

# Rising Sun

Women  
Proutists of  
North  
America

January 2018

## #MeToo!

The Silence Breakers  
are Transforming  
Rape Culture

by Mirra Price

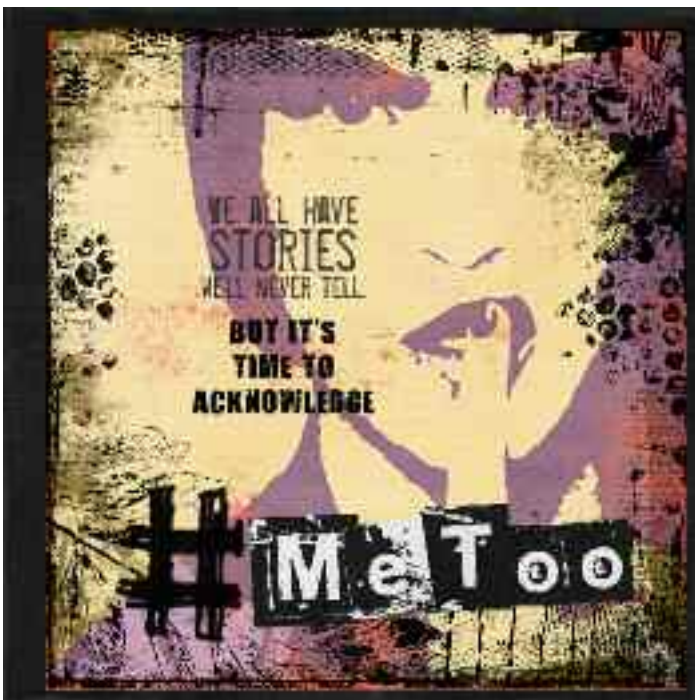
*Time* magazine's 2017 person of the year is not an individual, but a movement—the "Silence Breakers". In the past couple of months, thousands of women have spoken up, igniting a social maelstrom around sexual harassment and assault. These women, some famous and many not, have come forward to tell their stories of sexual harassment and abuse by prominent men in the entertainment and media industries, in government and other professions over a considerable time period.

More Inside:  
Sharing Our Stories  
Healing Winter Illnesses  
Cooperative Leadership  
Recipe Corner

This flood tide began with dozens of accusations of sexual harassment, assault, and rape against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, who is now under criminal investigation. After investigations by *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, women across the country and the world are now coming forward with their own stories, involving many different men, under the hashtag, "#MeToo".

Yet if not for Trump's electoral triumph, the current #MeToo phenomenon might never have occurred. Activist Tarana Burke, one of *Time*'s "Silence Breakers," originated the #MeToo hashtag ten years ago. She has described this as the "Trump Effect," the outrage after the "Access Hollywood" tape in which Trump claimed that due to being a celebrity, he could grope women as he pleased. This helped inspire between three to five million women and men to join the Women's March in January the day after the inauguration, and also stirred actresses Ashley Judd and Rose McGowan to speak out on the record against other alleged predators (Blake, Meredith, Dec. 7, 2017).

Let's not forget that President Trump has been accused by no less than sixteen women of sexual misconduct. He has denied these claims, and has yet to acknowledge or apologize to his accusers. According to a new Quinnipiac Poll, 70 percent of Americans believe



Collage by Sharon Brogan/Creative Commons

Continued on page 12

# What is Prout?

**PROUT** is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory which was propounded in 1959 by Indian philosopher Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. PROUT presents a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist socio-economic models. Neither of these theories has adequately met the needs of humanity.

Proutists are seeking to convey the comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT theory, which combines the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self reliance and the spirit of economic democracy. As women who are Proutists, in this magazine, we are attempting to focus on the particular struggles that women face in attaining self reliance in society. However, we also wish to present the complete vision of Prout as a new ideology for a new world.

Toward the goal of being inclusive, we invite Proutists and others who are interested in providing a platform for social change to submit articles, letters to the editor, poetry, blogs, and other writings to Rising Sun. We want to take the pulse of the 99 percent and to try to reflect in some small way the voice of the people.

## Key Principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism:

**Neo-humanism** expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a theoretical base for creating a new era of ecological balance and planetary kinship.

**Basic necessities guaranteed to all:** In order to be able to actualize their highest aspirations, people need to have their basic needs met. Access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

**Balanced economy:** Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of wealth.

**Women's Rights:** Prout encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. Prout's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

**Cultural Diversity:** In the spirit of universal fellowship, Prout encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

## Rising Sun January 2018

© Women Proutists, January, 2018  
Editor—Mirra Price Design—Jody Wright

Contributors: Nydia Barone-Labensart, Satya Tanner, Liina Laufer, Diane Moan, Anna Girresh, Katherine Donnelly-Anderson, Jivadhara, Sara Giita, Nancy Pulley, Howard Nemon, Dada Maheshvarananda and Lori Miller.

## Mission Statement

Women PROUTists are working together to create a world in which all people have the opportunity to develop their full potential. We educate and organize our communities to resist oppression, exploitation and discrimination. Women PROUTists support the all-round physical, economic, intellectual and spiritual development of women.

**Submissions:** We invite you to submit articles of 500-1000 words, poetry, photos, graphics and news of your projects. Deadlines are six weeks before publication—May 15th for the July 1st issue and November 15th for the January 1st issue. Send to [mirraprice@gmail.com](mailto:mirraprice@gmail.com). Content from this newsletter may be used in any Prout publication with credit given to Rising Sun. We suggest you contact the authors of articles for specific permission to use individual articles. Thank you.

