

Rising Sun

Women
Proutists of
North
America

July 2015

INSIDE:

Who Will Lead Us?
Cooperative Leadership
Inspirational Kurd Women



Supporting local agriculture: WESPAC members volunteering at the Stony Point Farm in Rockland County, New York.

Cooperatives in the New Economy

By Howard Nemon

In November of 2013, Fagor Electrodomésticos, one of the largest producers of appliances in Europe and a flagship enterprise for the Mondragon federation of cooperatives, filed for bankruptcy. In spite of the massive infusion of capital from Mondragon to save it, Fagor was unable to survive the global financial crisis that plagued Spain and other European countries where the company operated. The closure of its operations affected 5,700 workers and sent shock waves through the global community that supports and develops cooperatives. After all, Mondragon was one of the largest and most successful cooperative models in the world, comprising over 110 individual cooperatives and with \$35 billion in assets.



Questions were asked. Should cooperatives be able to fail, just like any company competing in the marketplace? Do they require special protections or treatment? Should we have greater expectations for

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Elevating the Status of Agriculture

By Nada Khader

Who are the most important people in our lives? Our children, our spouses, our firefighters, our teachers? What about our farmers? They are among the most important people in our lives and yet our current socio-economic system treats them so poorly. They are among the most exploited workers on our planet today.

The founder of PROUT or Progressive Utilization Theory, Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, has stated that part of the solution to regaining the balance in our economic system is to elevate the status of agriculture to that of manufacturing and industry. According to PROUT, around thirty percent of the population of a region should be employed in agriculture, another thirty percent in agriculture-related industry (canning, pickling, teas, plant medicine etc), thirty percent in in-

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President Jimmy Carter's Clarion Call to Women: Who Will Lead Us?

By Mirra Price

“Lord, we ain't what we want to be.
We ain't what we ought to be.
We ain't what we gonna be.
But, thank God, we ain't what we was.”

(African-American preacher on race relations as quoted
in Martin Luther King, Jr. 1959 Speech).

Over in Georgia, next to my state of North Carolina, former President Jimmy Carter and Rosalyn Carter, direct a foundation, The Carter Center, which is dedicated to advocating for human rights. Since his presidency, Carter has received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 and has tirelessly championed many worthwhile causes. He, courageously, left his church in 2000, due to its unequal, oppressive policy toward women.

In a HuffPost Live interview on Jan. 13, 2015 Carter said, "I think the worst human rights abuse on Earth is the horrible persecution and deprivation of equal rights of women..." Carter's book, *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence and Power*, published in 2014, "describes the horrendous abuse that women do suffer in this country and around the world," he told HuffPost Live. Jan. 13, 2015 interview [here](#).

In this interview Carter mentioned the trafficking of young women and girls as an unprecedented and un-addressed human rights abuse and the escalation of sexual assault on college campuses and in the military as among the worst human rights abuses facing women. He also discussed the wage gap between men and women (77 % women-men) in this country and the low percentage (18%) of women in Congress. Carter has launched the Mobilizing Faith for Women and Girls Initiative, which hosts an annual forum of world political and religious leaders to promote the protection of equal rights for women and girls across the globe. Mar., 2014 Interview.

President Carter inspires me with his stand up values and clear, astute analysis of the condition of women in this country and around the world. Carter's enlightened stand for women is in distinct contrast to the backlash against women in congress. Conservative legislators are pushing to cut funding for women's health care and are even proposing laws that make some forms of birth

control illegal. The Blunt Amendment, narrowly rejected in the Senate, would have allowed employers to withhold health insurance coverage not only for contraception, but for any treatment of which they disapproved. http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/birth-control-exemption-bill-the-blunt-amendment-killed-in-senate/2012/03/01/gIQA4tXjkR_story.html

When I consider who might be a choice of conscience for the next U. S. President, I cannot help but wish it were possible to elect someone just like former President Carter. Probably, his hands would be tied in getting human rights legislation passed; however, if anyone could cut through the corruption, lobbying, and vested interests in our capitalist bureaucracy, it would be someone with the moral fiber of Jimmy Carter. Sadly, Congresswoman Elizabeth Warren has chosen not to run for President, possibly not wishing to oppose another woman, Hillary Clinton.

P. R. Sarkar, Prout's founder, admonished us not to choose between two evils when voting for political candidates, rather to vote for a moral choice. So who to vote for? Whoever can amass the millions of dollars needed to buy a presidency, must, necessarily, be beholden to the Superpacs and multinational corporations who run our country. Though I would love to see a woman president, I am skeptical about Hilary Clinton's Foundation campaign contributions from Saudi Arabia and other far eastern countries. While Bernie Sanders supports many populist causes and is drawing huge crowds on the campaign trail, I wonder if he can navigate a clear path around the Washington elite (Truthdig, May 5th, 2015).

What we really need are leaders who serve the interests of the people and in an entirely new system— Prout. How long must humanity wait for Prout?

Mirra Price, a retired English teacher, currently is a writer, editor and copyeditor. An activist and Proutist, she has worked in cooperatives, for many social justice causes, and has advocated for women's rights and gender equality since the 1960s.

Come see our website:

www.proutwomen.org

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Women Proutists of North America

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 out-moded 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.

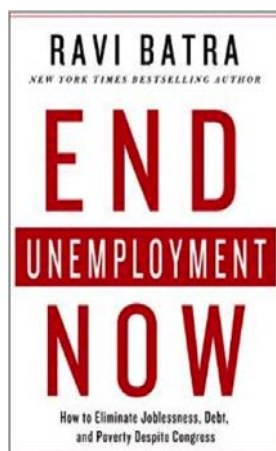
Cultural Diversity: In the spirit of universal fellowship, Prout encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

World Government: Prout supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and common penal code.

Now Available: End Unemployment Now

Proutist Economist Dr. Ravi Batra's latest book, *End Unemployment Now*, is receiving rave reviews and is on its way to becoming another bestseller. According to the Publishers Weekly review, "In this important book, Southern Methodist University economics professor Batra offers practicable solutions to many of the economic problems plaguing America." In the Kirkus review of the book is stated, "...the author offers a macroeconomic look at the causes of joblessness and income inequality."

Dr. Batra will be signing his book at Malaprops Bookstore in Asheville, North Carolina, Saturday, July 11th, along with the Global Gurukul Conference, which begins on the next day.



