

Partnerism

Post-capitalist/Post-socialist Economics

RIANE EISLER



IN OUR TIME of unprecedented economic, social, technological, and environmental change, awareness of the need for new economic thinking is growing. Yet most government and business policies are still made looking through a rearview mirror.

This article outlines a new post-capitalist and post-socialist economic system. It describes building blocks for a new economics of *partnerism* that recognizes that our real wealth consists of the contributions of people and of nature. It demonstrates that to move toward a more sustainable and just system we must implement economic measurements, policies, and practices that recognize the enormous value of the essential work of caring for people, starting in early childhood, and caring for our natural life-support systems.

The Old Economic Paradigms

Most current proposals for a new economics are still framed in terms of the debate between capitalism and socialism—even though both came out of early industrial times (the 1700s and 1800s), and we are now well into the 21st-century postindustrial era. On that account alone, both these economic paradigms are antiquated.

But the problem is even deeper. Both these economic systems came out of times when kings, emperors, sheiks, pashas, and other potentates ruled in states and tribes. These were also times when by both law and custom men ruled the women and children in their families. In other words, both these economic systems came out of times when top-down familial, social, political, and economic rankings were still the norm. And so also was the use of fear and violence to maintain these rankings.

Capitalism and socialism were actually attempts to challenge top-down economic control.¹ But to varying degrees both theories reflected this, perpetuated it.

Adam Smith proposed replacing royal/state economic monopolies with the “invisible hand of the market.” But his capitalist economic theory still relied on inequality (the class structure), emphasized individual acquisitiveness and greed (the profit motive), and failed to address the use of violence to protect this new form of top-down economics.

Marx challenged unregulated capitalism and its re-concentration of economic resources in the hands of industrialists and merchants. Though his theory of scientific socialism argued that the abolition of private property would eventually emancipate society from all exploitation, oppression, and class distinction, his “dictatorship of the proletariat” (a state ruled by the proletariat or workers rather than the bourgeois or propertied class) followed the familiar formula of oppressor and oppressed trading places—that is, yet another version of top-down control.

These economic theories also reflected another established tradition of top-down rule. Neither challenged the then prevailing belief that women should work for free within households, where their labor, as well as all family income and economic resources, are under male control.

Marx and Engels argued that the abolition of private property would lead to women no longer being dependent on the male “head of household.” But they did not challenge this headship, which basically put women in the position of an unpaid employee or indentured servant.

Indeed, when Smith and Marx formulated their theories, the work that women performed both inside and outside

households was by law and custom their husbands' property. As late as the close of the 19th century, in most U.S. states a woman could not even sue for injuries inflicted on her. Only her husband could sue, on the grounds that his wife's injuries had deprived him of her services, which were legally his due.²

It should therefore not surprise us that neither Smith nor Marx was interested in changing the exploitation of women's work in male-controlled households or the use of fear and violence to maintain this control. Nor, for that matter, did their theories address the critical issue of how resources are distributed within families and how this affects all family members, especially the nutrition and education of children—which must be considered as part of a more equitable and sustainable economics.³

Hence, it should also not surprise us that both Marx's and Smith's theories devalued the "women's work" of caring for people, starting in early childhood. For both, this was merely "reproductive" rather than "productive" labor—a classification still perpetuated in economics texts and courses to this day.

Moreover, neither Smith nor Marx considered the "women's work" of keeping a clean and healthy home environment important in their theoretical frameworks. In fact, both failed to give any value to the work of caring for our Mother Earth; for both, nature was there to be exploited. In short, caring for our natural life-support system is not part of either capitalist or socialist theory.⁴

It should therefore also not surprise us that the real-life applications of these theories led to the despoliation and destruction of our natural life-support system we see all around us. The damage done by capitalism was extensively reported in a recent study by thirteen U.S. government agencies.⁵ The two major applications of socialism, in the former Soviet Union and China, fared no better, leading to environmental disasters such as the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe, the virtual destruction of Lake Baikal, and the life-threatening air pollution of Beijing and other Chinese cities.