# Organizing As Spiritual Practice

*A New Column by Anna Girresch*

## Sharing Our Stories

It would appear that I should fill this column with a triumphal story of hope in the midst of despair...that I should chronicle some progressive strategy to win, offer you some morsel of something to believe in when it seems that we are losing so much. I'm not sure if I can do that for you. My dear friends, we are one year into the presidency of 45, and death is all around us.

Many have believed white supremacy has been dead for fifty years. All too many people of color told us that it wasn't—that it had simply been re-packaged and re-sold to America as the War on Drugs, as "tough on crime," as the New Jim Crow. It wasn't until Ferguson, November 2016, or perhaps Charlottesville, August, 2017, that White America saw the veil ripped away and realized that racism is alive and well. The spike in hate crimes, the repeal of DACA (Deferred Action for Child Arrivals), the smattering of "religious liberty" laws that make it illegal to be LGBTQ, mass shootings, the attempts to take away our healthcare, and the normalizing of rape culture—it's enough to make anyone sick and depressed. Death is all around us. Deaths of bodies: black, brown, poor, immigrant, Trans, and queer. But beyond the deaths of our bodies, it seems that our very society is on the verge of collapse.

So how are we to live? As I look around in my community, I see a variety of responses. Some of my friends are in full blown survivalist mode. They stockpile supplies and learn valuable skills like homeopathic medicine, urban agriculture, and self-defense. My more moderate friends are living with a healthy dose of denial, avoiding news outlets and trying to keep up hope that impeachment will come sooner or later. And then there are the activists and the organizers: rising to the surface of their cynicism, breathing life into resistance with street activism and strategic campaigns.

I keep coming back to my spiritual practice. Something about November, 2016 caused a profound deepening in my spirit—something in me clicked. I became much more prayerful, much less concerned with what I "should" be doing with my life, and much more concerned with my soul's purpose. Some deep bunker of knowing within me called out and said, "We cannot think our way out of this." Many of our spiritual and religious traditions beautifully teach us that the Divine cannot be understood without the mess of human life, death, and suffering. We feel that the Sacred is made manifest in

our hearts and bodies when we open ourselves to divine healing, and it is made manifest in the world when we act for social, economic, and political liberation. This is at the heart of yoga and PROUT: the healing of our bodies and the healing of our world.

We often think of activism and organizing as something that is separate from our spiritual practice. We separate the two: meditation is how I reconnect with Spirit, and activism is how I do the work of Spirit in the world. What I'm starting to realize in my own journey is that there is a dynamic relationship between them: though I need time for solitude, prayer, and reflection, my spiritual practice is incomplete without my organizing. Each one informs the other.

**Any community organizer worth their weight will tell you that the most basic building block for a movement is self-interest. The delicate art and slight science of organizing's most elemental unit is the story of self. Who am I, and who is my family? How have I been wounded? What is my stake in the game?**

We cannot build a committee, an organization, a campaign, or a movement without tapping into this raw intersection of the personal and the political. We cannot resist until we have identified how these massive systems of death and destruction have wounded us in our own bodies. Breaking this silence and sharing our stories with each other is the first step.

*Annie worked to build the labor movement as a rank-and-file union member in Indiana and Georgia from 2012-2015. She has also supported racial justice work. She has just started this fall at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis and loves living at the intersection of faith and social justice.*







Graphic by Lori Miller.

## Healing/Persevering

by Sara Giita

The victim I once was  
ran with all her might  
and came to a threshold  
One moonlit mountain night

I let go of self-blame  
for the undeserved assault;  
As the wind carried the clouds  
It blew away the fault.

I stood with clarity  
And allowed my soul to speak;  
It was time to let that era die  
of feeling wronged and weak.

The new phase is not perfect,  
I am not a realized saint,  
But I have come out of hiding,  
My voice is not as faint.

I ground myself with roots,  
Drawing deep like a tree,  
each time I grow more steady  
When life's challenges come shake me

Moving forward to take such courage  
and I still get overwhelmed,  
So I reach out for help,  
a steady hand at the helm.

I feel through the pain,  
No longer drowning in it,  
And understand that this is strength:

Persevering when I'm in it.

*Colorado singer/songwriter Sara Giita's music chronicles her journey from assault survivor to empowered diva. Her clear, shimmering voice breathes life to her message of personal transformation and spiritual awakening. You can hear her music on Spotify, YouTube, and iTunes, or connect with her at [saragiita.com](http://saragiita.com) or [facebook.com/saragiita](https://facebook.com/saragiita).*



# Healing from Within Achoo!

*A New Column by Diane Moan*

*Dr. Diane Moan is a Naturopathic Doctor, who graduated from Bastyr University in Kenmore, Washington, an accredited naturopathic medical school. Licensed in the state of Washington, she practices in Seattle at Dahlia Natural Health Clinic.*

Cold and flu season is upon us. The best way to avoid getting sick is through maintaining a balanced life style, which of course is not always possible. Numerous factors make us more susceptible. They usually include stress, lack of sleep, lack of exercise, too much exercise, overwork, eating/drinking too much sugar, including soda, fruit juice and alcohol, or too many processed foods and not enough fresh fruits and vegetables which contain protective vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants. All of these things affect us mentally, spiritually and physically and suppress our immune system response. We can't always control the source of our stress, but we can mitigate its effect on us through exercise, meditation, yoga, tai chi, Chi Gong, massage and spending time in nature. Most of us can control which foods we choose to eat. White processed sugar has no health benefit whatsoever. Brown sugar is just white sugar with a little molasses added. Honey, molasses and maple syrup, as well as the lower glycemic index sugars— agave and coconut palm sugar— have some nutrients but can also suppress our immune systems if consumed frequently and/or in large amounts.