Rising Sun July 2015

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Women Proutist Profile

Didi Ananda

Candrasedkhara

My first experience with Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout) was in 1983 or 84. I became an acarya (meditation teacher or 'one who teaches by example'), also called a didi (sister) or dada (brother) in 1979. My first posting was in Jamalpur, India, for one year. I was trainer of the Varanasi Training Center for the sisters' training center. I was there for two years—1981-83. In 1984 and 85 I was Girls' Prout (GP) Secretary. In 1986-89 I was Central Women's Welfare Secretary (CWWS) in India. I went to Georgetown Sector (GT) as Sectorial Women's Welfare Secretary (SWWS) in 1990-92. From 1993-98 I was SWWS in Manilla Sector, then SWWS from 2000-14 in Nairobi Sector. I came here in December, 2014, and am now GP, or Women Proutists' Sectorial Secretary, as it is called in New York Sector.

In 1974 when I was 14, one of our school teachers told us about Shrii Shrii Anandamurti's (Baba's) life story. In 1954 Baba had started Ananda Marga (Path of Bliss) in India, a socio-spiritual organization promoting neohumanism, which was banned at that time and Baba was in jail. I insisted my teacher give me some of Baba's books. My family didn't like my involvement with Ananda Marga, so I had to hide the books that I was studying. I was ready to learn meditation, but all the didis and dadas were in jail in 1974 and 1975, due to the Emergency imposed by Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, who had banned Ananda Marga, as one of the groups that challenged some of her policies. [Baba was outspoken against the caste system, the dowry system and the practice of sati in which women threw themselves on their husbands' funeral pyre.] I went to Patna to see Baba without learning meditation. I didn't get a chance to see Baba. I learned meditation in 1977, and became a didi in 1979. After all the dadas and didis got released, I was able to learn meditation, but I had known Ananda Marga since 1975.

My first Dharma Maha Cakra (DMC), a huge collective meditation in which the guru speaks and gives bless-

ings, was in 1978. When Baba was giving a mudra (special gesture infused with spiritual energy), I didn't know what was happening. Some light came to me in my anahata chakra (heart chakra). I started crying so much. The margiis from our area wanted to go home, but I was blessed by Baba and didn't want to go. The next year I became a didi.

When I was GP Secretary, we did one big demonstration—Sarva samaj mahila samamita (sisters' or women's samaj, or collective advocacy group.) We did a big procession in 1985. That was the first time Baba said that 1000 women will come, but, 1500 women came from all over Delhi. We made a video, but it wasn't kept. We protested in October, 1985, in Delhi about women's rights, girls not getting proper education, rapes, and the dowry system.

We constructed a GP building in Tiljala when I was there at Central Office 1984- 85. At first they built one building, then two buildings together. Many GP sisters and didis (Didi Ananda Muktribrata, Didi Ananda Usa, Didi Ananda Tapat) helped in getting funds for these buildings.



The first thing I want to do in New York Sector is to initiate more sisters and inspire them to be close to Baba. The second thing I want to do, because I am GP, I need to know more about the social problems. Mostly Baba said we need to focus on women's education—like the publishing of magazines and newspapers. [After a hiatus of a few years, WP has started publishing Rising Sun, which had formerly been an internal newsletter, as a public newsletter since winter, 2010. (Ed.)]

Women's economic independence is also important, like establishing cottage industries so women can make arts and crafts in their homes. In Africa women are selling fruit and vegetables on the street and in markets. Since we are in a developed country, we need to figure out what items would work to sell and create commerce projects. We could get goods from India to sell.

We need to create regular leadership training for women and to bring all the women together. Starting consciousness raising groups in which women can get to know one another and share their problems and learn to solve them together in a united way.

I am happy to be in this sector, and look forward to meeting and working with the dynamic sisters of New York Sector.

Cooperative Leadership

A regular column by Satya Tanner

Do you treat people differently or the same?

One of the challenges I faced when coming to understand issues of prejudice was: Where is the line between the individual and the group? When I was studying engineering, the other women and I didn't like to be singled out from the men. Instead we wanted to be treated 'just like everybody else', but at the same time would attend 'women in engineering' events. So, is this hypocrisy? Where is the line? This then begs the question, as leaders, how do we treat others when diversity is at play?

The secret to answering a question like this lies with evaluating the underlying power structures, i.e.: Who has influence over whom, directly or indirectly? At the most basic level, we all want to be seen as individuals, without prejudice. I am a unique person with a unique experience of the world. I have been influenced by many different cultures (work, country, family, etc.) to varying extents and don't like leaders to decide what is best for me based on stereotypes. I want a leader to give me choice and/or ask my opinion if they don't know me well. At the same time, we are a part of groups that often sit within a privilege priority order and it is important to acknowledge where we and other people sit within that artificially constructed model of importance. These are two distinct issues that are often mixed together.

For example, women are grossly under-represented in the engineering profession. This means that on a systemic level it makes perfect sense for leaders to advocate and promote 'women in engineering' events because they go a small way to help support

women continuing in the profession despite the obstacles. But at the individual level, women and men have the right to be treated as individuals without prejudice.

I remember having one university professor who was not used to teaching women and would get very flustered trying to make sure that he didn't get himself in trouble by saying the wrong thing in front of us. Of course that only made matters worse because we felt singled out and would prefer that he simply saw us as human beings like everyone else in the room. Why would I be more offended because of my gender? If someone is being prejudiced, then that is ultimately a problem for everybody. The irony was that his efforts to be more 'gentlemanly' made the situation feel like 'there are the engineers (i.e., men)' and 'there are the women (i.e., not engineers)'. And hence the group privilege order revealed itself.

Therefore it is not hypocrisy to both want to be seen as an individual and also reap the benefits of systems or events that rebalance the power for disadvantaged groups. Good leaders know that people want to be treated as human beings foremost, i.e., with the same dignity and respect that we all deserve. At the same time people want to have their diversity and difference recognized as something unique that they can bring to the table so that everybody can work together in coordinated cooperation. The equality movement ensures that systemic disadvantage takes care of groups; the diversity movement tries to ensure that we are respected for our individual diversity and uniqueness. Thus leaders can navigate the tension between individuals and groups when viewing the problem as two distinct issues.

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.