In sum, in our time, when the scientific consensus is that climate change is leading our planet in an unsustainable direction, neither capitalism nor socialism can meet our environmental challenges. Nor can either economic system effectively address the injustices of the gap between those on top and those on bottom.

I saw these injustices firsthand when I visited the former Soviet Union. Caviar and champagne were served to Soviet elites, while the mass of people stood in lines for hours for the most basic necessities. According to recent reports, China today tops the United States in the number of its billionaires. As for capitalism, it is notorious for its misdistribution of resources to those on top, a problem that has increased in recent years when the heads of U.S. companies earn over 300 times what workers do. Poverty also persists under both systems, as we see today, not only in China



but also in the United States, which has the highest child-poverty rates of any developed nation.⁶

While capitalism brought an expanding middle class and socialism somewhat mitigated extreme poverty in China and the USSR, the many failures of both systems have led some people to believe there is no hope for us. But there is another way, the way of *partnerism*, which has been emerging in nations such as Sweden, Norway, and Finland. These are *not* social democracies, a term Hitler used to describe his regime in Nazi Germany. What they often call themselves is *caring societies*. And, as I will develop in this article, they have been moving toward a *caring economics*.

A Whole Systems Analysis

To understand why an economic system does or does not pay attention to caring for people and nature, we have to look at its larger social context. In doing this, I again ask you to analyze societies from a new perspective. This perspective requires leaving our comfort zone of familiar social categories—Right/Left, religious/secular, Eastern/Western, Southern/Northern, industrial/pre- or postindustrial—and instead use the new categories of the *domination system* and the *partnership system*. Or rather, because no society is a pure partnership or domination system, we will look at where a society falls on the *partnership/domination social scale*.⁷

Let's start with capitalism. Certainly capitalism has, during the last two hundred years, been linked with imperialism. But earlier noncapitalist domination-oriented societies, be they European like Belgium, the Netherlands, and Great Britain, or Eastern like the Mongolians, Chinese, and Ottomans, were also exploitive imperial powers.

From the new perspective of the partnership/domination social scale, we can further see that neoliberalism too is *not*

a new capitalist phenomenon: it is a regression to an *economics of domination*. “Trickle-down economics” is just another version of old traditions of economic domination where, as in feudal times, those on the bottom are socialized to content themselves with the scraps dropping from the opulent tables of those on top. In other words, what we are dealing with is one more version of an ancient economics of top-down domination, whether it is tribal, feudal, or mercantilist, Eastern or Western, ancient or modern, capitalist or socialist.

This economics of domination did not arise in a vacuum. It is embedded in the *social configuration of domination systems*.

We see this domination configuration in the most repressive and violent societies of modern times—be they secular like Hitler’s rightist Germany and Kim Jong-Un’s leftist North Korea, or religious like Khomeini’s Iran, ISIS, the Taliban, and the rightist so-called Christian fundamentalist alliance in the U.S. that would turn us into a theocracy. *First*, all have an authoritarian structure in *both* the family and the state or tribe. *Second*, the male half of humanity is ranked over the female half, and with this comes a *gendered system of values* in which anything associated with masculinity in domination systems (e.g., conquest and violence) is deemed superior to the stereotypically feminine (e.g., nonviolence and caring). *Third*, abuse and violence are built into the system (from child and wife beating, to pogroms, lynchings, and aggressive warfare), since they are needed to maintain rigid top-down rankings: man over man, man over woman, race over race, religion over religion, tribe over tribe, or nation over nation.

In more equitable and peaceful partnership-oriented societies, we see a very different configuration. *First*, both families and tribes or nations are more democratic and egalitarian. There are still parents, teachers, managers, and leaders, but they exercise power through *hierarchies of actualization* where accountability, respect, and benefits flow both ways rather than just from the bottom up, and power is empowering rather than, as in *hierarchies of domination*, disempowering. *Second*, equal value is given to both the female and male halves of humanity, and in contrast to the rigid gender stereotypes of the domination system, qualities such as nonviolence and care are valued in both women and men as well as in social and economic policy. *Third*, while there is some abuse and violence, they do not have to be built into social institutions, as they are not required to maintain rigid rankings of domination.

