of fem-

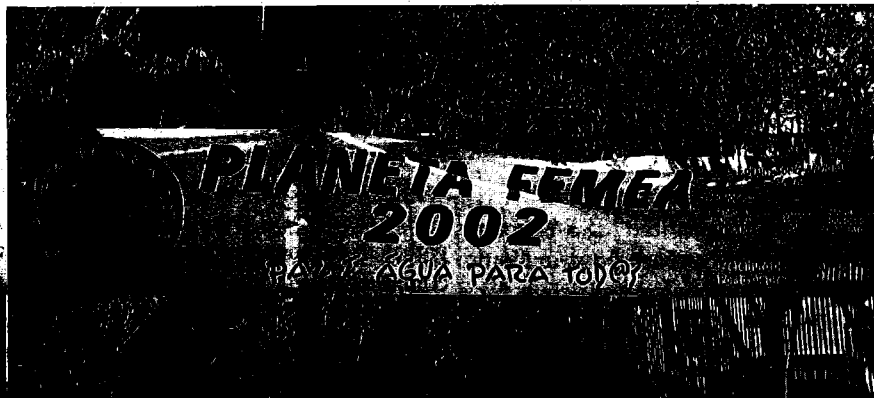
inist ecological economics in practice? While Petra and Orestes might not use those terms, their commitment to creating a dignified life based on gender equality and small-scale, collective, and ecologically sustainable production reveals concerns similar to those of feminist ecological economists. The MST settlements cannot be looked to as perfect feminist or ecological models, and many obstacles stand in the way of their vision (mainly a hostile national government and the pressures of neoliberal globalization), but their dedication to implementing an alternative economic vision and fighting for fundamental social change remains inspiring. Most importantly, the MST provides thousands of Brazilian women and men with land, a voice, and a future. For good reason, their motto is "We have hope – do you?"⁴

¹ See www.mstbrazil.org (English) or www.mst.org.br (Portuguese) for more information and suggestions on how to support the MST's work

² www.mstbrazil.org/summary.html

³ www.mstbrazil.org/updates.html

Diana Huet de Guerville is currently completing her Master's degree in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University, where she is researching resistance to globalization from a feminist/ecological perspective.



WSP women's tent 2002: peace and water for all.

Globetrotting

"Women and Community Economic Development: Changing Knowledge, Changing Practice"

The Centre for the Study of Training, Investment and Economic Restructuring (CSTIER) and New Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL) (based at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) recently conducted interviews with Community Economic Development (CED) practitioners in order to determine how they gained and applied knowledge relevant to their work with women.

The study indicates that key issues for CED workers are what is valued as legitimate knowledge, and the tension between formal and informal learning. While CED workers tended to value most the informal knowledge that they gained in the field, they felt that funders, politicians, and even academics disregard their insights into what was necessary for successful community development. And while gender was acknowledged as an important consideration in CED work, practitioners insisted that other social factors such as class, ethnicity, geography and dis/ability had to be considered simultaneously, and the knowledge of women living in target communities needed to be legitimized as well.

For a brief overview and further links see www.carleton.ca/cstier/nall-news.html

Petition to allow caregivers to contribute to pension plans

The Canadian Home Care Association and the Kids First Parent Association of Canada have sent a petition to the Canadian government demanding that women's unpaid caregiving work be accounted for in retirement benefits. Current rules regarding the Canadian Pension Plan and RRSPs prohibit caregivers from making contributions in their own name, which has disproportionate economic impacts on women. 75% of Canada's poor are women, and many are over the age of 65.

Despite rhetoric and promises since 1907, homemakers are still excluded from pension plans, and are actually economically

penalized for their socially vital caregiving work. The petition thus makes a list of recommendations in support of women's pension rights, including insistence that non-earning caregivers be permitted to contribute to RRSPs and the Canada Pension fund, and that families and governments split the costs.

For more information contact kidsfirstcanada@hotmail.com or see <http://kidsfirst1.tripod.com>.

Women's response to the Crisis in Argentina

The "cacerolazo" (banging of pots and pans as a form of protest) has come to international attention as an important symbol of Argentinean resistance to the economic crisis brought on by the IMF and World Bank. But women's roles as both inventors of "cacerolazo" and community caretakers have yet to be fully recognized.

Consequently, the Sindicato de Amas de Casa de Santa Fe – SAC (Housewives' Trade Union) in Argentina, which is part of the Women's International Network for Wages for Caring Work, is presenting its own set of proposals to confront the economic problems Argentina now faces. In response to the government's offer of 200 pesos per month to unemployed people who engage in community work, SAC demands that those funds be paid directly to female heads of households in recognition of the invisible and unpaid community work that women perform to ensure the survival of their families and neighbourhoods.

Given the history of government corruption in Argentina, SAC also wishes to monitor payment of benefits in order to guarantee transparency. With this grassroots response, SAC is thus emerging as an important independent voice calling for social and economic change at a time when people have little trust or confidence in formal politics. Additionally, SAC organized



the Argentinean leg of the Women's Global Strike, a yearly event which occurs on March 8.

For more information about SAC see <http://www.ellitoral.com> (in Spanish) or the International Wages for Housework Campaign (UK): <http://womenstrike8m.server101.com>

Ban on plastic bags in Kerala benefits women and the environment

The mayor of Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of Kerala state in India, has declared a ban on non-biodegradable plastic bags because a new garbage treatment plant, which will produce biofertilizers, cannot process them. A benefit of the ban is that the resultant demand for paper, jute, and straw bags will provide employment for poor women. This was reported in the Ethiopian environmental magazine Akirma (Contact: editor Delalegn Eyob, desalegneyob@yahoo.com).

Unpaid Caregiving and the Canadian Economy

Unpaid caregivers save the public coffers over \$5 billion per year, and their work is equivalent to that of 276,509 full-time employees, according to the Canadian Caregiver Coalition. Founded in August, 2001 by the Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada and nine other public and non-profit organizations, the Coalition acts in support of the 2.8 million Canadians who provide unpaid care to people with physical or cognitive limitations or long-term health care problems. Its mission is to influence government policy and to promote awareness and action addressing the growing needs of Canadian caregivers. Membership is open to organizations, caregivers, and other individuals. Contact the Coalition at 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1B4; phone 613-233-5694; fax 613-230-4376; email ccc_ccan@von.ca; website www.ccc-ccan.ca.

Green Solutions to Homelessness

When most people think of homelessness, the image of an alcoholic single man on the streets, begging for money comes to mind. However, homelessness affects everyone and those who suffer the most are often women, and women with dependent children. On June 20th 2001, the Coalition for a Greener Economic Recovery held a meeting in Toronto's Metro Hall to discuss the issue of Greener Alternatives to Homelessness. Keynote speakers included: Susan Shepherd, member of the Homelessness Advisory Task Force and an Analyst with the City of Toronto; green architect Martin Liefhebber; and planner Peter Burns, who spoke on low-cost green options for solving the homelessness crisis. Members of the community were invited to attend and participate in the discussion that followed the presentations. The speakers outlined issues facing homeless people in Toronto, and discussed environmentally sensible solutions.

Women on the streets are often victims of violence and troubled childhoods. They take shelter on the street in order to get away from their troubled lives, but often run the risk of more abuse and exploitation. In Toronto, there is an increasing number of homeless women, particularly those who are pregnant.

The 1993 Violence against Women Survey by Statistics Canada indicated that one-half of Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16, and that 25 percent of all women have experienced physical or sexual assault at the hands of a marital or common-law partner. The issue of remaining or leaving an abusive mate is complicated, since factors such as fear, family pressure, legal and childcare issues, children's schooling, and economics all play a role.