Book Review: This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein

This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein brought together concepts that I've long held in my own mind as interwoven—planetary environmental pollution brought on by capitalism and punctuated by racism. Her views are in sync with PROUT, humanitarily and economically. She writes in an engaging and direct manner and is not afraid to speak truth to

power and tell it like it is. Her account is from the perspective of a well-researched journalist; she's really done the footwork; she has travelled the world, attending global climate conferences as well as in her home country Canada, with indigenous peoples affected by economic hardship and environmental pollution.

Ms. Klein shares with us ways that first world peoples are some of the hardest hit by climate change and how some Native Peoples are resisting climate destruction by defending treaties and sovereignties granted to them long ago, and largely broken historically. By doing so they are creating precedents for resisting corporate greed and mass climate devastation. She tells us that the empowered need to reach out to the disempowered and that when we all join together we can solve this climate crisis.

Non-Natives will have to become the treaty and land-sharing partners that our ancestors failed to be, making good on the full panoply of promises made... Because the only people who will be truly empowered to say no to dirty development over the long term are people who see real, hopeful alternatives.

Klein offers hope for the future by sharing examples of grassroots movements as well as large scale efforts at change. The fundamental basis for this world surviving the brink of destruction is a profound values shift.

...only mass social movements can save us now, because we know where the current system, left unchecked, is headed. The only remaining variable is whether some countervailing power will emerge to block the road, and simultaneously clear some alternative pathways to destinations that are safer. If that happens, well, it changes everything.

And that variable, in my view, is PROUT and the time for it is NOW.

Review by Nina Shapiro. This Changes Everything, Naomi Klein Simon & Schuster 2014 ISBN 978-1-4516-9738-4

Part Four in our serialization of this significant new Prout book, *Principles for a Balanced Economy*, which is based on Prout's founder, P. R. Sarkar's 1961 Ananda Sutram. We pick it up at the beginning of Chapter Two.

Principles for a Balanced Economy: An Introduction to the Progressive Utilization Theory

By Roar Bjonnes

Chapter Two: Second Principle

"There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of the crude, subtle and causal resources."

Introduction

As noted in the previous chapter, limits to the accumulation of wealth is an important requisite for achieving an equitable distribution of resources, but such restrictions by themselves cannot achieve this aim. While it is appropriate that individuals do not appropriate an unfair portion of available wealth, it is equally important that society's wealth is transformed into sufficient goods and services. If not, living standards can never be increased. The second principle emphasizes that the key to adequate production is maximum utilization. Poor utilization results in inefficiency and wastage, which compromises a society's ability to provide for its citizens and negatively impacts the environment. A healthy economy needs to continually strive to better utilize its resources.

Second, these products must be distributed rationally. The transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich is increasing rapidly, within countries and between countries and regions.

As long as there are extreme disparities of wealth distribution, communities—even whole societies—will be left behind.

For reasons explained while discussing the first principle, this is not a rational way of distributing resources. A rational distribution within the context of this principle would entail:

1. Setting aside sufficient resources for investment in further production, infrastructure, education, research, etc.
2. Providing for the minimum requirements of everyone by maximizing the production of essential goods. This will restore parity between production and consumption
3. Providing special amenities to people according to merit once the economy has reached a state of dynamic balance.

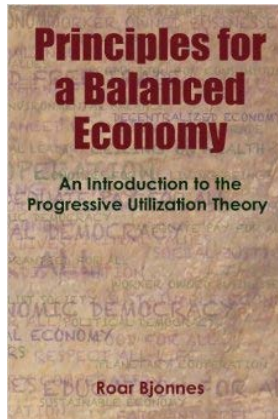
As with all of Prout's fundamental principles, the second principle is rooted in the idea of cosmic inheritance—the understanding that the entire universe belongs to all beings and should be used for universal welfare.

This does not mean the everyone owns everything, which is obviously unfeasible, nor does it imply collective ownership by the state: rather it signifies that resources are to be utilized in a way that respects the needs of each living being and considers this to be our birthright (hence the word 'inheritance'). The first principle takes a major step in this direction by preventing the misutilization of accumulated resources through limits on personal wealth. The second principle strengthens its foundation even further by explaining the proper way to utilize and share these resources in an economic and environmentally responsible manner.

Three Types of Resources

As explained in the introduction, Prout asserts that a comprehensive economic system must consider the three distinct dimensions of existence—physical, mental and physical. Hence economic activity involves the production, distribution and consumption of resources in these three dimensions in order to satisfy individual human needs on all three levels. The second principle of Prout refers to these resources in the external world as crude, subtle and causal respectively. Crude resources refer to material resources such as food, land, minerals and energy. Subtle resources refer to the ideas, concepts, ideas and realizations that exist in the mental dimension. They include our discoveries in physical, life and applied sciences, which assist in transforming material resources into products that sustain our physical existence.

These resources also encompass our evolving knowledge of cultures, esthetics, social



systems and the human mind itself which is essential for meeting our social and psychological challenges.

At the upper boundary of the subtle dimension lies a vast reservoir of intuitional knowledge that has enriched our civilization with invaluable insights. Significant scientific discoveries, such as Mendeleev's periodic table and Einstein's theory of relativity, are often attributed to both intellectual and intuitive perceptions. Mendeleev's discovery came to him in a dream and Einstein attributed one of his discoveries to a flash of insight. These mental resources have opened the doors to new paradigms of understanding, products and modes of production.

Roar Bjonnes is co-founder of the Prama Institute, a holistic retreat center in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. He is a certified yoga health educator, a popular yoga columnist and a lecturer on yoga philosophy and history. He has been a Proutist for several decades, giving Prout presentations in the U.S. and Europe.



Recipe Corner

A regular column by Liina Laufer

Enchilada Casserole

This is one of my mother's recipes, a simple enchilada casserole I ate growing up and make myself now. I realized that the American style "enchiladas" are completely different than authentic Mexican enchiladas when I lived in Monterrey, Mexico. However, both are delicious. The enchilada casserole is a

great dish to make when you have some leftover rice, older tortillas, beans and tomato sauce on hand.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups well-cooked pinto or black beans, or a combination of beans and rice
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon cumin
- 2 – 3 cups prepared tomato sauce (see recipe)
- one dozen tortillas
- 1/2 cups grated cheese

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Mix together beans, rice, and spice in a large bowl. Add some of the tomato sauce if they are too dry.