Again, societies orienting to the partnership system’s configuration transcend familiar social categories. For example, they can be technologically undeveloped foraging societies, as documented by the research of anthropologist Douglas Fry and others.⁸ As shown by archeological excavations, they can be egalitarian prehistoric farming cultures like Catal Huyuk, where there are no signs of destruction though warfare for

1000 years and no signs of inequality between women and men. They can be technologically advanced “high civilizations” like Minoan Crete, where women played leading roles, there was a generally high standard of living, and there are no signs of warfare between the various city-states on the island. They can be modern societies like Sweden, Norway, and Finland, to which I will return.

But here I want to stay with the need to leave behind our familiar social and economic categories, and look at our past, present, and the possibilities for our future through the lens of the partnership/domination social scale.

To begin with, societies in all the conventional categories have been authoritarian, violent, and unjust. This is the case for not only capitalist societies but also socialist ones, as we see in the despotic and violent character of the former Soviet Union and China. It is also the case for secular rightist societies, such as contemporary Latin American juntas, and secular leftist ones, such as today’s North Korea, as well as for religious ones, as shown by religious fundamentalist regimes such as ISIS and the Taliban.

Additionally, and this is a critical point, these old categories do *not* describe a crucial aspect of social systems: the cultural construction of parent-child and gender relations. This is a major deficiency because parent-child and gender relations are the relations children first experience and observe in their families, and psychology and neuroscience show that these early experiences and observations profoundly affect how our brains develop, and therefore how people feel, think, and act—including what they consider normal and moral.

The social construction of domination or partnership systems plays a key role in shaping whether a society is more just or unjust, more peaceful or violent, and whether it protects human rights or considers chronic human rights violations normal, even moral.

Shifting from Domination to Partnership

Domination systems have caused enormous suffering and injustice, and the legacy we carry from earlier times that is oriented more closely to the domination side of the social scale continues to cause great suffering and injustice.

But there has also been movement toward the partnership side of the partnership/domination social scale. If we look at modern history from this new perspective, we see that every progressive social movement has challenged entrenched traditions of domination. The 18th-century “rights of man” movement challenged the supposedly divinely ordained right of kings to rule their “subjects.” The feminist movement challenged the supposedly divinely ordained right of men to rule the women and children in the “castles” (a military term) of their homes. The 19th- and 20th-century abolitionist, civil rights, and anticolonial movements challenged the divinely

ordained right of a supposedly “superior” race to rule over “inferior” ones. The 19th-, 20th-, and 21st-century peace movements and the more recent movement to end traditions of violence in families challenge the use of fear and force to maintain domination in these relations. The environmental movement challenges another tradition of domination: the once hallowed conquest of nature, which at our level of technological development could take us to an evolutionary dead end.

So, at least in some world regions, there has been some progress in leaving behind traditions of domination. Just a few hundred years ago, the European Middle Ages still oriented very closely to the domination side of the social scale. While there were some partnership elements, with its Inquisition (where you would get tortured and killed for any deviation from official thinking), its Crusades (holy wars), and its witch-burnings (where by conservative estimates 100,000 women were tortured and killed, a huge number considering the low European population of that time), this period had much in common with today’s Taliban and ISIS. Women had no rights, children had no rights—in fact, the idea of human rights would have been considered insane. So also would any challenge to the established order of rigid top-down rankings. As St. Augustine famously declared, for anyone to even think of changing their station in life was like a nose wanting to be an eye.

Yet our forward movement has not been linear, it has been more like an upward spiral with dips. Not only has it been fiercely resisted every inch of the way; it has also been punctuated by massive regressions to the domination side of the social scale. I was born into a brutal domination regression when the Nazis came to power in my native Austria, and we are in a regression today in the United States and in other world regions.