When a woman leaves her mate, she often suffers financially and housing is not always economically viable. Even affluent women sometimes remain with abusive mates, because although they appear well off financially, they are often dependent on their husbands.

Unlike men, women often seek secondary sources of housing, such as going to live (either temporarily or long-term) with family, friends or in shelters. Single mothers

EARTH DAY[®]

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Find out how you can do your part for a healthy Earth.

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www.earthday.ca

often have to rely on social assistance in order to get by, receiving very little money and usually relying on shelters.

According to Sheppard, in 1988 an estimated 2700 children spent some time in shelters in Toronto; this number increased by 130% to 6200 in 1999. People are now remaining in shelters for a longer period of time, often because they have no place to go. The living conditions are inadequate with improper food storage and preparation facilities. Health is also a factor, as there is an increased risk of infection and disease when sharing common facilities.

A study in October of 2000 reported that the rental housing vacancy rate in Toronto is .6 percent. That means that only 6 out of 1000 units are available at any point in time. Landlords are taking advantage of the abolition of rent control by increasing rents. Unfortunately, salaries are not increasing at the same rate.

Liefhebber believes that the onus is on planners and developers to address Toronto's housing crisis. One way of creating housing is to work with what is available. Converting warehouses into lofts is a huge success and there are many great ideas that can follow, such as converting laneways and garages into housing. But in order for these ideas to come to life, there must be cooperation from the government. Currently, there is a bylaw that forbids turning garages into housing. City policies have to change if we are going to find a solution to homelessness. Another idea is to build apartments on top of shopping malls. Taxes are a worry and prevent many from pursuing ideas for housing. One thing to consider is the land we use for cars. In Toronto, we treat our vehicles better than we treat people; we "give better housing to cars than we do to people" says Liefhebber.

Burns stated that a more realistic approach is non-profit housing. In one project, in the St. Lawrence Market area, new housing sold at a reasonable \$175-\$250 per square foot. This could enable some homeless people to purchase a home.

All in all, the meeting demonstrated some of the connections between environmental and social priorities, as opposed to market priorities, in Toronto's urban housing situation.



Women's circle dance at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

DIANA HUET DE GUERVILLE

Quebec Feminist Research Network on Political Economy

"Economic security for women" is the topic of a workshop to be held in early October, 2002 in Quebec City, organized by the Feminist Network for Renewal of Economic and Political Theories and Practices. Based at the University of Quebec at Montreal, the Network has also organized workshops on women's health and the transformation of health systems, among other topics. It links a number of "tables fem", which are locally-based groups of women working on local community economic issues from a women's perspective.

For more information, contact: Louise Brossard, Réseau féministe pour un renouvellement des théories et des pratiques économiques et politiques, Institute de recherches et d'études féministes, Université de Québec à Montréal, Pavillon Thérèse-Cagrain, bur. W-4275, C.P. 8888, Succ. Centre-Ville, Montréal, Québec H3C 3P8. Tel. 514-987-3000 poste 1203, fax 514-987-6742, email brossard.louise@courrier.uqam.ca.

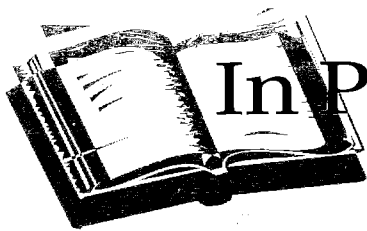
Does Roots Use Sweatshops?

The Maquila Solidarity Network is asking Roots to disclose the locations of factories which produce its apparel, including Olympics items. "Sweatshop abuses flourish when they are hidden from public scrutiny, and Roots seems intent on hiding its locations of production, both in Canada and internationally," states a press release from the Network, which is organizing demonstrations and a media campaign on this issue in conjunction with the Ethical Trading Action Group.

An earlier campaign by the Network and other groups to support workers who produce shoes for Nike and Reebok resulted in a successful union-organizing drive at the Kuk Dong factory in Atlitxco, Puebla, Mexico. The workers signed their first collective agreement on September 21, 2001 - a precedent-setting victory in Mexico's maquiladora sector where independent unions have not been tolerated. The union, called SITEMEX, represents about 450 workers at the shoe factory, which has changed its name to Mex Mode. The nine-month organizing drive was supported by many groups, including the Workers Support Centre (CAT) in Mexico, Students Against Sweatshops groups in the U.S. and Canada, labour organizations including the AFL-CIO and Canadian Labour Congress, and solidarity groups including the U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (LEAP), Campaign for Labor Rights, the Korean House for International Solidarity, as well as the Maquila Solidarity Network. Nineteen Canadian religious, labour, women's and non-governmental organizations signed a joint letter in support of the workers' right to be represented by a union of their choice, which was presented to the Mexican ambassador in August, 2001.

Encouraging Nike, Reebok, Roots and other multinational firms to deal only with factories which have respected workers' rights is an important way consumers in the North can show their support for a more humane and just global economy.

For more information, contact: Maquila Solidarity Network / Ethical Trading Action Group, 606 Shaw Street, Toronto, Ontario M6G 3L6; phone 416-532-8584; fax 416-532-7688; website www.maquilasolidarity.org.



InPrint

THE INVISIBLE HEART: ECONOMICS AND FAMILY VALUES

by Nancy Folbre. (New York: The New Press, 2001).

Reviewed by Diana Huet de Guerville

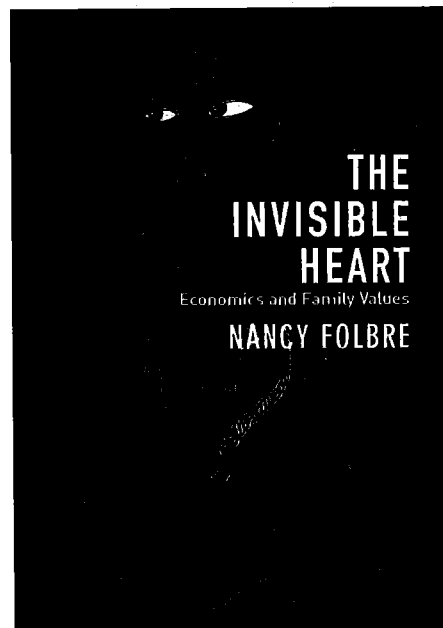
If you're usually squeamish about economics, take heart: Nancy Folbre's new book is an accessible, engaging, and thought-provoking feminist analysis of the ways in which market values undermine social values of love, obligation, and reciprocity. The MacArthur Award-winning Folbre cuts through neoliberal rhetoric around 'Family Values' with a steady hand, exposing conservative attacks on feminists and the welfare state as a smokescreen for an economic system that actually values family very little. In no uncertain terms, she denounces market capitalism's inability to account for and value the non-market caring activities that women have been largely responsible for, making a strong case for significant reforms to the economy, as we know it.

Folbre has little patience for what she calls "jaded debates" between socialism and capitalism, and claims that we must instead search for innovative ways to value and encourage more caring labour in ways that don't place the burden solely on women's shoulders. This means that men's responsibilities and capabilities for care must be developed significantly, which requires that social structures must change as well. For example, she highlights the flaws in government policies, taxation and subsidies, suggesting simple and reasonable alternative formulations which could have considerable social impact. She also explores different ways in which some European countries value caring labour, argues that we should think of children as a public good, and presents ideas such as market socialism and participatory democracy.