The first sign of a cold is usually a scratchy throat, sneezing or runny nose, or a rundown, sometimes achy feeling. There are numerous natural remedies for both children and adults that can stop a cold from becoming full-blown. Of course, they work best if taken immediately. Even if taken later, they can shorten the length of the cold, especially if taken throughout the day for as long as the symptoms persist. These remedies include vitamin C, the homeopathic remedy, oscillococcinum, anti-microbial herbs that come in caps or tincture like elderberry (also in syrup for children), cat's claw, eucalyptus and goldenseal (strong, bitter taste in tincture). For sinus congestion, neti pots or salt nasal sprays work well. For coughs, a good addition to the anti-microbials, eucalyptus and elderberry, are the herbs, hysop and wild cherry bark, which are relaxing expectorants. Steam inhalation with a few drops eucalyptus or thyme oil added to a pot of hot, steaming water is helpful for both sinus congestion and coughs.

During a cold, rest, stay warm, fast from solid foods and drink lots of warm liquids to help with a speedy recov-



*The choice is always yours. Madhavi Kuram/Creative Commons*

ery. Fasting allows your body to divert the energy needed to break down foods to breaking down pathogens, and the liquids flush them out. The above-mentioned herbs also come in teas for both adults and children. If you're hungry, cooked fruit, broths and miso or vegetable soups are easier than other foods to digest. Avoid dairy and wheat which create mucus. For diarrhea, try two teaspoons carob powder in a cup of applesauce. Probiotics would help as well.

A low fever (up to 102 degrees F) is common with viral colds and flus. Fevers are good—they're your body's way of fighting the invading microbes. Don't try to bring them down unless they're making you or your child very uncomfortable; in that case the homeopathic belladonna is a great remedy.

Over-the counter medicines usually suppress cold symptoms, like coughing and sneezing but don't get rid of the virus and usually prolong the duration of the cold. Coughing and sneezing is the body's way of expelling excess mucus.

Help prevent other people from getting your cold. Stay home when you're sick. Wash your hands after touching any body fluids, wiping or blowing your nose or coughing into them. When in public, cough or sneeze under your arm if you don't have a ready tissue. Be conscious of touching doorknobs and light switches with clean, dry hands. Wipe off weights and mats you've touched at the gym. Teach your children to do all of the above. If everyone followed this etiquette, we would all stay healthier during cold and flu season.





# Cooperative Leadership

## Quenching the Organizational Pants on Fire: Double Loop Learning and What it Means for You

*A regular column by Satya Tanner*

Working in a high paced, dynamic environment is fun but it can also be exhausting, especially when you see the same crises recurring over and over again. It is like that friend who keeps repeating their unconscious patterns, unable to get their finances, relationships or work life together in the long term.

In an organizational context, I call this 'fire fighting'. We might be good at putting out the fire, or urgent crisis, but we don't stop and ask why the fires keep happening, nor do we prevent them from happening. This is where the work of Chris Argyris and Donald Schön's "Double Loop Learning" comes into play: how we close the gap between what we THINK or CLAIM we do, and what we ACTUALLY do. For example, I might tell my employees to speak what is on their mind and contribute to discussions, but then I might dominate the conversation and fail to make space for them. And in doing so I might set up a bunch of unintended consequences that take me away from my goal.

The ability of an organization to learn depends on its ability to close the gap between what it CLAIMS to do and what it ACTUALLY does, i.e., its impact. The level of sophistication to which an organization can close its gaps can be explained by Argyris and Schön's learning loops.

First you start with the context and from there you can figure out the deeper learnings.

Zero Loop learning means no feedback. Single Loop learning means reacting during the execution. Double Loop learning is a proactive process that questions the underlying assumptions and goals of the context. Triple Loop doesn't have a universally agreed definition but it applies double loop learning to the original double loop learning context. i.e., reflecting another level deeper.

Let's look at a few examples:

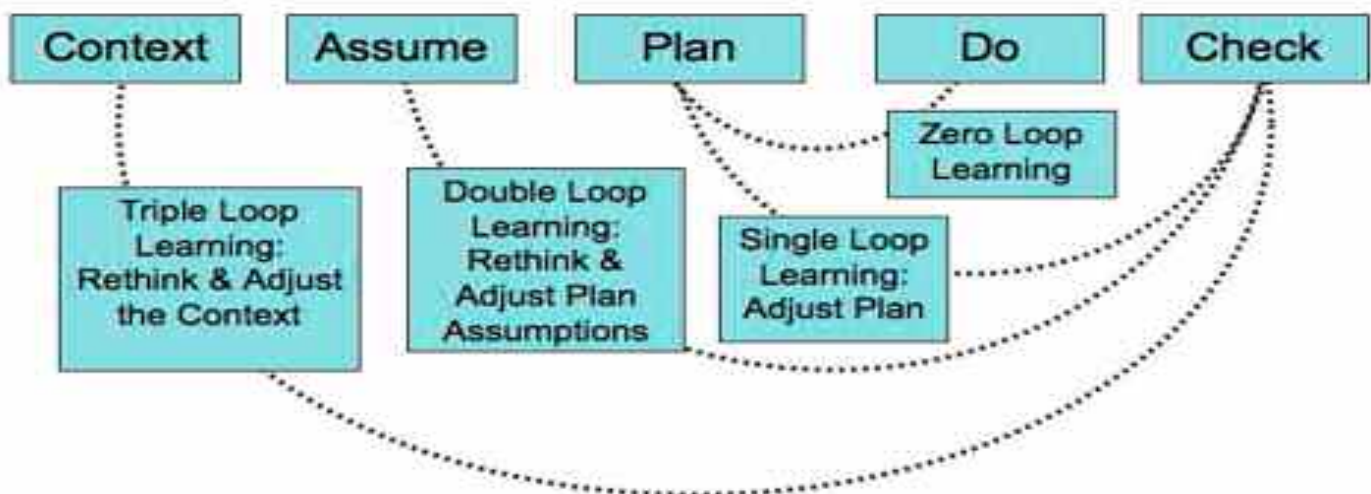
Context 1: Having efficient meetings

- Zero Loop Learning: We plan the meetings; we do them and never reflect on whether they are efficient.
- Single Loop Learning: You notice that the meeting is derailing and the facilitator brings it back on track.
- Double Loop Learning: Here we might ask what it is about our culture that makes our meetings derail, or what our definition of efficient is and whether it is valid.
- Triple Loop: Here we might question the necessity for meetings in the first place, or reflect on how honest we were with diagnosing the organizational cultural reasons for inefficient meetings.

Context 2: Project crises

- Zero Loop Learning: We don't track our ability to meet the customer deadline. It gets done when it gets done.
- Single Loop Learning: Our project starts to derail and we create workarounds to get back on track.
- Double Loop Learning: We might deeply diagnose

## Reflective Learning Loops



what is causing the need for workarounds. i.e., how valid is our original plan and do our processes actually work? Are we setting unrealistic deadlines? What long term solutions will prevent so many crises? How does our project culture support us (or work against us) in preventing these project crises?

- Triple Loop Learning: We might ask how honest we are in our diagnosis of the problem, or whether our organizational culture allows long term solutions rather than relying on quick fixes in projects. i.e., does senior management make heroes out of the company ‘firefighters’, or the ‘fire preventers’? To what extent are we willing to understand the complexity of why we have so many fires vs. do we just want someone else to solve the problem and fast? What is my role in contributing to a fire fighting culture and how well am I learning to close the gap between where we are and where we need to be? To what extent do we set time aside to stop and reflect on what is going wrong and why.

Having worked in a number of organizations with ‘pants

on fire’ approaches, I noticed that the main cause is the need to stop, pause, reflect, and understand the complexity and whole system. Companies often underestimate the effort required to solve a problem properly: they fail to allocate the resources and time, and either cannot understand, or fail to acknowledge, the cultural component: i.e., what behaviors and attitudes are preventing success? If however, we make the time to stop and reflect, we can stop, drop, roll and finally take off the flammable trousers.

*Satya Tanner had a 16-year career as a pilot and aerospace engineer in the Royal Australian Air Force, leading people and managing projects. She has studied Prout at a post graduate level and has a passion for helping organizations and communities that are in search of innovation, leadership, healthy cultures and conscious business principles.*



## Christmas Poem, 2015

### Indiana

*By Nancy Pulley*

Birth, of course, came first  
But after that story  
The resurrections, the seasons  
Underground aching towards sun—  
Days when so many layers  
Kept us from light we almost  
Forgot what we came here for.  
Then we see a flower and it all  
Comes rushing back; our own tenderness,  
The urge to push out of dirt, to follow  
Spirit upwards, the need—  
Whatever the season, to blossom.

*Nancy Pulley's poems have appeared in The Flying Island, Arts Indiana Literary Supplement, Passages North, Plainsong, The Sycamore Review, Humpback Barn Collection, A Linen Weave of Themes, and The Tipton Poetry Journal. She received a 2013 Indiana Arts Commission Individual Artist Grant in Poetry. Nancy has published two chapbooks and Warren Avenue, a full length poetry book.*







## Global Prout Convention 2017, Copenhagen, Denmark

Report by Kate Donnelly-Anderson

The topic of the annual 2017 Prout Convention in July was "Global Threats and Progressive Responses: Coordinated Cooperation in the Fight Against Inequality, Misinformation and Exclusion". A Sisters' Retreat and debrief/action plan Prout meetings were held before and after the main event. Guiding the theme of the events was the quote by P.R. Sarkar:

In every field of collective life there should be cooperation among the members of society. Where this cooperation is between free human beings, each with equal rights and mutual respect for each other, and working for the welfare of the other, it is called 'coordinated cooperation'. Where people do something individually or collectively, but keep themselves under other people's supervision, then it is called 'subordinated cooperation'. In each and every stratum of life, we should do everything with coordinated cooperation and always avoid subordinated cooperation.