A major reason for these regressions is that most of the energy and resources of the modern progressive movements I just mentioned have focused on dismantling the top of the domination pyramid: politics and economics as conventionally defined. Far less attention has been given to changing traditions of domination and violence in our primary human relations: our parent-child and gender relations. Yet, as we know from neuroscience, what children experience and observe in their early years affects nothing less than how our brains develop. It is on these foundations that domination systems have kept rebuilding themselves in different forms, whether secular or religious, Eastern or Western, and so on.

Once we understand these psychosocial dynamics, we can more effectively work to change what is happening right now in the United States. We can see something I have closely studied: that those in the United States pushing us back to more authoritarianism, violence, and in-group versus out-group scapegoating have, for decades, invested enormous resources and energy in maintaining or reinstating the

domination character of four interconnected cornerstones for domination systems: family and childhood relations (appropriating family, values, and morality); gender relations (demonizing same-gender partnership), economics (promoting trickle-down economics), and narratives that justify top-down control (like claiming that the only good family is one in which the father is master of the house). We can see that they were extraordinarily successful in this effort, which is one of the foundations for accepting strongman rule in the state. Polls show that from 1992 to 2004, the percent of Americans who agreed that “the father of the family is master of the house” jumped from 42 percent to 52 percent.

We further see that the current scapegoating of African-Americans and immigrants, misogyny, machismo, and the idealization of “strongman” rule in *both* the family and the state are not disconnected. They are all elements of a regression to top-down family, political, and economic rule—in other words, a regression to the domination side of the social scale.

Connecting the Dots

While most progressives still marginalize gender and parent-child relations as “just” women’s and children’s issues, those pushing us back pay great attention to either maintaining or reinstating traditions of domination in our family and gender relations.

If we are to counter regressions to domination worldwide and build a more equitable and caring socioeconomic system, progressives, too, must have a systemic, fully integrated social and political agenda. We must take into account that if children grow up in cultures or subcultures where economic injustice and even violence in families are accepted as normal and moral, they learn basic lessons that support domination systems. While not everyone growing up in these settings accepts these lessons, as we see all around us, many people do.

One basic lesson children learn in domination families is to equate difference, beginning with the most fundamental difference in our species between male and female, with either superiority or inferiority, dominating or being dominated, being served or serving. This lesson is particularly relevant to economics, as it provides a model of inequality in human relations that children internalize. Long before their critical faculties are developed, children learn that it is normal and moral for one kind of person to serve and another kind to be served—a model they can then apply to other differences, whether based on race, religion, or ethnicity.

As noted earlier, in the more rigid domination systems we have struggled to leave behind, women and their labor were male property. Their life-sustaining activities, like those of nature, were simply there to be exploited by the “superior” male half of the species. That was obviously very bad for women; but it was also very bad for men. Along with the



subordination and devaluation of the female half of humanity came a gendered system of values in which anything associated with women or the “feminine”—like the essential work of caring for people and keeping a clean and healthy environment—was also subordinated and devalued. As long as caring is devalued, we cannot realistically expect more caring policies.

We would not have global warming, we would not have such huge investments in weapons and wars, we would not have so much poverty, hunger, and misery worldwide, if we had an economic system that recognized the enormous value of caring for people and for nature.

I realize that when people first hear caring and economics in the same sentence, many do a double take. But think about what a terrible comment that is on how we have been conditioned to accept that uncaring values should drive economic systems.

Today, when climate change threatens our life-support systems, it is more essential than ever that we support the work of caring for nature. The same is true for supporting the work of caring for people.

In fact, we can make a purely financial case for recognizing the value of the work of caring for people, starting in early childhood. As we move into the postindustrial age, when automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence have already replaced many jobs and are predicted to continue to do so at an exponential rate, a time when economists tell us that the most important capital is what they call “high-quality human capital,” it is economically essential that we support the work of caring for people, starting in early childhood. The reason, as we know from neuroscience, is that whether or not our human capacities develop largely hinges on the quality of care and education children receive early on.