Although Folbre does spend a few chapters exploring alternatives, and even briefly addresses the particular context of globalization, I would have liked a deeper treatment of the ideas that she put forward. Her approach is certainly reformist rather than revolutionary, and she seems overly confident that the political will exists to put some of her ideas into practice. I must admit I'm a bit more sceptical, especially since she offers no suggestions on how to advocate for the changes she envisions.

Nevertheless, her arguments may be inspiring enough to motivate some concerted political action, and her unique and original insights are certainly worth consideration.

Diana Huet de Guerville is completing her MES degree at York University. Her research centres on women's resistance to globalization.



INTEREST AND INFLATION FREE MONEY

by Margrit Kennedy (Philadelphia, PA and Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 1995).

Reviewed by Mary-Beth Raddon

Many women know first-hand that whenever someone gains without working, it is likely the result of another person working. This experience, and the concern of many women for social equity, ecological health and economic stability, says Margrit Kennedy, should make women particularly wary of the idea that money "works" to make more money. In this short book, filled with graphs and cartoon-like illustrations, Kennedy identifies the exponential growth pattern of money, through interest and compound interest, as the central flaw in the present money system. She describes past and current experiments with interest-free monies, proposes a composite model for monetary reform, and discusses how to implement such alternatives. The book is an abridged version of a German edition, which is being translated into twenty languages.

Kennedy's analysis closely follows that of Silvio Gesell (*The Natural Economic Order*, 1904), who argued that we ought to treat money as a public service rather than as a private commodity. If we considered that the primary function of money is to circulate wealth, we would perceive the current monetary system as exploitative: the many who "do not have enough" of the exchange medium pay more for its use than the few who "have too much." Kennedy presents German figures showing how low- to lower-middle income households pay more interest than they receive, while households of the tenth income decile receive about double the interest they pay, and the wealthiest one percent receive from fifteen to two thousand times more than they pay. She outlines four basic misconceptions about money that prevent us from recognizing how interest redistributes money from the poor to the rich. For instance, it is a misconception that we only pay interest when we borrow money. In fact, the cost of interest is passed on in prices of commercial goods, fees for services and rents. Interest on capital comprises a major proportion of the cost of public services, from garbage collection to public housing.

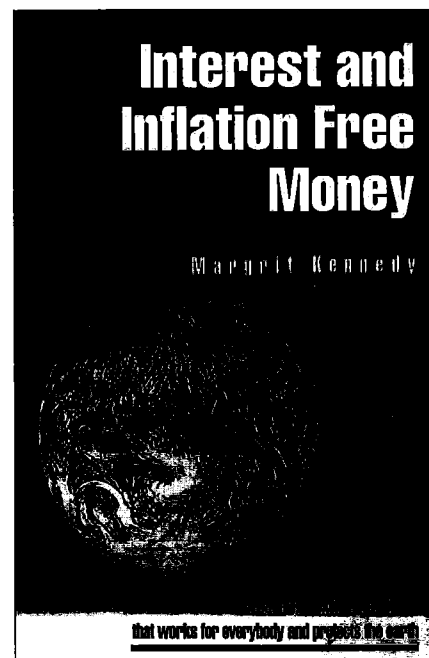
Kennedy's proposal for reform is a variant on Gesell's design for a "neutral" or "free" money system. In Gesellian projects, interest is replaced by a small fee on money kept out of circulation. The slight depreciation of non-circulating money reflects a "natural economic order" because it resembles processes of wear and tear, spoilage and rot of physical capital. In contrast, the exponential growth of interest-bearing money mimics the pathological growth pattern of cancer. The consequences of interest-bearing money, Kennedy argues, include inflation and the destructive pursuit of economic growth. Compared with financial investments, in the current system, investment in beneficial activities that receive modest returns – durable buildings, ecological technologies, sustainable agriculture and art – appear "economically unfeasible."

Kennedy documents historical and contemporary money projects consistent with Gesell's ideas, but she avoids one murky aspect of this history. The most famous exponent of Gesell's ideas was Ezra Pound who championed interest-free money to Mussolini and the Italian Fascist Party. So forceful is Pound's story that Gesell's proposals have retained an unfortunate association with fascism. In her unstated attempt to lift the cloud over Gesell, Kennedy explains how votes for Hitler in the Weimar Republic were correlated with unemployment, which was a partial consequence of high interest rate policies. She comments on the dangers to personal freedom of a state monopoly combined with a totally cashless money system. Finally, she notes that money reform must be linked to broader political agendas, including land and tax reform.

The challenges of creating a new monetary system, Kennedy insists, are political, not technical. To get there we need to experiment with many models of interest-free currency, and to gain practical experience using them. We can start by sponsoring experiments, becoming active in local exchange systems and supporting ethical investment. Be-

cause women carry the heaviest burden of poverty and economic instability, Kennedy expects that women will be prominent among those seeking better to understand money and working to introduce alternatives.

Mary-Beth Raddon recently completed her Ph.D. in Sociology. Her thesis on community currencies as social experiments reveals how conventional money relations are gendered. She is currently teaching sex and gender at the University of Toronto at Scarborough.



THE PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD

by Ann Crittenden. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001).

Reviewed by Sarah Blake

Young Canadian families with children were thirty percent less wealthy in 1999 than in 1984, the *Toronto Star* recently reported (March 16, 2002). "That may help explain why fewer Canadians were having children, threatening the growth – and wealth – of the country," the article stated.

In *The Price of Motherhood*, Ann Crittenden, a journalist and mother, systematically dissects the process through which North American women who have children pay a price over their lifetimes of roughly a million dollars each, which Crittenden terms the "mommy tax." Mothers pay other unmonetized costs as well, in lost sleep, stress, and damaged relationships. And society as a whole suffers untold additional costs stemming from the financial pressures on mothers and the poor quality of available child-

care, which lowers worker productivity throughout the economy and increases health and other costs overall.

The sheer volume and relentlessness of Crittenden's well-researched and well-organized arguments is impressive. She discusses the current state of affairs: how homemaking, the largest single occupation in the U.S. and every other country, is left out of the GDP and most economic statistics, so that homemakers must fight to show they are "working." She explains the history: how women's work, and especially childcare, came to be so undervalued. She demonstrates how case law and practice on divorce settlements, despite reforms in recent years, worsen the effects of the "mommy tax" and push most divorced women with children into poverty, ignoring the value and costs of the years of unpaid work which women invest in their families.

The Price of Motherhood



Why the Most Important Job in the World Is Still the Least Valued

ANN CRITTENDEN

Government policies, in North America and especially the U.S. – from welfare and other forms of social assistance to tax policies – reinforce the financial burdens and risks mothers face, while other policies such as mothers' allowances, which have been proven in places like France and Scandinavia to lessen the burden of motherhood, are rejected. Even mothers who continue to work full-time witness a pay gap of 20

to 30 percent, not just compared to men but also to childless women. Crittenden discusses the implications of these financial realities for family decision-making, power relations in families, and family violence.

The book ends with a plethora of policy suggestions for ways to "bring children up without putting women down." Crittenden outlines needed reforms in workplace rules, pay equity, elimination of discrimination against mothers, social security and social insurance, preschool and childcare policies, taxes and healthcare, GDP accounting, divorce settlements, community supports and parent education. She ends with a recognition of political realities: "Even if only a handful of these proposals were enacted, the most obvious result would be a massive shift of income to women – which is precisely why all of them have met with such resistance. But paying women for services rendered is precisely the point.... Whatever the cries of outrage, however loud the protests against each and every one of these ideas, remember one thing: a society that beggars its mothers beggars its own future."

Ann Crittenden holds a full-time university teaching position and is the mother of three children.