Before the convention over 30 women from many different countries attended the Sisters' Retreat, "We are the Change". We discussed ways women are

discredited and silenced, including being interrupted more often than men, use of gender-biased language, and women being contradicted when relaying data or our own experience (sometimes referred to as 'mansplaining'). We brainstormed remedies, including speaking out more and utilizing the technique called "amplification" in which women repeat what a woman has just said in a mixed gender gathering if we feel it hasn't been heard. We resolved to be courageous in telling our experiences to one another and to brothers and to ask for coordinated cooperation and support in the form of understanding, deep listening and reflection of what we just said to determine if we were fully heard. We also resolved to promote full gender equality in the ratio of male and female speakers, facilitators and organizers at organizational events through a comprehensive Gender - Equity Policy that addressed unintended bias at previous Prout conferences and conventions.

Some advantages of having a Gender policy are:

- To demonstrate the principle of coordinated cooperation creating an atmosphere of free minds positively interacting so that no one should be subordinated.
  - To give much needed diversity to meetings as well as aiding the visibility of women, as well as people of other gender identities, which is crucial for their ongoing contribution to Prout activities and which provides valuable role models for younger Proutists.
  - To increase the diversity of thought in our community, we need to bring forward more women's views on the issues and make the entire convention more balanced in all aspects.
- . Find the full document here: <http://www.proutconvention.dk/gender-equity-policy/>

At the Prout Convention sisters led workshops addressing bias and inequality. One of my favorites





was how brothers can recognize their own bias and privilege, led by Sadhana who is also a Nonviolent Communication facilitator.

From the first day of the Prout Convention particular emphasis was placed on the Cooperative Duty Groups that each participant signed up for at registration. Duties included food preparation, cleaning, childcare and my choice: "Bliss Bouncer", or program monitor.

The Workshop and Activity Program included: "Undoing Patriarchy and Capitalism", "Exploring the Role of Gender Balance in Social Change", "The Emergence of the Female Leader: Implications for Prout", and Resistance to Right Wing Extremism and Global Fascist Politics.

Dada Madhuvidyananda shared the hope of the German Proutist political party, Menschliche Welt, a first in Europe, in his workshop: "How We Can Combat Global Threats by Contesting and Winning Elections". We also heard about efforts in Romania, Greece, Egypt and India involving women, children, refugees and Prout initiatives. The Hats for Haiti Ananda Arts Women's Fiber Arts Collective displayed work of women united in self-sustainability efforts from Port- au- Prince and Denver, Colorado.

Presentations on Prout projects in Europe included the Ananda Kalyani Master Unit in Portugal which includes the Proutist PRIP Institute, agricultural pursuits, the Ananda Mela music and art festival, retreats, inviting political figures, cooperative garden and community-supported events. Denmark has both the jagrti in Copenhagen and the Master Unit in Vig with its bakery and farm: the goal is to become an

eco village. Ananda Gaorii works with the European Union to bring workers from countries around the world to live, work, and study at their model project.

After the convention we had four days of meetings to discuss how to propagate Prout ideas globally. We created cooperative groups including policy, finance, events, education, literature, public relations, working model projects, samaja, training, digital and social media. Participants of each group agreed to continue to meet by global conference calls, using virtual meeting boards and try to recruit others when we returned home. We came up with three- year and five- year plans. Since then a new Wikipedia article on Prout has been created and the creation of a mission statement and a podcast are in the works. The Training Team is developing a three-level Prout Study Circle Guide.

<http://anandamarga.dk/about/facilities/ananda-gaorii-master-unit-organic-farm/>

<http://anandakalyani.org/>

<http://qah.amps.org/>

*Katherine Donnelly heads Hats for Haiti Ananda Arts Fiber Arts Cooperative - a collective of women, children and men in Denver and Port-au-Prince. Members in the USA collect yarn, crochet hooks, knitting needles and sell handmade items with 100% of proceeds going to orphanages in Haiti. Raw materials are also delivered to Haiti and at-risk locals are taught fiber arts and how to make yarn from plastic bags and t-shirts with the goal of becoming fully self-supporting.*



# Recipe Corner

A regular column by Liina Laufer

Perfect for cold nights. Here's a delicious vegan version of Gumbo.

## Vegan Gumbo

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup oil + oil for stir frying
- 1 cup flour
- 1 large bell pepper
- 3-4 carrots
- 3 stalks celery
- 2 cups okra
- 8 cups vegetable stock
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 veggie sausage or a block of tofu

### Other assorted vegetables:

- 1 cup butternut squash
- 1 cup green beans
- 1 cup cauliflower
- handful of spinach

### Seasoning:

- salt
- pepper
- gumbo filé spice (sassafras, marjoram and thyme)
- cayenne
- chili pepper flakes
- parsley

### Instructions:

First, make a roux [a roux is flour and fat cooked together and used to thicken sauces]:



The roux.

In a heavy bottomed saucepan, whisk together equal parts oil and flour over low heat. Whisk constantly until it turns milk chocolate brown, approximately 20-30 minutes. Make sure to keep whisking so it doesn't stick to the bottom and burn.

Next, stir in the diced carrots, bell pepper, and celery. Cook for 2 minutes. Then add the okra, bay leaves, and vegetable stock. Simmer for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Add additional vegetables earlier or later depending on how long they need to cook (put butternut and cauliflower in earlier, and green beans at the end). Add spinach right before you finish.

In a separate pan, stir fry the veggie sausage or tofu until crispy. Then add to the mixture.

Finally, add a dash of filé powder, salt, pepper, and cayenne to taste. Add parsley as a garnish. Serve over rice or alone.