Steps Toward a Caring Economics

Moving beyond the old argument about socialism versus capitalism, and vice versa, does not mean leaving everything from these old economic paradigms behind. We must strengthen the partnership elements in both the market and government economies and leave their domination elements behind. But we must go further to a new economic system that recognizes what these two old systems do not: that the real wealth of nations consists of the contributions of people and of nature.

My book, *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*, outlines key components of the new economics of partnership, as well as building blocks for its construction. I want to briefly describe five of these.

1. A first step toward partnership is changing how we measure economic health. Currently policymakers heavily rely on GDP/GNP. These measures, developed almost one hundred years ago, include as “productive” many activities that harm and destroy life (e.g., selling cigarettes and the resulting medical and funeral costs). They do not subtract “externalities” (e.g., costs of natural disasters produced by climate change, instead adding to GDP the expenses of cleaning up and rebuilding). And they fail to include as “productive” the work of caring for people in households, despite studies showing that if the value of this work were counted, it would constitute between 30 to 50 percent of the reported GDP.¹⁰

As a response to the need for more accurate and forward-looking metrics to guide policymakers, the Center for Partnership Studies’ Caring Economy Campaign (<http://www.caringeconomy.org>) together with a group of prominent economists developed the first iteration of Social Wealth Economic Indicators (SWEIs). SWEIs demonstrate the economic value of the work of caring for people and nature, the benefits of investing in it, and the costs of not doing so.

Social Wealth Economic Indicators measure two interconnected factors. The first is the state of a nation’s *human capacity development*, as shown by data such as child poverty rates, enrollment in early childhood education, gender and racial equity, educational attainment, and ecological deficit/returns. The second is a nation’s *care investment*; for example, public spending on family benefits, funding for childcare and education, and government and business investment in environmental protection.

By measuring both inputs (investments) and outputs (where a society stands), unlike other “GDP alternatives” that only provide a snapshot of current conditions, SWEIs further show that outputs (human capacity development) are heavily dependent on inputs (care investment). For example, there is a connection between the fact that the United States has the highest child poverty rates of any major developed nation and that it invests the least in early childhood education and support for childcare in families.

The use of SWEIs in policy-making has been proposed to the Democratic Party of New Mexico in the resolution “Prioritizing Support for and Reliance on Social Wealth Economic Indicators when Developing Policies to Reduce Poverty and Economic Exploitation.” This resolution, submitted by Edith Copeland, an alumna of CPS’s Caring Economy Advocates Program, is available for use and/or adaptation at www.caringeconomy.org.

Partnerism and a Guaranteed Income

In response to the growing loss of jobs to automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence, and predictions that millions more jobs will soon disappear, a no-strings-attached universal income has been proposed.

This approach, however, ignores that people need meaningful work. This is dramatically shown by Nicholas Eberstadt in “The Idle Army: America’s Unworking Men,” based on Time-Use studies of what the over ten million men who have already dropped out of the U.S. workforce do with their free time.

What this article reports is that the overwhelming majority of these “unworking men” are almost entirely idle. They help out around the house less than employed men. They care for others less than employed women. They volunteer and engage in religious activities less than working men and women or unemployed men. In fact, for most of them, “socializing, relaxing and leisure” is a full-time occupation, accounting for 3,000 hours a year, much of this time in front of television or computer screens.”

The article does not mention a guaranteed income. But what it tells us about just handing out money without linking it to need and/or making a meaningful contribution is dismal. Nor does it raise other serious issues: what will millions of young men do if they are just handed out money? Will violence increase? What about their mental health? What about increased alcohol and drug use? What will be the costs to society?

These issues are addressed in *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*, which proposes that a guaranteed income should be linked to caring for people and nature in households and other nonmarket sectors of the economy. A number of other thinkers are also proposing that a guaranteed income be linked to care work in homes; for example, Tufts University economist Neva Goodwin details such a plan in her article in the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies*, “Core Support for the New Economy.”