Spread some of the sauce over the bottom of a casserole, baking pan, or cast iron skillet.

Toast the tortillas individually for just a minute or two and remove before they get crisp. Put about 1/3 cup of the bean mixture in each tortilla. Fold in half and line up in the casserole dish. When all are filled, cover with tomato sauce, making sure to cover all of the tortillas to the edges of the dish. Cover with the grated cheese and bake for 30-45 minutes until bubbly and golden brown.

This casserole can be taken to potlucks if well wrapped, because it keeps its heat well. Leftovers are excellent.

For extra spice, you can add chopped jalapeño or serrano chilies, or replace some or all of the tomato sauce with salsa. You can also add bell peppers, celery, or other veggies. I like to serve with some avocado on top. Enjoy!

Please see Liina's blog at recipesheliina.wordpress.com

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Elevating the Status of Agriculture

Continued from front cover

dustrial manufacturing and ten percent in services. In 1870, 70-80 percent of the US population was employed in agriculture; as of 2008, less than two percent of the United States population is directly employed in agriculture (United States Department of Labor). Hence, Sarkar's proposal would have far reaching ramifications on our current food system, employment rates and standard of living. Agricultural workers that are respected, paid well and receive full labor protections will be better able to take care of their families and will be able to participate more fully in the local economy and society with living wages and adequate purchasing power.

In our current agricultural system, agro-corporations hire migrant labor to minimize their expenditures and very often engage in abusive labor practices that also place farm workers in dangerous working conditions, exposing them to pesticides and other toxins, skin and lung diseases, hearing loss, certain cancers and excessive sun exposure. As a result of the existing working conditions for farm workers, very few Americans are willing to undergo the risk of the work and as well as the very poor levels of financial compensation. Farm owners each year hire hundreds of thousands of temporary agricultural workers from South of the border to engage in back breaking work in poor working conditions. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (tomato farm workers in Florida) has exposed and assisted in the prosecution of numerous multi-state farm slavery operations across the Southeastern United States, helping to free over a thousand agricultural workers that were being held against their will (<http://ciw-online.org/slavery/>).

In this context, there is currently a movement in the United States and beyond of young people rekindling interest in returning to the land, nurturing the soil, growing food and building community. These young farmers are struggling very hard to maintain their farms and livelihoods while competing with agri-business that is able to produce cheap, conventional food at great cost to both our ecosystems and farm workers. It is the responsibility of people with conscience to reach out to these independent small farmers and support them. We may need to prepare ourselves to pay a little more for fresh local produce so that farmers can earn a living wage. These relationships with local farmers have become institutionalized here in the U.S. with the CSA movement or Community Supported Agriculture. A CSA is a group of individuals who have pledged to support one or more local farms, with growers and consumers sharing the risks and benefits of food production.

There are so many benefits to signing up with a CSA: supporting local farmers and not chemical intensive agri-business: nurturing top soil and habitat for bees and other creatures, enjoying fresh, local produce with every meal; having our food travel a much shorter distance to get to us so we use less fossil fuels in food transportation, keeping dollars in our local economy and not funneling them to far away corporate headquarters who have no interest in our local economy and ecosystem, meeting like-minded people; sharing recipes and more. Perhaps the most important as-

pect of belonging to a CSA is developing an authentic relationship with the people who grow the food that we eat and nourish our bodies and minds with. We visit our CSA farmers at their farms and learn about the challenges they are encountering growing our food, including issues around climate change, land ownership and labor. Sarkar always encouraged us to know where our food comes from, and that includes learning about all aspects regarding the conditions in which our food is grown and the people who dedicate themselves to this purpose.

I live in Westchester County, New York. We are a county of 930,000 people. If every family signed up with a local CSA, there would be an enormous demand for New York grown produce and family farms would be able to thrive in such a market. Such a trend would truly shift the numbers of people employed in the agricultural sector from the less than two percent currently upwards to the target level of twenty-five percent or more. The strong relationship with the farmers would encourage adequate working conditions and compensation for the farmers. Local families do not want to support abused and exploited farm workers. A summer volunteer day at the farm also helps us to understand the labor of love involved in growing food and the delicate relationship we have with the soil and the ecosystem.

Within the growing CSA movement is a growing consciousness about our responsibility in ensuring that fresh, local, high quality produce is accessible for all income levels, especially the very low income communities. I am a member of the Lineage Farm CSA here in the Hudson Valley and I am very pleased to learn that the farmers have made a commitment to grow additional food for over fifty families in need in their locale. In order to provide that support, they need families who can afford to pay more for their CSA share to pay extra to help subsidize the cost of the free or low cost shares. Access to healthy food is a very basic human right that our current socio-economic system does not address.

In short, there are various ways we can go about elevating the status of agriculture to that of industrial manufacturing. We can agitate for much better legislation that would allow agricultural workers to form a union and create worker safety standards. These legislative changes are important in the short term, but in and of themselves are not sufficient to transform our food and agricultural system into one consistent with PROUT values of regional self-sufficiency, local control of local resources, full employment and a balanced economy. We need very large percentages of our local population to make a commitment to purchase foods from local farmers who have merged their interests with the interests of our communities and in so doing become stewards of mother earth for generations to come.

Nada Khader has been the executive director of WESPAC Foundation, a peace and justice action network in Westchester County, New York, for the past 14 years – wespac.org. This article originally appeared in the April, 2015 Global Impact newsletter and is used with permission.



Women Proutists Create Our Vision Story

Women Proutists envision a future, twenty-five years from now, in which women and men are working together in coordinated cooperation on projects to eliminate inequality regimes. Women Proutists have taken a leadership role in advancing social justice, economic equality and education for women. Women have become the vanguard of society, promoting women as leaders so the whole society will be more just for all.

We were catalysts, smoothing the way for the change that needed to happen. By pointing out disparities between men and women and racial makeup of various organizations, a movement for social justice got its own momentum. Women Proutists are playing a key role in bringing together networks that are working for greater social and economic equality. Women Proutists have transformed from being baby birds to mature birds, flying in conjunction with men in bringing about a new economy based on PROUT principles.