*"I love to cook from scratch. I prefer simple, all natural ingredients, the fewer the better. I was raised on the sentient Margii diet, so I cook without onions, garlic, mushrooms, eggs, or meat. Check out my sentient recipes at [recipessdeliina.wordpress.com](http://recipessdeliina.wordpress.com)."*





# Prout Founder P.R. Sarkar speaks on:

## Human Rights

“Those who do not have the tendency to deprive others cannot morally and justifiably accept the principles of individual ownership of wealth. The economic structure of the present world is not based on the principle of human rights. By the very acceptance of human rights we will have to keep ourselves ready for revolutionary changes and we shall also have to welcome them. The socialization of land, industry and trade is a major objective of that revolution” (*Prout in a Nutshell, Part 3*).

## Materialism

“Materialism can never be the base of human life in any country because it is detrimental to the all round development of human beings. The higher human and spiritual values of life stand unrecognized” (*A Few Problems Solved, Part 6*).

## Minimum Necessities of Life

“I want that every person should be guaranteed the minimum physical requirements of life, every person should get scope for the full exploitation of psychic potentialities, and every person should get equal opportunity to attain absolute truth” (*A Few Problems Solved, Part 6*).

## Oppression

“People who perpetrate any sort of oppression on collective life or on any human group cannot be pardoned. To pardon people under these circumstances not only shows weakness but also encourages injustice, consequently the oppressors become even more reckless” (*Prout in a Nutshell, Part 3*).

## Party Politics

“Those who make attempts to disturb human unity are mainly motivated by party politics. In fact, this malady is even more dangerous than germs. This gradually completely spoils the attributes of the human mind, like fine taste, simplicity, spirit and service. To such people the main objec-

tive is not social service but the service of the self, not human welfare but the welfare of the cabinet ministry” (*Prout in a Nutshell, Part 3*).

## Women’s Rights

We stand to create a powerful, dynamic and up-surg-ing social consciousness, especially among women, so that they are inspired to rise, abolish dogma and annihilate all symbols of slavery, and usher in a new era of coordinated cooperation and glorious achievement. Let women be the vanguard of a new revolution which humanity must achieve for a glorious tomorrow” (*A Few Problems Solved, Part 9*).

## Social Equality

Till recently there was a defective idea in all the corners and amongst all the groups of people on the earth, that males are blessed beings and not females. In your family life, you know, you feel that the parents cannot have any sense of disparity in their mind regarding their sons and daughters. Both are equally important; both are equally loving. I said my sons and my daughters are just like two hands of mine. They are just like wings of a bird. A bird having one wing cannot fly” (*Ananda Vacanamtram, Part 12*).



Since his early childhood in Bihar, India, Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar [1922-1990] attracted others by his deep love for humanity and guided them along the path of self-realization. Adjusting the ancient science of Tantra

Yoga to meet the needs of this age, he developed a scientific and rational philosophy and a system of practical disciplines for physical, mental and spiritual development. P.R. Sarkar advocated for thoughtful social and political change throughout the world, and named this Progressive Utilization Theory, PROUT.

*#metoo! from page 1*

that Trump should be investigated for the sexual harassment claims against him (Burstyn, Linda, Dec. 7, 2017).

We had a similar upsurge when Anita Hill revealed sexual harassment by Clarence Thomas in 1991. However, she was mainly discounted and not believed, with Thomas ascending to the Supreme Court, despite Hill's revelations about him. She had rocks thrown through her window, death threats, and her funding source put in jeopardy. Hill's experience sent a chilling message to women in Washington, D.C., and the nation as a whole: If women dared expose the predations of powerful men, they would pay a stiff personal price.

We are witnessing the dam breaking again, and no one is going to be able to stick a finger in it this time to hold back this riptide of revelations pouring from the too-long-silenced throats of thousands of women.

Women are often blamed for being victimized. Even recently a really smart woman I know asked me what these women were doing to encourage the abuse. What were they wearing? Were they flirting with these powerful men? We need to reframe the issue; the questions need to be about the male abusers, not the women victims. Why do men think they have a right to make unwanted advances? Why do men gain status for sexual conquests? Women who want to speak up are often silenced by their own fear of workplace and personal retaliation and by families who don't want the shame and notoriety.

Why is the public taking the stories of the women seriously now—those who are accusing the media moguls, the members of Congress, the sports figures, the priests, teachers, symphony conductors, bosses of domestic workers, farm worker supervisors, soldiers, inmates...? What has changed in society that allows women's voices to be heard and believed?

Prominent women's rights attorney, Gloria Allred, who is representing women in the Cosby and Weinstein court cases, says, "The more women speak out, the more other women want to speak out" (Blair, Elizabeth, Oct. 27, 2017). There is safety in numbers.

Jackson Katz is an American educator, filmmaker, and author who has created a gender violence prevention and education program, "Mentors in Violence

Prevention", which is used by the U.S. military and various sporting organizations. In a bold, honest Ted Talk, Katz points out that these are really men's issues.

Katz explains how these gender violent behaviors are tied to definitions of manhood, asking how we can change the socialization of boys that leads to current outcomes of rampant violence against women. He says that gender violence issues are not women's issues that some good men help out with. These are actually men's issues. Calling gender violence a women's issue gives men an excuse not to pay attention.