GREENWOR(L)DS: ECOCRITICAL READINGS OF CANADIANWOMEN'S POETRY

by Diana M. A. Relke (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1999).

Reviewed by Katherine Verhagen

In this book, Diana M. A. Relke provides an introduction to the new field of ecocriticism. This area of study, which reinvests environmental concerns into literary analysis, gained academic prominence in the early 90's but has roots in earlier literary movements, such as Romanticism. Deftly mingling literary criticism with references to Greek, biblical, and matriarchal myths, Relke criticizes a wide array of past and present literary methodologies for being male-centred and oblivious to environmental concerns. She brings our attention to Canadian female poets, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, who actively integrate ecological issues and subject matter into their work.

Relke is a founding member and Professor in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and an interdisciplinary scholar. Her writing is comprehensible, concise, and inspiring, for she has "adopted the position that language is less opaque than current [academic] fashion would have it" (p.184). Her introduction is inviting and her analyses are informative and dexterous. Both the young scholar and the seasoned professor will find this book valuable. Relke demands little previous experience with theory, gives detailed backgrounds of each methodology that she studies, and comprehensively relates it to ecocritical debate. For the august academic, Relke challenges many current and authoritative theories by providing innovative and disarming arguments about their male-centred and unenvironmental nature. Her attractive descriptions of Canadian female poets will send many a reader rushing to the nearest bookstore in search of their works!

Overall, this book inspires great enthusiasm. However, Relke risks essentializing the ecocritical debate into gender categories. Although she states in her conclusion that "feminist disciples" of male-centred theories are "included" in her criticism (p.321), all of the "disciples" of these theories, whom she criticizes, are male. Admittedly, she does not spare many of her female poets from her criticism. However, the manner in which she presents the debate between the unenvironmental literary critic and the environmental poet is that the critic is always male and that the poet is always female. One might wonder why she does not explicitly mention any of the unenvironmental female theorists or any adequately environmental male poets. Relke may damage her persuasiveness because of this exclusion.

Nevertheless, *Green-wor(l)ds* is a significant and clever work that demands attention. Even in our time of rampant ecological disasters, the literary world, especially in academia, still largely ignores environmental matters. Relke's book, clear and enlightening, may be one of the few texts which can inspire much needed change in literary studies. For either a well-established faculty member or a young scholar/reader of Canadian women's poetry, *Green-wor(l)ds* is a necessary read.



Katherine Verhagen is doctoral candidate in the department of English and in the Collaborative Program in Book History and Print Culture at the University of Toronto. Her thesis is on Caribbean-Canadian women writers and the publishing of their texts in Canada and in the Caribbean. She divides her time between academic work, volunteering for WE International magazine, acting as a union steward for her department, and creative writing.

WOMEN IN A WORLD OF MONEY: MAKING THE LOCAL-GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Sally Flax and Corin Kagan. (Minneapolis: Flax and Kagan, 2000).

Reviewed by Diana Huet de Guerville

Sally Flax and Corin Kagan have written a book designed to spur women into action by educating them about economic affairs, under the assumption that if women understand how the economy functions, they will then know how to make the necessary changes to improve women's lives. Their intent is admirable, and they have produced a comprehensive and highly readable explanation of important economic concepts, writing in a conversational style that makes potentially boring topics such as free trade or economic history seem both interesting and relevant to women's lives.

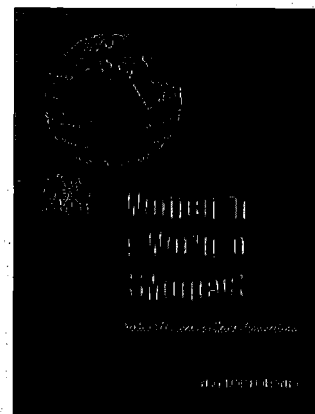
When they draw on their personal experiences their accounts are frequently passionate and moving, and their indignity at the injustices suffered by women the world shows through quite clearly. They do a fairly good job of integrating issues of race and class into their analysis – while certainly not central, they are not left out entirely (as

is unfortunately the case for sexual orientation and disability, for example). And though the book seems primarily geared towards American women, Flax and Kagan highlight the diverse (and often highly unequal) conditions that women face the world over, in order to illustrate the vital necessity of global solidarity between women in order to counter the destructive power of corporate globalization.

Despite these merits, however, I encountered some pretty significant weakness in both their analysis and vision for change. First of all, I often found myself quite frustrated by their oversights and simplifications, having read a fair bit about many of the concepts they tackle. Though I realize their book is directed primarily towards those with little to no background in economics, I thought they could have presented a much more nuanced account of different economic systems, for example. Instead, they seem thoroughly confident that the market capitalist economy that exists in the US can be made to work better if women just have more of a voice within it, and they assume that all economies should and will eventually make the transition to this system.

This unquestioned faith in market capitalism (a 'just fix-it' mentality) is problematic for many reasons, most obviously from an ecological perspective. Though they mention a few environmental issues in passing, they seem to give no thought to the dangers of unrestrained economic growth and consumption. In fact, given their commitment to global feminism, I was quite surprised to find that they unquestioningly accept population growth in the South as a major cause of environmental destruction, completely ignoring feminist analyses that point to Northern consumption as a much bigger problem. I was further shocked to find the phrase "Workers are the consumers our growth economy needs" (p.76), used as justification for why corporations should pay better wages. None of their seemingly extensive research on economics has evidently led them to the substantial body of environmental literature critiquing the very notion of the growth economy.

Even more surprising is the complete lack of vision that characterizes their agenda for change, which seems to hinge entirely on women voting and contacting their elected officials. Given the enormity of the problems they describe throughout the book, their suggestions are strangely anti-climactic and don't reflect any sense of the radical potential of feminist action. For example, they never recommend that women them-



selves run for office, insisting instead: "We must elect leaders who will speak out" and "Speak up women - vote" (p.111). Having just returned from the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a city becoming world-renowned for its participatory budgeting process and high level of citizen involvement in government affairs, Flax and Kagan's call to action strikes me as hollow and uninspiring. Given their oft-cited concern for the ways in which corporate power has undermined democracy, I also find it strange that they continue to trust so completely in formal democracy as it exists in the US, oblivious to the variety of progressive and radical theories about democracy that seem much more promising as a source of power for women.

All that being said, I would nevertheless encourage women who want to become more economically literate to pick up this book, because it contains a wealth of good information, and a particularly strong critique of the military-industrial complex that seems especially pertinent today. Just keep in mind that a great deal has been left out, so this book is most useful as a starting point for further research and action.

JUST DOING IT: POPULAR COLLECTIVE ACTION IN THE AMERICAS

Edited by Gene Desfor, Deborah Barndt, and Barbara Rahder.
(Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2002).

Reviewed by Hayley Easto

This book contains a series of accounts from North, Central and South America of successful local political and economic organizing. The introduction by the editors introduces the reader to the concept of "popular collective action." It also provides an overview of the strengths of the book (the emphasis on local stories and real people, and themes of social justice and popular collective action) while recognizing that "broader coalitions for action" are also a vital part of global social change (p. xxii). The book is divided into two sections: the first dealing with Latin America, and the second with Canada and the USA.

The first section includes five stories from Latin America. Galit Wolfensohn recounts the experiences of Guatemalan refugees in Mexico. These refugees are self-settled, undocumented, without a camp to go to, and dispersed around southern Mexico. This unique situation of legal vulnerability, material insecurity and cultural and spatial dispersion makes the formation and success of their advocacy group, the Association of Dispersed Guatemalan Refugees (ARDIGUA), all the more remarkable.