Around the world, women have begun to take on more leadership roles. The multi-culturalism movement has given rise to a larger network of interconnected samajas, e.g., socio-economic units based on common regional, cultural and economic interests. Mahila samaja (women's interest groups) plays a key role in this national and global network of samajas. Cooperatives have become widely established within the samajas, becoming the base of the new Prout economy, which has replaced capitalism.

Women Proutists have helped change the way women are viewed in society, and women are no longer viewed as second-class citizens. Women are respected as equals and as partners in creating an egalitarian society based on neohumanism in which all people have the opportunity to achieve their true potentials and in working for the common good of all.

Movie Review: She's Beautiful When She's Angry

By Jyoti Wind

"She's Beautiful When She's Angry" is a documentary of the feminist movement in America, 1966-1971. From the founding of The National Organization for Women (NOW) to the Women's Liberation Movement, we remember that 'a woman's place was in the home' was still in play. Jobs (carpenters, welders, astronauts) were not open to our gender. The typewriter, waitress apron, nurse and mother were the rule of the day.



This stirring film about women's rise for equality in all areas of life, and how they took to the streets and halls of government, organizing as they went, is a reminder of what was the situation just 40 years ago. We also see the face of the women's movement now. Excellent film!

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.

Neohumanism in Action:

Educating for Sustainable & Compassionate Futures

July 11 - 16, 2015

25th Anniversary of
Ananda Marga Gurukula

We invite all educators and Neohumanist activists from around the globe to share in creating the vision of a sustainable and compassionate future and adopting the actions required to expand our Neohumanist institutions and projects.

Place: Prama Institute Asheville USA Price: \$285 US Information & Registration: www.gurukul.edu

Registration: amgk.glo@gurukul.edu



Cooperatives in the New Economy

Continued from front cover

businesses that offer ownership to all employees, operate in a more participatory, democratic, and transparent way, and divide profits more equitably? And if such a mammoth cooperative empire fails to keep a key business afloat, what does this mean for cooperativism as a viable alternative to corporate capitalism? Or even further, McLeod (2014) questions "... whether models such as Mondragon are adequate to address the world's interwoven economic, ecological and social crisis."

The questions stimulated by the Fagor bankruptcy bring to light the different notions people have regarding the role of cooperatives in the economy. Some believe they merely represent a better business model for capitalism while others see them playing a pivotal role in the formation of an alternative economic framework. In the US, progressives who analyzed Mondragon's efforts to compete with multinationals have realized that there are fundamental limitations for developing the cooperative model in the current global economy. They have initiated a national conversation regarding the principles, values, and strategies of a new system capable of offering real solutions for today's crises (see <http://thenextsystem.org/>). It is becoming increasingly clear to them that reforms to the existing system are inadequate to resolve the serious social, economic, and environmental problems we face today.

These efforts to envision a new economic paradigm are indeed very significant for Proutists. It is not easy to promote a radically different system like Prout. The current debate regarding cooperatives is a good entry point for Prout into these discussions. After all, cooperative enterprises are central to the Prout economy. Although Proutists encourage the creation of cooperatives in the current economy, they understand that the cooperative system will only come into its own under a full-fledged Prout economy. So, as academics and activists begin to delve into the core concepts and strategies for true systemic change, and how cooperatives will contribute to this new economy, Prout is positioned to offer important insights into how a cooperative-based economy might be achieved.

Building Blocks for a Cooperative Economy

Thus far, the full potential of cooperatives has not been attained because they are "swimming against the current" of a centralized, profit-based system,

dominated by transnational corporations. Also, their scope, scale, and relationship with other elements of the economy have not been adequately defined. In Prout, cooperatives play an important role, but only as far as they support the larger economic objectives of consumption-based production, decentralization and democratization of economic activity, and sustainable values. Below are four core elements of Prout that clarify the purpose and parameters of cooperatives:

1. From the Bottom Up

The majority of cooperatives in the world are local, or at least regional. Their member-owners typically live in the same area where the co-op operates, thereby localizing ownership and helping to strengthen the local economy. That is why those who promote economic localization have taken up the cooperative banner. Yet cooperatives may grow beyond their local borders or serve non-local demand.

Prout's concept of economic decentralization institutionalizes local economy by creating small economic areas, or "blocks"*, based on local physical features, socio-economic requirements and difficulties, and their physico-psychic aspirations (Sarkar, 1979). Economic planning boards, from the block level up to district, state, national and global levels would operate with the primary objective of building self-sufficiency from the bottom up.

Under this decentralized system, cooperatives would first be developed in each block to meet the basic needs of the population. An immense multi-national cooperative like Mondragon would not be allowed to suppress the development of blocks in any region or country. Prout prefers the creation of a larger number of cooperatives closer to the source of raw materials and production, allowing for better owner participation, integration with local economic planning, and community involvement.

2. Networks Going to Scale

Although the drive for "Buy Local" is attracting many adherents, the reality is that localities import most of their goods from outside. Prout proposes to reach scale by increasing the density and comprehensiveness of local networks. Through local (aka block-level) planning, extensive supply chains (networks of buyers and sellers) can be developed to meet local demand. The function of these networks is not just to exist to deliver a product to a consumer, but rather to respond directly to the needs of the local population.

Cooperatives are the backbone of these consumption-based chains as they are anchored in the com-

munity and can operate at a scale necessary to achieve local self-sufficiency. The creation of networked producer, distributor, and consumer cooperatives would be capable of large-scale production. For example, in Western North Carolina where production of natural fibers (cotton, wool, and alpaca) is on the rise, a network of this kind could include fiber producers' cooperatives to collectively market their raw material, mill cooperatives to produce threads and fabrics, processing cooperatives to manufacture apparel and other textiles, distributor co-ops, and consumer co-ops to sell the products. The same can be set up for every major sector of the economy.

3. Three Sizes Fit Better

There are basically three types of ownership in business: private, cooperative, and public. When the economy is controlled by large private interests, centralization occurs, large economic disparities arise, markets fail, and consumers lose. Cooperative ownership has been promoted as a solution to these problems. However, the economy is diverse, and co-ops may not be the answer for every type of economic activity. According to Prout, a three-tiered system is preferable—comprising small private businesses, cooperatives, and large publicly-owned enterprises (Sarkar, 1992). Cooperatives should handle all medium to large scale economic activity, especially those related to essential commodities. Smaller private businesses are ideal to produce non-essential items at a scale too small or too complex for co-ops. These companies would also give individual entrepreneurs the opportunity to innovate and test new products and services. And key industries that are too large or too complex for cooperatives would be run by local governments, such as power and water utilities.

