



Friends World Committee, Northeast Regional Gathering
Hosted by Atlantic Friends Gathering with the assistance of Quaker Institute for the Future

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton NB
May 21-24, 2010

“Turning the World Right-Side Up:” *

**Exploring the Role of Women in Re-Balancing Economic Priorities Toward Right Relationship
with the Whole Commonwealth of Life**

Toward a Moral Economy

From domination, competition, and violence to respect, nurture, and peace.

Social and Economic Change

The rise of women and the challenge to male domination in our time is a societal change of momentous consequences. After ten thousand years of patriarchy, this unbalanced, unfair, and damaging arrangement of spiritual, social, and economic authority is changing. This change is well underway in many important respects, but has yet a long way to go in the conduct of the economy.

The Spiritual Connection

In a profound sense both economics and ecology are domains of relationship. There is a deep sense of **right relationship** within a fully developed understanding of these domains. Our spiritual traditions teach us that in **right relationship** we touch the fullness of human meaning and the presence of the Divine.

Guiding Questions

How does the conduct of the economy need to change so its operation will serve the common good of all peoples and the whole realm of life?

How do Quaker testimonies advance the role of women in helping establish an economy based on respect, nurture, security, and peace?

*The title of our program is taken from the book by Patrick Kerans & John Kearney, *Turning the World Right-Side Up: Science, Community and Democracy*, Halifax, Fernside Publishing, 2006

Outline of Program

Friday Evening Plenary (open to the public):

Background and overview – Barbara Aikman & Keith Helmuth

Marilyn Keyes Roper – **How the Sacred Feminine Was Uprooted in Western Culture: Remnants and Renewal**

Saturday Morning Plenary (open to the public)

Geoffrey Garver & Keith Helmuth – **Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy**

Saturday Afternoon

Experiential activities on conference themes and Quaker testimonies.

Saturday Evening Keynote Plenary (open to the public):

Ellie Perkins – **Working Together Toward a Moral Economy: The Importance of Diversity**

Sunday Morning

Meeting for Worship

Plenary (open to the public): Imelda Perley – Women and Right Relationship in First Nation Community Life

Sunday Afternoon

Jane Orion Smith - **From Wrong to Right Relationship – What are the Means to the Ends?**

In considering how to move towards “turning the world right-side up,” the means are critical to the ends. Friends may be clearer on their vision of a “peaceable kingdom” than on the way to get there, which will require engaging many ways of seeing, thinking and doing. Process is central to both feminist and Quaker methodologies. In this session, we will engage in exercises to help us envision the means, and some of the ends, toward right relationships within creation.

Sunday Evening

Meeting for reading, creative performance, and singing.

Monday Morning

Meeting for Worship and final reflections.

Presenters

Marilyn Keyes Roper (NBMM), MS Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania: Coordinator of "War or Peace," a three year program of the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania; conducting research on the evidence for the origins of war.

Ellie Perkins (Toronto MM), Professor of Economics, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University. Special interest in ecological and feminist economics.

Imelda Perley (Negotkuk First Nation), Lecturer, Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute, University of New Brunswick; Community educator in Maliseet language and traditional culture.

Geoffrey Garver (Buffalo MM, attender at Montreal MM), Consultant on Environmental Law and International Trade; Instructor in Law at Laval University and University of Quebec. Contributing author to *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy*.

Keith Helmuth (NBMM), Secretary, Quaker Institute for the Future. Contributing author to *Right Relationship*.

Jane Orion Smith (Vancouver Island MM) serves as the General Secretary of Canadian Friends Service Committee, a committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting. She is a sojourning member of Toronto Monthly Meeting.

Recommending Reading

***Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy* - Peter G Brown, Geoffrey Garver, Keith Helmuth, Robert Howell, and Steve Szeghi;** San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler, 2009. The book was created by the Moral Economy Project of Quaker Institute for the Future. It addresses five basic questions: what is the economy for; how does it work; how big should it be; what's fair; how should it be governed? It lays out a social action programme for working toward a whole earth economy. It is the background book for this conference. This conference addresses a theme that supplements the book.

***The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* - Riane Eisler;** New York, Harper, 1988. The first book for the general reader that brings together the archaeological and historical evidence for the loss of gender equality in Western culture and the rise of patriarchy, along with war making and environmental destruction. Lays out a hopeful program for the recovery of gender balance, and a caring and peace-making society. Became a best seller when published.

***Rebalancing the World: Why Women Belong and Men Compete and How to Restore the Ancient Equilibrium* - Carol Lee Flinders;** New York, HarperCollins, 2002. This is gem of book. Covers some of the same material as *The Chalice and the Blade* but is much better written with a more profound understanding of culture. Carol Flinders is the co-author of the enormously popular cookbook, *Laurel's Kitchen*. I don't know if she has Quaker connections, but she references Quakers and John Woolman several times in *Rebalancing the World*.

***Economics for Humans* - Julie A Nelson;** Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006. This, too, is an excellent book. In 164 pages she provides an incisive and easy to understand guide to the field of economics, and a powerful critique of both the right and left ideologies from a feminist point of view. The author is a bon fide economist who knows the field inside-out. She is a leader in the field of feminist economics. This is a book for the general reader, well written, highly accessible, hopeful and practical.

***The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values* - Nancy Folbre;** New York, The New Press, 2001. "As paid work and market values come to dominate society, how can we ensure that people are truly cared for? Nancy Folbre provides a compelling answer. Along the way, she . . . exposes the ground on which traditional economists dare not tread, and moves feminism a step closer to its longstanding ideals of a better and fairer society. . . . Nancy Folbre is a must read!" (Juliet Schor, Lecturer, Harvard University)

***The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics* - Riane Eisler;** San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler, 2007. Riane Eisler returns with a major book on economics from the feminist perspective. She builds on her analysis of the "dominator/partnership" dualism that she developed in *The Chalice and the Blade*, and shows why a decent future depends on the reemergence of the partnership dynamic in economic life.

Prepared by Keith Helmuth