Egla Martinez-Salazar contributes a chapter about the Maya-Tzutuhil people of Guatemala who suffered a decade of state-sponsored terrorism in the name of 'development'. Racist and sexist violence ruled their lives until one day in 1990, when in response to the shooting of thirteen of their members, the community mobilized to guard the corpses of the dead until international media and human rights groups began to pay attention.

In a first-person narrative style, Cindy McCulloch shares her experiences in Mexico as she struggled with ideas of decolonization of the mind and the self. She produced an organic farming manual through participatory processes within the community, while the main conclusions of her research are reflective and discourse-based.

Sheelagh Davis provides a thorough introduction to the concepts of popular environmental education (PEE), whose central goal, she argues, is building skills and experience within a community. She recounts her experiences participating in PEE in Perempitz, Mexico, a community feeling the effects of economic instability brought by industrialized agriculture and neo-liberal economic policies.

W. Alexander Long explores the situation of a small community of pepenadores, waste pickers in urban landfill sites in Mexico, working under informal union-like conditions and exploited by the municipality. He provides a thorough discussion of the identity of his group of pepenadores, both within the larger community of pepenadores throughout the country and in the local community, as well as of the informal economy surrounding solid waste management.

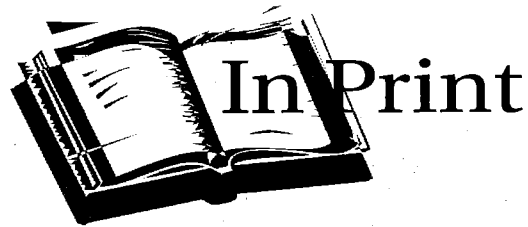
In section two, on Canada and the U.S., Emily Chan describes the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYCEJA) and their struggles against municipal policies and attempts at reform which unfairly target already-disadvantaged communities. Their key strategies are in the arenas of planning, community gardens and grassroots organizing.

Sarah Koch-Schulte investigates individual acts of resistance of call-center workers in several cities in Canada. She argues that acts of resistance go beyond public demonstrations, and matter at the individual level. Five categories of individual, sometimes covert resistance are examined, and the author concludes that "power is context-specific and negotiated in everyday work practices" (p.169).

Emile K. Adin introduces the idea of social sustainability, which he defines as "a community's capacity to attain and maintain internal vitality and social equity over the long term" (p. 175). He discusses this in the context of housing for seniors in downtown Vancouver by giving a brief overview of the history of housing legislation and patterns, and argues that the result of the unavailability of

affordable housing has led to an underuse of available social capital.

Hayley Easto is a graduate student at York University whose program of study focuses on international development, social justice, and land ownership.



fruit

Elizabeth Bradfield

She's in her cabin peeling fruit. Apples.
Pomegranate - red skin difficult
and staining. Oranges. Mango -
the tough inner fibers drying hard and textured.

Then her needle through the skins.
Zippers, buttons, clasps
foreign on the rinds.

She likes what isolation
has turned her to - letters,
views, the fruit
in its silent, hollow pile
at one corner of the room.

The metaphors of her craft are endless. She worked
in hospices. She cared for bodies that were hollowing
themselves, watched absences form
their slow and difficult shapes
among the loved survivors.

Now tell me
that the fruit is strange - whole but empty,
cured but dry, more compelling
through the odd things holding it together.

Elizabeth Bradfield works as a naturalist, kayak guide, and website designer on Cape Cod. Her poetry has appeared in *The Louisville Review*, *Rhino*, *The Evergreen Chronicle* and is forthcoming in *Calyx*, *The Alaska Quarterly Review*, *The Seattle Review*, and *Epoch*.

GENDER AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Routledge journal *Local Economy* devoted its May, 2000 issue (vol. 15, no. 1) to the topic of "Gender and Local Economic Development". Articles include the following:

Sally Theobald and Rachel Tolhurst - "Gender and infectious diseases: methodology from a training programme"

Judi Abel - "Empowering grandmothers in a community health programme in Senegal"

Paule Simard - "Environment, living spaces and health: compound organization practices in a Bamako squatter settlement"

Mohga Smith - "Monitoring and evaluation of health projects: Oxfam experience"

Huda Zurayk - "The meaning of reproductive health for developing countries: the case of the Middle East"

Deyanira González de León Aguirre and Deborah L. Billings - "Abortion: Attitudes among Obstetrics and Gynecology Medical Residents in Mexico City Public Hospitals"

Carolyn Baylies - "HIV/AIDS, microbicides and fertility"

Alice Welbourn - "Participatory methods of HIV prevention: experiences in Africa and Asia"

Colette Harris and Ines Smyth - "Reproductive Health of Refugees"

GENDER, DEVELOPMENT AND MONEY

Oxfam has recently published a monograph entitled *Gender, Development and Money* as part of its "Focus on Gender" series (ISBN 085598 453 8). Edited by Carolyn Sweetman, who is editor of the international journal *Gender and Development*, the book includes chapters by authors from both North and South who explore the role of income in transforming the power relations between women and men, changing roles in the household, marketplace, and state. Authors also address the question of how to value unpaid work, and they discuss microfinance from a gender perspective. Chapters include:

Irene Bruegel - "Getting Explicit: Gender and Local Economic Development"

Rose Gilroy and Christine Booth - "The Role of a Toolkit in Mobilising Women in Local and Regional Development"

Fiona Forsyth - "Women's Enterprise and Business Development: Lessons from Targeted Women's Programmes in Glasgow"

Suzanne Speak - "Barriers to Lone Parents' Employment: Looking Beyond the Obvious"

Clive Collis, Anne Green and Tony Mallier - "Older Female Workers in Britain and its Regions: Millennium prospects"

Anna Webb - "Women Entrepreneurs, Barcelona"

Lesley Harding - "Forum for the Future"

Lesley Harding - "Women's Full Circle Fund, Norwich"

Massimiliano Di Luca – "A Dating Agency for Entrepreneurial Successors"

Jeff Turner, Margaret Grieco, Nana Apt and Len Holmes – "Looking to Initiatives in Communications Technology to Overcome Social Exclusion and Gender Inequalities"

For more information or to order the book, contact Oxfam at publish@oxfam.org.uk.

WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

A research report from the Washington, DC-based Center for Women's Business Research documents the success of women-owned firms over the past decade. Women business owners used smaller amounts of start-up capital than men, but after ten years a similar proportion had reached the \$500,000 level in revenues. The executive report, entitled *The New Generation of Women Business Owners*, is available at no charge on the Center's website, www.womensbusiness-research.org. For further information, contact the Center for Women's Business Research, 1411 K St. N.W., Suite 1350, Washington, DC 20005-3407; phone 202-638-3060; fax 202-638-3064; email info@womensbusinessresearch.org.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CANADA

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) has been active in researching and promoting sustainable development indicators for Canada. Its publications in this area include *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles* (1993); *Pathways to Sustainability: Assessing our Progress* (edited by Tony Hodge, et al., 1995); *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Putting Principles into Practice* (by Gerald W. Cormick et al., 1996); *Sustainable Strategies for Oceans: A Co-Management Guide* (1998); and *Measuring Eco-Efficiency in Business: Feasibility of a Core Set of Indicators* (1999). NRTEE's Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators Initiative, launched in September 2000, is a three-year project aimed at developing a set of nationally well-accepted indicators to promote the integration of environmental considerations into economic decisions. NRTEE works in collaboration with Statistics Canada and Environment Canada, and many of its publications are accessible on its website. For more information, visit the NRTEE website on indicators at www.nrtee-tntee.ca/indicators or contact the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, Canada Building, 344 Slater Street, Suite 200, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7Y3; phone 613-992-7189; fax 613-992-7385, email info@nrtee-tntee.ca.