4. Valuing an Economy for All

There is an assumption that cooperatives naturally are dedicated to the triple bottom line—social equity, economic growth, and environmental responsibility. True, all co-op members have equal status and the wage differentials are small so that profits are distributed more equitably. However, cooperative owners reflect the value system of a larger society afflicted by racism, sexism, and environmental disregard. José Arizmendiarieta, the Catholic priest who founded the Mondragon cooperatives, saw his work as basically educational with an economic component. It was an ongoing education based on cooperative values. Prout has adopted a system of values called neohumanism (Sarkar, 1989) to guide its cooperative development—in fact, all economic activity. This value system expands human consciousness to grasp the

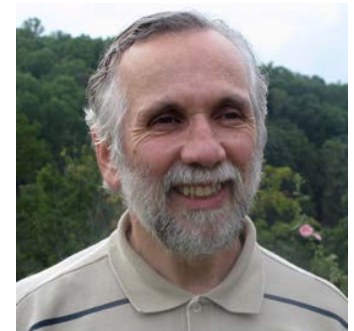
interconnectedness of all living beings and non-living entities. Neohumanism cultivates love and respect in the human mind which motivates economic players to establish a truly sustainable economy for everyone.

As we grapple today with an economy out of control, extremely inequitable, and environmentally dangerous, reasonable voices are beginning to explore what a better system would look like. Many consider cooperatives as an important part of the solution, with their spirit of cooperation, democracy, equity, and community. Prout explains that the potential of cooperatives can be maximized within the framework of larger system transformation. This encompasses a structured economic decentralization, sector-based networking, a three-tiered economy, and a neohumanist value system.

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Report: Building the New World Conference in Radford, Virginia

By Liila Hass

I feel very fortunate to have been part of the “Building the New World” conference held recently in Radford, Virginia. This conference is a legacy of the late long-term PROUT activist Garda Ghista, and as such, the PROUT team paid a moving tribute to her in the opening invocation. Gayatrii was known for her unflinching devotion to PROUT, social and economic justice and a better world for all; Dada Maheshvarananda was able to acknowledge her many contributions to social change. Dada also led the PROUT team in the singing of “Samgachadvam”, in the spirit of “Let us Move Together”, which seemed fitting for the program.

Garda’s vision has been taken up fittingly by Professor Glen Martin, of Radford University, and the Reverend Laura George, of the Oracle Institute, in what proved to be a fabulous bringing together of thinkers and change makers from all over the world.

This year’s conference attracted several key players in the futures and social change movements, including Barbara Marx Hubbard, futurist, Phillip Hellmich, from the Shift Movement, Charles Eisenstein, author of Sacred Economics, and many others. The themes included health and wellbeing, economics and business, justice and governance and many more.

I had the opportunity to present in the “food, water & environment” theme, and as such, put forward a talk on water conservation and food security (subtitled “Surviving and Thriving in the Era of Climate Change”), based on the teachings of P.R Sarkar, founder of PROUT. I used information from Sarkar’s book, *Ideal Farming, Part 2*, and also from the work of Al Gore’s *The Climate Reality Project* and other climate change and water networks.

The conference organizers had asked all presenters to focus on what is possible and on positive solutions for building a new world. As this is very much in keeping with PROUT’s objectives, I was able to present several concrete solutions, which seemed much appreciated by the audience.

Key solutions for water conservation include catching the rain water where it falls, building shallow ponds, which allow water to slowly refill the ground water supply, using mud from already existing ponds, as a way to line the shallow pools and prevent too much seepage of the water, and afforestation, as a way to attract the rainclouds and also

ensure that the water stays within the root systems of the trees, rather than running off quickly down the slopes.

Food security solutions include agro-forestry (planting and maintaining trees that provide food as well as shade, shelter, both water and carbon storage and oxygen), reducing the use of glyphosates (found especially in the chemical, Round Up), as these have been definitively linked to the loss of our pollinating bees, and avoiding monocultures such as only corn or soy. I also suggested a look at balancing the economy. Currently in the U.S., a mere two percent of the population derives its income from the agricultural sector, while 81 percent are involved in service and 17 percent in industry and manufacturing. This has huge implications for food security; should blight, drought, insect plague or other unimagined events occur, then we may have a tough time with food and water supplies. The U. S. government claims to store two weeks’ worth of grains for its population, but others believe that the real amount is closer to three days’ worth. A solution to food security and withstanding environmental threats is to ensure that more people enter the agricultural sector, thereby building wider diversity of crops, including drought- and plague-resistant species or crops that are nutrient-dense.

Other highlights of the conference included a panel on intentional communities, featuring Dada, who presented on Master Units, as well as members of Yogaville, Acorn Community Farm and Twin Oaks, all based in Virginia, Damanhur in Italy, and others. This was an inspiring forum that included a look at structure and lifestyle questions, as well as economic structure and social service. In a separate program, Dada gave a very inspiring presentation on cooperatives, which was well attended and well received by the audience.

Final highlights were the musical performances by local members of the community, and the chance to network with many bold and inspiring leaders of the social change movement.

I was very grateful to have had the opportunity to present on behalf of the PROUT movement and I thank Mirra Price for the amazing work she did to help make this all happen. Finally, Clark Webb, a long-term PROUTist from Blacksburg, was a key player on the organizing committee and did an amazing job on behalf of PROUT to help make it all happen.

Liila Hass is a Naturopath who is the founding director of Future Tasmania and a recent recipient of the Jan Lee Martin Scholarship, Melbourne University School of Business Executive Education. She is a graduate of the Tasmanian Leaders Program and has trained with Al Gore as a climate change activist.



Golden Jubilee of WWD

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti established the Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga on the 23rd May, 1965, in Patna, India. As 2015 is the 50th anniversary of this auspicious event, we invite all sisters and Didis to

an open global gathering
to commemorate Baba's legacy to us and the world.