Ultimately, the issue is not about getting rid of a few bad apples in positions of power. The need is to change the culture of hyper masculinity itself so that men no longer even desire to gain status and power in the eyes of other men by being a sexual predator.

We need to ask ourselves what we are doing in our society. What is the role of institutions in producing abusive men, in perpetuating this rape culture? How do religious belief systems, pornography culture, sports culture, family structure, race and ethnicity, economics, and class interplay in perpetuating systemic rape culture?

How can we transform this culture? How can we change the socialization of boys and definition of manhood that leads to this outcome of their adopting role models of hypermasculine men who take what they want, and gain status by their conquests of women and aggression toward those women to prove their manhood?

Katz has a program called the "Bystander Approach". Bystanders are anyone who is not the victim or perpetrator in a dyad of abuse. He urges especially men of power to challenge sexist behaviors of other men. For example, if someone tells a sexist or racist joke, the bystander would challenge the joke teller. Katz trains people to interrupt the sexist behaviors, and challenge them, creating a climate where sexist behavior will cause men to lose status. Of course, a bystander would interrupt any behavior they witness which demeans women, e.g., catcalling, putdowns, keeping women out of positions of power, and any form of discrimination and domination.

He urges men to stand with women in creating this paradigm shift for gender equality. Men can say things that women will not be heard if we say, e.g.,





Bill Cosby's sexual misconduct finally gained public recognition when a male comedian exposed the predatory behavior, after women had been talking about it for decades. Women are sometimes accused of being anti-male when we speak out against sexist violence.

Going forward, I urge men and women to work together to begin the transformation that must happen so that future generations will look forward to a healthier, safer, world based on free, loving, supportive relationships between women and men. Let's all become active bystanders against sexual violence. Let's work together to create a paradigm that ends the tide of sexist violence and transforms rape culture into an egalitarian culture which supports all to attain their true potential as human beings.

Blair, Elizabeth, "Women Are Speaking Up About Harassment and Abuse, but Why Now?" NPR.org, Oct. 27, 2017.

<https://www.npr.org/2017/10/27/560231232/women-are-speaking-up-about-harassment-and-abuse-but-why-now>

Blake, Meredith, "By naming the 'Silence Breakers' as 'Person of the Year,' Time rebukes last year's winner, Donald Trump", Los Angeles Times, Dec. 7, 2017.

London Photo by [Duncan Comming/Creative Commons](#)

<http://beta.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-et-st-time-person-of-the-year-me-too-trump-20171207-story.html>

Burstyn, Linda, "What About the Sexual Harasser in the White House?" Ms Blog, Dec. 7, 2017, <http://ms-magazine.com/blog/2017/12/07/sexual-harasser-white-house/>

Katz, Jackson, Ted Talk, TEDxFIDiWomen, "Violence Against Women: It's a Men's Issue", [https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson\\_katz\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_it\\_s\\_a\\_men\\_s\\_issue?utm\\_campaign=ted-spread-b&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=ted-comshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue?utm_campaign=ted-spread-b&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=ted-comshare)

*Mirra Price, a retired English teacher, is a writer, editor, copyeditor and activist. She has promoted many social justice causes, including women's rights and gender equality, since the 1960s. A member of Prout (Progressive Utilization Theory), for several decades, she has given workshops and classes on social justice issues and neo-humanist education. Contact her at [www.mirraedits.com](http://www.mirraedits.com), or [women-proutists@gmail.com](mailto:women-proutists@gmail.com).*





## Prout Strategic Planning Seminar II Report Asheville, NC, Sept. 29-Oct. 1, 2017

*By Mirra Price, Howard Nemon,  
and Dada Maheshvarananda*

From September 29 to October 1, 2017, thirty Proutists from New York Sector gathered at Ananda Girisuta Master Unit in Asheville, North Carolina, to participate in a weekend of discussion and planning. The event built on the work done last year in the first Prout Strategic Planning Seminar held in May, 2016. This seminar was the result of three months of meetings by a small planning team seeking to further Prout work in the sector.

Beginning the seminar were reports from the three teams created at last year's seminar. These teams worked on starting the proutusa.org website, policy advocacy papers, and organizational development. On Saturday morning, participants listened to three presentations: "Designing a Prout Study Circle Manual" by Dada Maheshvarananda and Miirabaii, "Co-operative Internet Tools for Communication" by James Quilligan, and "Prout Analysis of Leftist Latin American Governments" by Hiranmaya and Dada Maheshvarananda.. Then Didi Devinistha led a brainstorming session about how to best rebrand Prout for the 21st century.

In the afternoon, we formed six teams that included work from the preceding years as well as new tasks that complemented the

group structure which has been created at the global level. The six teams are: 1. Model Projects, which will research Master Units and cooperatives and work on development of these projects; 2. Movement, which will focus on networking with other activist organizations with common objectives with Prout/Samaja, and they will set up public events to promote their work; 3. The Office, which will handle the administration, financial and communication systems of Prout USA; 4. Policy, which will conduct research and create Prout publications; 5. Public Relations, which will utilize the ProutUSA.org website, Facebook, and digital media to promote Prout; and 6. Training, which will develop a Prout Study Circle curriculum, and film a series of 2-4 minute answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Prout.

Throughout the rest of the weekend, these groups brainstormed possible programs and activities, and finally designed practical action plans for implementation. During the final session, all six groups presented their plans and discussed ways to coordinate and collaborate among one another.