The Sound of One Hand Drumming

Marilyn Dumont

"It is not the end of all being. Just a small stunting of a road in you,"¹ but you will branch out into all directions of this country, this nationstate inside of you waiting to come of age, cede, or claim independence from the founding fathers of confederation or thought

and all your tributaries will flow into the great dam of existence, the watershed of doubt and creation

of your soul and others in this land of no returning this fountain of youth and sorrow, and print-dressed women will greet you and say, "kayas,"² and kiss you on the cheek

call you relative, call you to them for everlasting life and who knows what will come of reading this bible of technology in your soul,

if you have one that isn't digitized yet, the soul you pray with every new dawn of your life before stepping into the headlines of thought or waving goodbye

to good fellows who trod off to loftier things in the big house of knowing,

peeling back words from spines that vault into theories as ornate as rococo and as cluttered as a bad relationship

with oneself or anyone else within reach of those words that flow like milkweed from Philosophers while the small single words

of brown women hang on clotheslines stiff in winter and thaw only in early spring but

no one takes them off the line because no one wants last year's clothes, they're the wrong colour and out of fashion and if dead-white-men stopped writing for one thousand years and only women wrote that wouldn't be enough

time for all the Indian youth to say what they had to or enough for me and those of my kind, the sharp-toned-and-tongued kind who keep railing on about this stuff when all well-mannered and sophisticated Indian types would have reasonably dropped it long ago because it's just rhetoric,

guilt-provoking and sounds like a broken record of an Indian beating a drum or like a Indian beating a drum with a broken record, or like an Indian breaking a record, or like an Indian breaking a drum over a record whose sound is digitized, on CD-ROM complete with video and CD-quality sound.

Reprinted with the permission of the author, from her book *A Really Good Brown Girl* (London: Orlino Brick Books, 1996).

¹"Thirst," Robert Priest. ²Kayas: Cree for "it's been a long time."

NEW INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL

Women for Women International, a U.S.-based response and development organization, is starting a semi-annual journal about economic and social issues as they relate to women in international development. The journal is intended as a venue for debate among academics, professionals, and practitioners, addressing issues from various viewpoints. It is meant for the development community, including government policymakers, international NGOs, U.S. foundations, and grassroots supporters. Articles will ask how women are included in, and best served by, the programs intended to rebuild their communities and the development projects intended to assist them.

The first issue of the journal will focus on the role of religion in the

development process, and how it affects women. For more information on the journal, contact: Journal Editor, Communications Department, Women for Women International, 733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 340, Washington, D.C. 20005 USA. Email: jan@womenforwomen.org.

Women for Women is dedicated to building a world that ensures economic, political, and social justice with gender equality at its core. The group provides women in developing countries with the physical and emotional resources, as well as the income-generating skills and rights-awareness training, needed to move out of crisis and poverty and into stability and self-sufficiency. Additional information about programs can be found on the group's Website, <http://www.womenforwomen.org>

WE Surf

TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM: THE EXPERIENCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL PROCESS

Cécile Sabourin

Over the past two years, I have been the organizer of a tri-lingual international consultative process on the subject of "women and economy," which has used web conferencing and electronic translations, email, and face-to-face meetings to develop collective documents on women's economic contributions and women's initiatives in transforming the dominant economic paradigm. This article explains the consultative process itself, discusses its results so far, and outlines the next steps which are underway.

The project was conceived as a way of inviting women and feminists from around the world, and from a wide range of backgrounds and fields, to participate in identifying what is economically important to women and how economies can be changed from the bottom up. Invitations to participate in an electronic forum on these questions were widely distributed, using all the networks at our disposal. The initial question for discussion was: Do women's initiatives emerging from multiple and varied contexts have the potential to transform and renew economic thought? The project, in attempting to address this question, also envisioned concrete proposals for recognizing women's contribution to the creation of wealth and the well-being of societies. It accepted that the current forms of production and distribution of wealth in all socioeconomic spheres – market, non-market, and non-monetary – would need to be questioned.

Discussion papers were circulated by email; participants were invited to comment and to circulate their own papers or offer their thoughts; electronic translation made contributions in English, Spanish and French accessible to speakers of the other languages. In particular, participants were encouraged to describe innovative practices designed and carried out by women which respond to the real needs of women, families

and communities and which advance economic rationales divergent from those of the dominant economy.

Several dozen people participated in the electronic forum in early 2001. A number of participants also met face-to-face in Havana, Cuba in April, 2001; in Lille, France in December, 2001; and at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil in February, 2002, where the emerging conclusions and documents were discussed.

The collective report of the process thus far is available in English, French and Spanish on the web: <http://alliance21.org> under the heading "Thematic workshops" – "Women and Economy". The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, as sponsor of this workshop and a number of others on related topics, contributes research and conference funding to the project.

The priorities identified by forum participants include:

- Constructing a new economic paradigm based on women's specific positions and practices of solidarity,
- Developing methodologies and tools to recognize women's practices,
- Making visible these practices and developing wider solidarity in various fields.

The participants' proposals include:

- Deconstructing the myths which contribute to the maintenance of the "inferior" position of women in society,
- Reconceptualizing basic economic concepts to make more visible women's and other voluntary contributions to the economy,
- Designing adaptable and varied indicators of wealth and work,
- Helping to bring together and strengthen existing

networks that interrelate women and economy,

- Demanding creativity and diversity in economic initiatives,
- Developing political practices capable of supporting new frameworks for economic relationships, including solidarity.

As we know, many projects and initiatives converge toward similar objectives in building viable alternatives for the future of the planet. However, the viewpoints of women and feminists need to be better documented and supported in order to figure seriously in this process and to weigh on the agenda of the most influential international organizations.

In the coming years, the "Women and Economy" workshop will attempt to enlarge our contacts, especially with the Asian, East European and Anglo-Saxon women's and feminists' networks already active in this field of transforming the economy. We also hope to continue gathering data on feminist initiatives which reject financial profitability as their main rationale and which explicitly take into account communities and their needs in designing economic activities. All this will contribute to the preparation of a seminar to be held during the next session of the World Social Forum in 2003. ❧

For more information or to become a participant in this continuing process, please contact me: cecile.sabourin@uqat.ca.

Cécile Sabourin is Professor, Département des sciences du développement humaine et social, Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue, and a member of the International Association for Feminist Economics.

U.N. PLATFORM FOR ACTION COMMITTEE

The United Nations Platform for Action Committee in Manitoba has a new website: www.unpac.ca. UNPAC was formed after the Beijing conference and has been active in monitoring the performance of governments, education activities about the lives of women, locally, nationally and internationally; sponsoring conferences; and sharing strategies for advancing women's equality. On its website are information and news, international and local links to women's equality-seeking organizations and U.N. sites, and a new project called "Women and Economy" – an examination and analysis of the economy through women's eyes. UNPAC is in the process of producing a video and perhaps a CD-ROM on this topic. For more information, or comments, contact: Jennifer deGroot, project@unpac.ca. Website: www.unpac.ca.



**Women &
Environments**
international

EUROPEAN CONTACTS

European grassroots organizations working on environmental and feminist issues include:

ASEED Europe (www.aseed.net), RISINGTIDE NETHERLANDS (www.risingtide.nl), and EYFA (www.eyfa.org). EYFA usually holds an annual meeting. This year it was focused on climate change issues, and speakers from Papua New Guinea, South Africa and Nepal discussed their local struggles against the negative effects of privatization of natural resources in their communities. The conference report will be available soon.