2. A second step toward partnerism is demonstrating that ending the devaluation of care work is essential to cut through seemingly intractable cycles of poverty. Again, the Caring Economy Campaign provides activists and policy-makers with resources such as Social Wealth Economic Indicators, as well as webinars and online courses to do this.

These resources highlight the need for high-quality early childcare and education, and the enormous long-term costs of not investing in policies that support these—from intergenerational patterns of poverty linked to low levels of human-capacity development, to crime and the attendant prison, court, and other taxpayer-supported costs. They also take into account that worldwide, women are the mass of the poor and the poorest of the poor, and that even in our wealthy United States, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures, women over the age of 65 are twice as likely to live in poverty as men of the same age. This poverty is due not only to job discrimination but also to the devaluation of care work: most of these women are or were either full- or part-time caregivers.

3. A third step toward partnerism is developing a cohesive family policy so progressives can reclaim family values and morality from their hijacking by regressives. To this end, the Center for Partnership Studies developed the “Family Security Agenda” designed to appeal to both “liberal” and “conservative” voters.

The Family Security Agenda focuses on reducing family stress, cutting through cycles of poverty, and producing the “high-quality human capital” needed for the new postindustrial age. Its provisions include support for the care work done for free in families (such as childcare, elder care, and increasingly, both), which are a major source of economic and psychological stress, especially to middle-class and low-income U.S. families. It includes policies to raise the wages of caregivers, which are so low that many have to turn to welfare. It proposes policies that make effective education a priority, starting with affordable high-quality early childhood education.



In addition, the Family Security Agenda identifies funding sources for its provisions by taxing and/or penalizing activities that are harmful or useless to our nation's well-being. These include closing the carried-interest loophole, enacting luxury goods purchase taxes, taxing very short-term stock market transactions, and increasing civil penalties for businesses that engage in activities that harm people and nature.

4. A fourth step toward partnerism is providing evidence that investing in the work of caring for people and nature is profitable for both businesses and nations. The Caring Economy Campaign shows how businesses that have parental leave, sick leave, flex time, and other caring policies have a higher yield to investors. It also shows that these policies provide nations with a path to an equitable and thriving economy.

As detailed in *The Real Wealth of Nations*, caring policies were a major factor in the economic transformation of nations that in the early 20th century were so poor there were famines. These are the nations I referred to earlier—Sweden, Norway, and Finland—which today have very low poverty and crime rates and a generally high standard of living for all.

These countries pioneered generous paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers, stipends to help families raise children, elder care with dignity, universal healthcare, quality childcare, and other caring policies. In addition, they have been in the forefront of moving toward renewable energy and other policies that recognize the necessity of caring for nature.

Contrary to popular beliefs—and I want to emphasize this—the reason these nations invest more in caring for people and nature is *not* that they are small and relatively homogeneous. There are also nations that are small and relatively homogeneous that are far from being caring societies. For example, Saudi Arabia is an authoritarian theocracy of top-down control in both the family and state, rigid male dominance, and entrenched traditions of violence, from stoning women accused of sexual independence to cutting off hands and/or heads in public exhibitions of brutal violence. There is also a huge wealth gap in Saudi Arabia between those on top and on the bottom, with a large underclass of menial workers from other Arab nations who have little- if any- social or economic protection.

So what really lies behind the more caring policies of nations such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway is something else: their movement toward the partnership side of the partnership-domination social scale.

5. This takes us to a fifth and essential step toward an economics of partnerism: the recognition that economic systems are affected by, and in turn affect, the larger social system in which they are embedded.

We see this interconnection if we look at what happened in Sweden, Norway, and Finland from the perspective of the

three core components of societies that orient toward the partnership side or the domination side of the partnership/ domination social scale.

First, these more equitable nations paid particular attention to family and childhood relations. For example, in addition to the caring policies to help families and children mentioned above, they pioneered legislation that makes it against the law to physically discipline children in families, which is considered normal and moral in domination systems.