The evening program consisted of presentations that showcased existing Prout strategies and projects taking place in the United States. Ananta discussed work being done by the Alliance for Economic Democracy in Maine; Jacelyn Eckman presented on the Economic Democracy Advocates, an organization the incorporates Prout principles in their work, and





Hiranmaya and Tapan gave an overview of the cooperative movement in the United States. and how Proutists are contributing to its development.

Those attending the seminar decided to use Loomio software to keep in touch and continue their work for implementing their action plans. There was also a general consensus to organize another strategy planning seminar next year. Developing a two-track seminar

was also discussed, in which ideological classes could be held for those new to Prout, while those interested in implementing strategies and action plans could hold organizational meetings separately. It was also suggested to first hold different utilization camps, such as Prout, Education, and Pracar for 2-3 days and then to come together afterwards for a collective sectorial Ananda Marga retreat. Everyone was inspired and motivated to accelerate Prout work in the sector.

*Dusky Sky from page 16*

“Oh, So and So has a lovely family. So and So has emotional problems. So and So hasn’t been in large groups of people for a while. Maybe you should give him a break.”

Hmmm...was this food for thought or was it an outright dismissal of my experience? I did think about it, for about five minutes. And I realized very quickly, within that short space of time, that what happened to me was not going to be ignored or devalued; it mattered, and the man who was responsible for this sexual harassment needed to take responsibility for what he said to me. It shouldn’t happen, and it shouldn’t be repeated for another woman to suffer through it.

We all have to take responsibility for our mistakes and be courageous to speak up for ourselves. We cannot let our throats close up. Then we would suffocate.

Feldblum, Chai R. & Victoria A. Lipnic. “Report of Co-Chairs, Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace”, EEOC, June,

2016. [https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task\\_force/harassment/report.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/report.cfm)

Langer Research, ABC News/Washington Post Poll: One in Four U.S. Women Reports Workplace Harassment, Nov. 16, 2011. <http://www.langerresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/1130a2WorkplaceHarassment.pdf>

National Women’s Law Center Fact Sheet. <https://nwlc.org/resources/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/>

*Nydia Barone-Labensart is a writer, yoga instructor and retired English teacher. She has taught writing to sixth and seventh graders for over 20 years. Her writing has been published in The Sun Literary Magazine and the RAWA*



# The Dusky Sky is Heavy

By Nydia Barone-Labensart

The dusky sky is heavy this evening and the humidity is almost as high as the temperature; it's July in the Midwest. As the hornets buzzed nearby I thought, "What if I get stung and my throat closes up?"

But I knew I wasn't allergic. Sure, I got stung occasionally over the years, and the sting swelled and turned pink, but I could breathe and even complain about it later.

An ant bite, a wasp, bee or hornet sting can kill someone who is allergic. The tongue swells, the throat constricts and there's a feeling of suffocation. It's dangerous. That's why a bee allergy is called life threatening.

Not so with harassment, specifically sexual harassment. It can be subtle, inconspicuous, quiet and insidious. Sexist jokes, sexual innuendos about a woman's body, the clothing she is wearing, unwanted hugging, touching, and the feeling of being stared at and watched are all examples of sexual harassment.

It's secretive, hiding in the corners of the minds of perfectly responsible people. They are not necessarily perverts. Sometimes they don't know how to behave. But that doesn't excuse them.

- Sexual harassment remains a widespread problem, affecting women in every kind of workplace setting and at every level of employment. Surveys indicate that at least one quarter of all women have experienced workplace sexual harassment (Langer Research, Nov. 16, 2011) In Federal Fiscal Year 2015, almost one-third of all charges filed with the EEOC involved harassment, and nearly a quarter of those harassment charges involved sexual harassment (EEOC, 2011).

- Sexual harassment may or may not involve any physical contact, and words alone may be enough to constitute either type of harassment (National Women's Law Center Fact Sheet).

Here is the part of the definition that fits my experience: "unwanted personal attention, 'unwanted sexual statements', and "unwanted physical or sexual advances."

It doesn't have to be touching. Verbal sexual harassment is equally harmful. If someone touched me, at least I would have an excuse to smack him. When it's only words, it's sneaky and demeaning, but some times hard to prove.

This happened to me several times over the 60-plus years of my life, starting when I was a teenager, and then when I was in college and later on, at work. Sometimes I reported it, sometimes I didn't. I grew more aware, acquired more wisdom over the years and empowered myself enough to speak up by the time I was 40 years old. I am the mother of two girls, and I wanted to make sure I taught them about sexual harassment, and how to deal with it. I needed to be the example for them, whether they knew it or not. My own integrity demanded it. I have learned to stand up for what is right, not just what is right for me.

This summer, at a week-long program I attended, I encountered sexual harassment once again. I spoke up about it, and relayed the information to the people in charge. But here's the interesting part.

This organization has been important to me; I have been attending their programs for many years. Many of us have known each other since we were in our 20s and have formed lasting friendships. I didn't know the name of the man who was harassing me, but when I identified him, I was surprised by the response from my fellow group members.

*Continued on page 15*

## Contact Us!

Online at: [www.proutwomen.org](http://www.proutwomen.org)

Women Proutists of North America  
PO Box 733  
Northampton MA 01061

Call us at: 828-274-1683

Email: [womenproutists@gmail.com](mailto:womenproutists@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [Women Proutists of North America](#)