FEMINIST ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS LISTSERVE

An email distribution list exists to facilitate dialogue about feminist ecological economics: feminist economic models, based on collective processes and the centrality of people's homes and communities to their ways of life, which adopt basic principles of ecological economics, such as recognition of the economy's limitation by environmental constraints, and the need to value services and goods often regarded as "externalities" – including environmental services, child-rearing, and household work. Other ways of defining feminist ecological economics involve recognition that the economy starts at home, where most of the work is done for free.

Without homes and communities, grounded in ecological support systems, there would be no economy. A sustainable society must recognize and respect the needs of the people and ecosystems which provide its foundation. An economic vision which goes far beyond money-based valuation and markets – one which speaks of "provisioning", not just production, consumption and distribution – is powerful and compelling as an economic paradigm for the 21st century.

The email discussion list is intended to foster dialogue about not only the definition of feminist ecological economics, but also its implications for politics and activism. For example, What are the outlines of a sustainable, woman-friendly economy? What stands in the way of building one? How can we overcome these barriers? How can the knowledge of environmental and social activists provide theoretical insights which lead to policy proposals and blueprints for community-based change?

To subscribe to the list, send a message to: listserv@yorku.ca, and in the body of the message, type "SUBscribe FemEcolEcon ←your full name→". For example, Jane Doe's message would be addressed to listserv@yorku.ca, have a blank subject line, and the body of the email would read "SUBscribe FemEcolEcon Jane Doe". You will then received a welcome message with details on how to use the listserv.

Calendar

May 9 - 11, 2002, Montreal, Canada - 1st International Seminar on Women's Safety. Under the theme **Making The Links**, the seminar will bring together women's groups, community organizations, cities and local governments, national and international agencies actively involved in increasing women's safety in cities and communities. The goal of this seminar is to review current knowledge and practices and to consolidate international exchanges in this field. This seminar is affiliated with the 6th world conference on injury prevention and control, May 12 to 15, 2002. For more information for the Seminar on Women's Safety: e-mail: cafsu@qc.aira.com; the 6th world conference website is: www.trauma2002.com

May 26 - 28, 2002, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada - Canadian Women's Studies Association (CWSA) Conference with the theme, **Designing Women - Designed Women, Women Designing and Women Having Designs** (see also the IWSGS Report in this issue). For more information: e-mail: cwsaacef@yorku.ca; website: www.yorku.ca/cwsaacef

May 28 - 30, 2002, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada - 9th Annual Conference, Environmental Studies Association of Canada/ L'association canadienne d'etudes environnementales. The ESAC/ACEE Annual Conference is a meeting point for scholars, professionals and activists from across Canada and beyond who work in areas of environmental concern. It is held as part of the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, the largest academic gathering in North America. For more information: website: www.thegreenpages.ca/esac

May 31 - June 2, 2002, Toronto, Canada - Gender and Geography Commission Workshop cosponsored with the Canadian Women and Geography. There will be a one-day overlap with the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers. With the theme **Placing Gender/ Making Policy** the workshop will explore place-specific aspects of creating gender-inclusive public policy. "Gender-inclusive" recognizes that women and men's experiences emerge from the intersections of gender with "race," class ability, sexual orientation and other markers of identity. For more information: e-mail Valerie Preston: vpreston@yorku.ca

June 6 - 9, 2002, Storrs, Connecticut, USA - The 12th Berkshire Conference of Women's History. The conference theme is **Local Knowledge - Global Knowledge**. For further information: e-mail: smyohn@erols.com; website: www.berksconference.org

June 6-11, 2002, Washington, DC - Conference on Healthy Ecosystems, Healthy People. The conference will focus on the complex linkages and interdependencies between biodiversity, ecosystem health, and human health. Presented by the London, Ontario-based International Society for Ecosystem Health, in association with the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science at Conservation International. For more information see the conference website: www.ecosystemhealth.com/hehp or email: hehp@ecosystemhealth.com

June 10 - 21, 2002, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, US - Ninth Women's Global Leadership Institute. An intensive two-week program for 25 women to become more effective women's rights leaders in policy and practice. Applications are welcome from women in all regions of the world who have taken leadership in various fields to make the abuses of female human rights visible and unacceptable. For more information: e-mail: cwgl@igc.org, website: www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/leadership.html

July 12 - 14, 2002, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA, US - The 2002 Conference on Feminist Economics. Sponsored by the International Institute for Feminist Economics (IAFFE), the conference's special areas of focus are Feminism, political, and military conflict; International living wage and anti-sweatshop campaigns; women and trade unions; family policy and the welfare state; the organization of care work; and interdisciplinary feminist research. See website: www.iaffe.org

August 12 - 16, 2002, York University, Toronto, Canada - 9th annual International Women & Health (IWHM) Meeting. The meeting will provide an international forum for health activists to advocate for essential health resources and the rights of women and girls. The program includes workshops, presentations, discussion groups and an information fair. Women who are involved in the women's health movement are invited to submit proposals. For more information: e-mail: iwhm@leca.com, website: www.iwhm-rifs.org/eng/index.htm

August 26 - September 4, 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa - World Summit on Sustainable Development. Tens of thousands of participants in this Rio plus 10 UN event, including heads of state and activists, will try to formulate quantifiable targets for implementing Agenda 21. For more information: www.joburgsummit2002.com

September 10 - 12, Mainz, Germany, Women or something like that? Revisiting Gender Studies in the Middle East, at the First World Congress of Middle East Studies. Gender panels include: Locating the Grassroots: Gender and Authenticity in Middle Eastern Politics, Gender and Transnationalism, Gender and Conflict. For more information: e-mail: igws@aucegypt.edu, website: www.aucegypt.edu/academic/igws/mainz02.html;

September 21 - 26, 2002, Athens, Greece - 38th Congress of the International Society of City and Regional Planners. The theme: **Urban Planning coping with the "The Pulsar Effect,"** the peaks, troughs and repeats in the demand cycle. For more information: Willem Witsenplein, ISOCARP secretariat, e-mail: secretariat@isocarp.org; website: www.isocarp.org

Oct 7, 2002 Global celebration of world Habitat Day under the theme City to City Cooperation For more information: www.unhabitat.org

November 15 - 17, 2002, Christian-Albrecht University at Kiel, Germany - Gender - From Costs to Benefits, 6th Symposium on Gender Research. It focuses on economic implications of gendering, including such questions as: How much does it cost when women earn just as much as men? How useful is the gender-specific distribution of tasks? How expensive is it not to make use of the leadership potential of women? Deadline for abstracts for Calls for Paper: May 1, 2002; Registration: Euro 50 until October 1, after that Euro 60. For more information: Dr. Anja Gottburgsen, ZiF Gender-Forschung at Kiel University, Germany, FAX ++431-579 49-50, email gottburgsen@zif.uni-kiel.de, home <http://www.uni-kiel.de/zif/>

ANNOUNCEMENT

McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women Visiting Scholar Positions 2002-2003

The Centre invites applications for Visiting Scholars positions. These are open to any scholar who wishes to spend one or two academic terms in a university environment and carry out research in Women's Studies. The Centre offers office space and support, an ongoing seminar program, and contact with other Women's Studies scholars at McGill and neighbouring universities. Scholars may wish to apply for external grants; limited research funding of \$1000 is available from the Centre. If interested, please send a copy of your curriculum vitae, a brief outline of the research to be undertaken, copies of two recent short publications, and the names of two referees, to:

Dr. Shree Mulay, Director,
McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women,
3487 Peel St., 2nd floor, Montreal, P.Q. H3A 1W7, Canada
phone: (514) 398-3911; fax: (514) 398-3986;
e-mail: learnrtw@po-box.mcgill.ca
Closing date: November 15, 2002



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Reader Survey 2002

Your thoughts about the magazine will help us to better reflect and respond to your expectations. Please take a minute to fill out this questionnaire and send it back today. The results will be published in the Network Directory and Index planned for 2002.