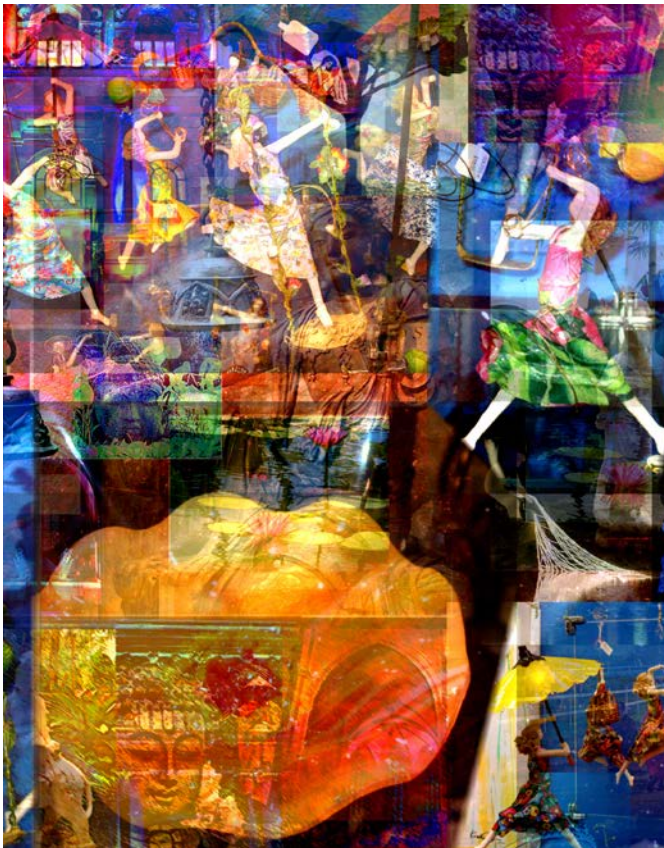
November 6, 7, 8, 2015 Ananda Nagar, India

Three days of collective kiirtans, programs on PWSA, AMURTEL, GV, Education, HPMGL, GP, seminars on leadership and addressing the challenges faced by women globally, presentations on WWD projects around the globe, and of course, time for rich, deep sadhana in the City of Bliss. This is an opportunity for us to embrace what we share in common - His gift of WWD. We hope to see Didis and sisters from around the world share in these days of celebration.

All sisters, all Didis, from all sectors, all trades,
and all affiliations are welcome.

Child care will be organized. Payment by donation.

For more information, please email: WWDsisters@gmail.com or go to: WWDsisters.org



Artwork by Jivadhara.

Like a Revolution

By Jyoti Wind

We sit with words..
they dangle like participles
from the pen tip
or computer key,
poised to give meaning
to the inner life
we all live.

Six women in one meeting,
five in another,
we write our stories,
our heart's desires,
our insights and knowings,
like a revolution
quietly taking place
on the inside.
We call it
a writing group.

Gender Equity in Education

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- Attractive applicants have a better chance of getting jobs, and of receiving higher salaries.
- Taller men earn on average \$600 more per inch (2.5 centimeters) in the United States than shorter executives.
- Judges find attractive people guilty of crimes less often, and if guilty, they receive shorter sentences.
- Attractive kids are more popular in school with their classmates.
- Teachers give higher grades to the work of attractive students and have higher expectations of them, which in turn improves their performance.

Understanding this tendency, which scientists point out is part of our evolutionary history, is crucial for overcoming bias.

The world needs quality education for all girls and women that includes:

- Teaching women how to care for and strengthen their bodies, their minds and their spirits.
- Learning the hidden history of women's great contributions to every aspect of society.
- Seeing through the imposed veils of superstition and dogmas.
- Valuing diversity and viewing gender, racial and cultural differences among people as enhancements of our human family.
- Leadership training to achieve the necessary self-confidence and will to apply their talents and knowledge for the benefit of society.

In the Neohumanist Education Conference in Porto Alegre, over 100 teachers brainstormed in small groups how we can help girls feel good about themselves. Suggestions included:

- Using physical activities to relearn and appreciate one's body
- Teaching dancing, singing and art.
- Leading activities that deconstruct the social gender paradigm.
- Explaining the theory of multiple intelligences (musical–rhythmic, visual–spatial, verbal–linguistic, logical–mathematical, bodily–kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, existential, etc.) to show that each person possesses a unique blend of all of them; therefore we should respect and encourage each person's different abilities and development.
- Deconstructing the appeals of the media through reflection and questioning. For example, bring examples of very old advertisements to compare with current ads.
- Encouraging each one to manifest their innate talent for their own self-esteem and to inspire others as well.
- Dialoging in order to understand why one is not well, and helping to find a solution
- Practicing yoga and meditation.
- Encouraging healthy eating.
- Telling stories with positive images of girls and women.
- Realizing that all people are beautiful inside

- Leading reflection on feminine stereotypes and women as objects in the media.
- Laughing!
- Valuing the different strengths and abilities of each person, remembering that no one is equal.
- Valuing inner beauty, kindness and compassion.
- Realizing that our culture is our strength, making each person proud of who they are.
- Comparing society's unrealistic image of female beauty (extensive makeup, plastic surgery, Photoshop, excessively thin) vs. the real beauty inside each person.
- Respecting diversity.

As long as girls and women remain second class citizens, their education will continue to be second class. Therefore, the struggle to end women's social and political oppression and inequality must go hand-in-hand with efforts to insure gender equity in education.

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Dada Maheshvarananda is a monk, activist, and writer. He is a follower and teacher of Tantra Yoga; his spiritual master is Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar (1922-1990). His latest book is After Capitalism: Economic Democracy in Action (Innerworld Publications, 2012). He is the director of the Prout Research Institute of Venezuela.



Mirra Price, a retired English teacher, currently is a writer, editor and copy-editor. An activist and Proutist, she has worked in cooperatives, for many social justice causes, and has advocated for women's rights and gender equality since the 1960s.

Kurd Women: An Inspiring Example of Gender Equality in a Cooperative Economy

By Dr. Fred E. Foldvary

In the midst of the violence of the Middle East, a relatively free society has emerged, Rojava in northern Syria, by the border with Turkey. Rojava, meaning “western,” also referred to as Western Kurdistan, is a self-governing, mostly Kurdish region, with a population of 4.5 million. It declared itself autonomous in November, 2013, after control by the government of Syria had collapsed. The capital is Qamishli in northeastern Syria. The territory includes Kobane, the city in which there was fierce fighting with ISIS.