Second, these nations are at the forefront of the move toward gender equity in both the family and the state. They have the lowest gender gaps in the world, and women are about half the national legislatures. But it is not only women who voted for caring policies. As the status of women rises, so also do “feminine” values and activities. In other words, as women and the feminine are no longer culturally devalued, men too can embrace “soft” values and activities as part of their “masculinity,” rather than conforming to the dominator maxim that “real men” can never be like “inferior” women.

Third, these nations have been in the forefront of trying to leave behind traditions of violence. In addition to their laws against violence against children in families, they pioneered the first peace studies programs. And, since it is in early family relations that children first learn whether or not it is okay to use violence to impose one's will on others, nonviolence in families and in the family of nations are inextricably interconnected.¹¹

Conclusion

We cannot meet our unprecedented environmental, economic, and social challenges with the same thinking that created them. The mix of high technology and domination systems is causing terrible damage. On top of this, there is a massive regression to uncaring policies and practices. This makes the need for an economic system that, unlike capitalism and socialism, recognizes and rewards the essential work of caring for nature and for people more urgent than ever before.

Our current technological dislocations are a crisis. But they are also an opportunity to develop the new economic paradigm of partnerism.

We are rapidly approaching an economic tipping point. Millions of jobs have already been replaced by automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence, and predictions are that job losses will accelerate exponentially in the next 20 years. This opens the door for redefining what is, and is not, productive work as part of a new, more sustainable and equitable economic system.

The good news is that we do not have to start from square one. There are already millions of individuals and organizations all over the world working to shift to a healthier and more caring economic system.

What has been missing is an integrated progressive social

and economic agenda that no longer devalues women and the “soft” or stereotypically feminine like caring and caregiving, focuses on children, and provides us with the new language/conceptual frames of partnership systems, domination systems, partnerism, and caring economics.

Together we can create and implement this agenda. What distinguishes us as humans is our enormous capacity for consciousness, caring, and creativity. We must use these gifts to construct the new caring economics of partnerism, beginning with the five building blocks described above: new metrics; ending the disproportionate poverty of women and children; implementing a cohesive family policy agenda; demonstrating the economic return from investing in caring for people and nature; and working together to shift social institutions and values from domination to partnership.

This is a long-term venture, and it will not be easy or quick. But if we are to have a more sustainable and equitable future, perhaps even a future at all, we must join together in this essential enterprise—starting right now. ■

RIANE EISLER is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking contributions as a cultural historian and futurist. Her influential books include *The Chalice and The Blade: Our History, Our Future* and *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*. She is president of the Center for Partnership Studies, editor-in-chief of the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies* and keynotes major conferences worldwide.

Notes

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What is the Tikkun Institute?

The Tikkun Institute is the research and theory/public policy development arm of the Tikkun community. It seeks to provide ideas, strategies, and analyses of politics, culture, intellectual life, social movements, and social theory both in the U.S. and globally, as well as to unveil the dynamics of classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and “othering” in all its dimensions.

The Tikkun Institute invites academics, writers, artists, musicians, and political and religious leaders to become Tikkun Fellows.

You can do this anywhere in the U.S., though we invite you to spend a year with us in Berkeley and to participate in online discussions, shape conferences, and create teach-ins or other public events aimed at refreshing public discourse, and move away from the servitude to the dominant ideologies generated in service of the competitive marketplace consciousness that buttresses a class dominated society with huge disparities of wealth, income, and recognition.

Fellows are invited to a monthly conference call at which we will discuss a Tikkun-related theme. It is our intention to find funding for these positions, but at the moment, Fellows are volunteers. To apply to be a Fellow, send an email to RabbiLerner.tikkun@gmail.com telling us about your background, intellectual interests, and what you imagine you could do to help develop the ideas, financing, grantwriting, social media presence, or public visibility of the Tikkun Institute, and why you should be considered for the position of Tikkun Editorial Fellow. [More info at www.tikkun.org/tikkunInstitute/fellow](http://www.tikkun.org/tikkunInstitute/fellow)