How long have you been a reader of WE? _____

Where did you get your copy of WE?

- I am a subscriber
 I found it in a university library
 I found it in a public library
 I purchased it in a store
 Other _____

Please rate the following main sections of WE on a scale of 1 (like very much) to 5 (dislike very much). Circle the number that best represents your opinion.

| | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Feature Articles | 1 2 3 4 5 | WE Research | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| In the Field | 1 2 3 4 5 | Book Reviews/In Print | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| WE Focus (featured artist) | 1 2 3 4 5 | Network Directory/Index issue | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Information Items (WE Globetrot, WE Surf, petitions, announcements, calendar,) | 1 2 3 4 5 | Other Comments: | _____ |

What sections would you like to see added, changed, or deleted from the magazine? _____

What specific topics would you like to see covered: _____

WE seeks to maintain a balance between academic discussions of issues and the diverse experiences of activists and professionals in their communities. Tell us how you feel about this balance:

- I would like to see more academic content
 I would like to see more activist content
 I would like to see more professional content
 I think the current balance is just right

Comments: _____

WE tries to promote dialogue on a wide range of issues affecting women and their environments. Issue themes address women's relations to the **built** (housing, transportation, services, community planning), **natural** and **social** (economic, cultural, political) environments. Which environments are you most interested in, on a scale of 1 (like very much) to 5 (dislike very much)? Circle the number that best represents your opinion.

Built Environment 1 2 3 4 5
 Social Environment 1 2 3 4 5
 Natural Environment 1 2 3 4 5
 Comments: _____

Please tell us about yourself:

Age: _____ Sex: _____ Occupation: _____

First language: _____ Ethnicity: _____

Education: Highest degree/diploma/program completed): _____

Field of Study: _____

Do you see yourself as an:

ACTIVIST STUDENT ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL ENTREPRENEUR/FARMER
OTHER EMPLOYED RETIRED OTHER (please specify) _____

Please circle your primary and bracket your secondary vocation.

List yourself & other great women or women's groups in the Network Directory and Index.

(if needed, please attach separate sheet)

Name: _____

Institutional Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province/State: _____

Postal/Zip Code: _____ Country: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please list your, or your nominee's, professional, community involvement or areas of interest related to women and their environments:

A \$10.00 contribution towards publishing the issue (which receives no other outside funding) would be appreciated.

Become a Bureau Chief

Would you like to become a regional or national correspondent or Bureau Chief for the magazine? This would involve reporting on events, issues, activities, and organizations related to women and environments in your area. You would let friends, libraries, and bookstores in your area know about us. In return you will receive a free subscription, extra copies, promotional material, and a listing in our upcoming Network Directory/Index Issue.

Yes No

Comments: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The information you have provided will allow us to make upcoming issues of the magazine more reflective of your interests and concerns. Please mail this survey in the attached envelope to:

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Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies
New College, University of Toronto
40 Willcocks Street, Rm. 2042
Toronto, ON, M5S 1C6, Canada

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IWSGS

This is the first in a regular series of reports about the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies (IWSGS) at the University of Toronto, with whom Women & Environment International Magazine is associated. With an emphasis on interdisciplinary discourse, the IWSGS serves as an institutional base for research, teaching, intellectual exchange and collaboration in feminist and gender studies.

IWSGS brings together the many distinguished scholars and students doing work in this significant field, located in a variety of faculties and departments across the University of Toronto.

Because the Learned Societies Congress will be located on the University of Toronto campus for its annual meetings in 2002, IWSGS is hosting and organizing the Canadian Women's Studies Association meetings this year.

The theme of the conference is **DESIGNING WOMEN**, a title with deliberate ambiguity to encourage discourse on a wide range of presentations. Presentations under the heading "Designed Women" will explore how diversely-situated women have been and are defined and 'designed.' How have cultural, historical, scientific, religious, medical, genetic, symbolic discourses and practices influenced women? "Women Designing" focuses on women's design practices and discourses around the world; how do women design in virtual and actual space and environments, in local and global politics, in embodied life-worlds and communities, in cultures, in education, in theoretical life and in other settings?. "Women Having Designs" will showcase women around the world who symbolically, historically, and in the present have had or have been seen as 'having designs' on others or on power."

An exciting range of presentations will occupy the daytime sessions. Each day will feature a plenary session featuring distinguished speakers from Women's Studies programs across Canada. "Canaries in a Cage: Young Racialised Minority Girls and Women," chaired by Jo-Anne Lee (UVic), features presentations by Yasmin Jiwani (Concordia), Jo-Anne Lee (UVic) and Somer Brodribb (UVic). "Feminist Biologists Reimagine and Redesign their Praxis," a presentation of the Baitworm group, comprises presentations by Elizabeth Abergel (York), Deboleena Roy (UT), Stacey Ritz (McMaster), Natasha Myers (York) and Leesa Fawcett (York), with Linda Muzzin (York) as chair. The final plenary, "Passing On: Performances of History, Autobiography, Memory and Pedagogy in Women's Studies" includes papers by Susan Heald (Manitoba), Susanne Luhmann (Laurentian), Sharon Rosenberg (York), and Ann Braithwaite (PEI).

In addition to the plenary and regular sessions that occupy the three days of the conference, each evening has a special event and opportunities for social interaction. In the early evening of the first day, we will take a historical walk-about "In the Footsteps of the Women of Ontario." This is a guided walking tour of important historic sites on the university campus and nearby Toronto locations, a repeat of the extremely successful Quebec City Walking Tour of 2001. Later the same evening, and sure to be one of the highlights of the conference, will be key-note address, "The Reshaping of North American Islam," by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Professor of the History of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Georgetown University, Washington, DC., Co-sponsored by CWSA, CSSR, Near and Eastern Religions Dept. UT, and the Centre for the Study of Religion UT. The keynote speech will be followed by a reception.

The evening of the second day features a staged play-reading. "The Angelina Project," written and directed by Frank Canino and produced by the Preface Theatre, was inspired by an article about three generations of women dealing with murder and memories, "Murder, Womanly Virtue and Motherhood" by Karen Dubinsky and Franca Iacovetta (The Canadian Historical Review 72:4, 1991). Co-sponsored with Women's Studies, Scarborough University, the Status of Women Officer (UT), CWSA and CHA.

On the last night of the meetings we celebrate the new books that have been published this year by women's presses and by our members. A giant book launch, co-sponsored by the Toronto Women's Bookstore, Women's Press, York University School of Women's Studies, and the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies (UT) will be held at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, a delightful space for a spring event with its patio-garden and comfortable indoor spaces surrounded by the best the world has to offer in women's books. Party on!

With many panels and presentations jointly sponsored with other learned associations, and a banner year in numbers of participants, the conference will be this year's must-attend event.

The Conference is scheduled from Sunday May 26 to 28, 2002, and will take place at the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada. For more information about the conference, e-mail: cwsaacef@yorku.ca; website: www.yorku.ca/cwsaacef.

For more information about the IWSGS, e-mail: iws.gs@utoronto.ca, website: www.utoronto.ca/iwsgs.