The region, established by the Democratic Union Party and the Kurdish National Council, is not recognized as a political jurisdiction by the government of Syria, and the government of Turkey has closed its border with Rojava for trade in goods and for entry by journalists.

The Constitution of the Rojava Cantons declares that, “We, the people of the Democratic Autonomous Regions of Afrin, Jazira and Kobane,” establish “a confederation of Kurds, Arabs, Syriacs, Arameans, Turkmen, Armenians and Chechens.”

The residents practice what they call “democratic confederalism.” Rojava is divided into cantons, like those of Switzerland. Most of the government’s services are provided locally by the three cantons. In response to a culture where women are typically treated badly, in Rojava, feminism is valued, and community “peace committees” have reduced violence within and among families. Women have formed a military force that helped rescue the Yazidi religious minority.

The government of Rojava is the Kurdish Supreme Committee. Its army is the People’s Protection Units. The public revenues of Rojava come mostly from selling oil. There are no taxes on wages, production, or goods. Local services are provided by cooperatives.

While some American and European Muslims are joining the violent extremists in the Middle East, others, not so publicized, are helping the Rojava side. They are called the “Lions of Rojava.” Those who want to get involved have an ideological choice.

The situation is complicated by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party in Turkey, or PKK, designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department. This party should work for peaceful self-governance within Turkey. Peace between the Kurds and the Turkish government would promote a normal border between Turkey and Rojava. Until

then, the government of the United States should push on Turkey to open its border to Rojava for trade, journalism, and assistance.

The revolutionary ideology in Rojava was led by Abdullah Öcalan, who rejects the structure of today’s state governments. Öcalan’s concept of Democratic Autonomy includes a bottom-up democracy, gender equality, environmental preservation, and a cooperative economy. The cantons operate under a “social contract” of self-governance based in neighborhood commune assemblies of several hundred households each, with women as equal participants. Power rises from the bottom up through elected deputies to the city and cantonal levels.

The people of Rojava are fighting not only for their autonomy, but also for their ideals of democracy and tolerance. The training of their military includes education about their Democratic Autonomy.

An academic group visited Rojava in December, 2014. In their statement of January 15, 2015, the group stated that “we, as a delegation of scholars from Europe, Turkey, and North America traveled to Rojava to learn more about the ideals and practices of this revolution and to witness at first hand, in one of its cantons, its claims to gender liberation and democratic self-government... In Rojava, we believe, genuinely democratic structures have indeed been established... Against all odds, the people of Rojava have advanced a bold program for civic tolerance, gender liberation, and direct democracy. For this, they deserve the world’s respect and its active support.”

Reference

<http://roarmag.org/2015/01/statement-academic-delegation-rojava/>

This article was used with permission from The Progress Report <http://www.progress.org>, A Free Society Amidst the Chaos of the Middle East, February 8, 2015

*Fred E. Foldvary, Ph.D., is an economist who has been writing weekly editorials for Progress.org since 1997. He received his B.A. in economics from the University of California at Berkeley, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from George Mason University. He has taught economics at Virginia Tech, John F. Kennedy University, Santa Clara University, and currently teaches at San Jose State University. Foldvary is the author of *The Soul of Liberty, Public Goods and Private Communities, and Dictionary of Free Market Economics*. He edited and contributed to *Beyond Neoclassical Economics* and, with Dan Klein, *The Half-Life of Policy Rationales*. Foldvary is known for going on record in the *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* in 1997 to predict the exact timing of the 2008 economic depression—eleven years before the event occurred.*

He was able to do so due to his extensive knowledge of the real-estate cycle.



Gender Equity in Education

By Dada Maheshvarananda and Mirra Price

This article originally appeared in the May, 2015 Gurukul magazine.

The mass media and advertising bombard us from a very young age that the value of women depends on how beautiful, thin and sexy they look; that buying the right clothes and beauty products is a key to success in life. A Harvard University study shows that 8 out of 10 U.S. women are unhappy with their physical appearance, and that only five percent are even capable of reaching the current ideal shape (Fox, 1997). The result of this mass hypnosis is eating disorders, low self-esteem and depression that plague many women who are unable to achieve that elusive commercial image of beauty.

The youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize was Malala Yousafzai at age 17 in 2014 for her courageous campaign for girls' education. According to a 2012 UNICEF study, an estimated 31 million girls of primary school age and 34 million girls of lower secondary school age were not enrolled in school in 2011, with Sub-Saharan Africa having the lowest percentage of gender parity (UNICEF, 2012).

Barriers to girls' education in economically impoverished countries include school fees, strong cultural norms favoring boys' education when a family has limited resources, lack of private separate bathrooms, negative classroom environments where girls may face violence, exploitation or corporal punishment. Additionally, schools in the so-called Third World often lack sufficient numbers of female teachers because men are given preference in awarding salaried teaching jobs. (UNICEF, 2012). Improving girls' access to education helps end the poverty cycle, creating a ripple effect, which will influence coming generations.

In Western countries, girls' access to education is roughly on a par with boys. However, social conditions persist which may negatively impact the educational climate in classrooms. In a 1992 American Association of University Women study, "How Schools Shortchange Girls", findings included that in the United States, girls received less attention than boys in classrooms and were less represented in math than boys. There has been a decided rise in bullying and violence, which often prevents girls from full participa-

tion in their education. Social issues such as teen pregnancy, one-parent households, having to help care for siblings, ever-increasing alcohol and drug use, and health problems, are all significant factors which may severely lessen the quality of education for girls, especially in public schools, which have limited resources and are sometimes in crime-ridden urban neighborhoods (AAUW, 1992) .

In a landmark longitudinal study, Harvard psychology professors Lyn Mikel Brown and Carol Gilligan followed the stories of 100 adolescent girls for five years. They found that when young girls in the United States reach adolescence, they start to receive contradictory expectations from parents, teachers, peers, the media, and themselves. Girls struggle with these conflicting messages, trying to figure out how to act, when to speak up, and who to please in their everyday lives. There are strong pressures from society for them to be beautiful, likable, passive and self-sacrificing. Many adolescents respond by falling into silence and disconnection from society (Brown, 1992).

Adolescent girls feel enormous pressure to attain unrealistic standards of beauty. Girls who do not fit this artificial standard of beauty face more obstacles than those who come closer to attaining it. Studies demonstrate that attractive people have distinct advantages in our society:

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