

# Boston Research Center for the 21st Century

NEWSLETTER : WINTER 2001 : NUMBER 16

## CHANGE THE WORLD!

BY CHARLES DERBER

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CHARLES DERBER IS PROFESSOR OF sociology at Boston College and author of *Corporation Nation: How Corporations Are Taking Over Our Lives and What We Can Do About It* (St. Martin's Press, 1998). He is a principal advisor to the BRC in developing the spring 2001 conference series, "Economics for Human Well-Being: Advancing a People's Agenda." As an introduction to this article which explains the theme of the first conference, Professor Derber offered the following comment on a growing grassroots commitment to economic justice:

*On the campus where I teach, a Vietnam-style revolt is mushrooming. Students are outraged about Boston College caps and sweatshirts made in sweatshops in Indonesia, China and El Salvador. As my students push the university to stop using sweatshop products,*

*similar protests have spread like wildfire across many other campuses across the country. Moreover, both on and off campus, a larger movement about global justice is taking center stage—most visibly at the spectacular protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle. Every citizen concerned with peace or justice has a stake in the new movement to stop "corporate globalism" and create a more democratic and just world.*

Consider the following: 450 billionaires today own more wealth than half of all humanity. And think about this: the three wealthiest shareholders of Microsoft own more wealth than all the people living in Africa. Or this: Wal-Mart is bigger than 163 countries. GE is bigger than Israel or Finland.

Globalization is creating a new *corpocracy*—a world-wide nexus of  
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## BRC 2001 EVENTS EXPLORE THE PATHS TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE

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THE BOSTON RESEARCH CENTER is pleased to announce four public programs designed to inform and inspire activists and scholars interested in re-envisioning a global justice movement. The series is entitled *Economics for Human Well-Being: Advancing a People's Agenda* and offers two conferences and two lectures to be held between February and early April 2001. Please watch for our mailings or call the Center for more information. Turn to page 8 for a complete list of events.



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*I've just returned from the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. I was struck by one thing in particular: the growing awareness among these scholars and theologians that global capitalism is becoming all pervasive. As Joerg Rieger of Southern Methodist University commented, religion must "take material reality seriously and provide alternatives if it is not to be pulled into the maelstrom of the economy." This was a recurring theme.*

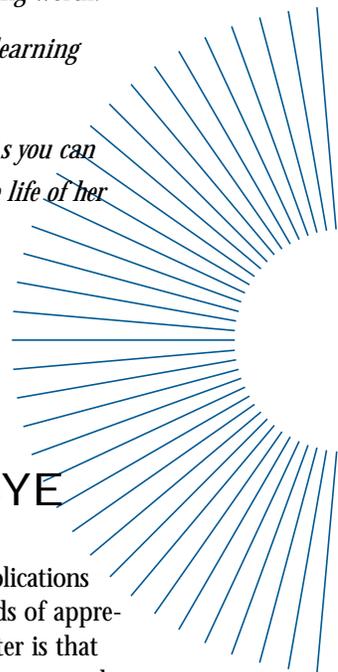
*It is also a theme that the Boston Research Center will take up as our next two-year focus. As you read about our upcoming events on economic justice and a multi-religious book, Subverting Greed, please be assured that we encounter these economic disparities from no special vantage point above the fray. In a sense, all of us are implicated in the systems of structural violence now in place locally and globally. At the same time, the benefits and moral necessity of making changes in these systems are becoming increasingly clear. BRC founder Daisaku Ikeda cast positive light on this daunting challenge in a recent peace proposal. He advocated "a transition from a consumer economy—the mad rush for ownership and consumption—to a constructive economy—an economy where all human beings can participate in the act of creating lasting worth."*

*I hope to welcome you to the Center soon for our events on economic justice. Please help us create new learning communities on this timely issue.*

*Finally, it's difficult to part ways with a valued co-worker after years of friendship and accomplishment. As you can see from Amy Morgante's gracious adieu below, she is heading off to Maryland for an exciting phase in the life of her family, and Patti Marxsen Sides is joining us as a welcome addition to the BRC team.*

*Virginia Straus*

—Virginia Straus, Executive Director



## PUBLICATIONS MANAGER SAYS GOOD-BYE

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Amy Morgante and Patti Marxsen Sides getting acquainted in the BRC Publications Office.

AS I PREPARE TO END a profoundly satisfying five-year stint as publications manager of the BRC, I would like to offer some reflections and words of appreciation. The most important lesson I take from my work at the Center is that *each of us truly does make a difference*. The dialogues begun here and recounted in the pages of our publications have a strong ripple effect. They nourish a global network of people making solid strides for a more just and peaceful world. And, as the Center's books are increasingly used in college courses (85 to date!), we invite a new generation of peacemakers to join the conversation.

I have the deepest appreciation for BRC founder Daisaku Ikeda, without whose vision the unique environment of the Center would not exist. That vision has been carried out under the wise, dynamic, and compassionate leadership of Virginia Straus. I will not forget the kindness, encouragement, and education I've received from my dear friends on the BRC staff and the many others who have contributed to our work—writers, editors, photographers, and colleagues who have given generously of their time and wisdom to make the Center's publications outstanding.

With great pleasure I leave the publications department in the very capable hands of new publications manager, Patti Marxsen Sides, a skilled writer, editor, and project manager. I hope you will continue to offer your support and good ideas to Patti as she steers the Center's books, newsletter and Web site into the new millennium.

As I leave for Maryland with my husband and children, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with all of you. In peace, *Amy Morgante*

# TOWARD AN ECONOMICS OF CARING: A CONVERSATION WITH DR. RIANE EISLER



RIANE EISLER IS A CULTURAL HISTORIAN, systems theorist, and the author of many books including *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future*; *Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth, and the Politics of the Body*; *The Partnership Way: New Tools for Living and Learning* (with David Loye); and *Tomorrow's Children: A Blueprint for Partnership Education in the 21st Century*. She is president of the Center for Partnership Studies and frequently consults on the application of the partnership model and cultural transformation theory to all aspects of life. "Caring," she maintains, "is the key to partnership — not only on the individual level, but also on the level of social and economic rules and practices." She will provide a keynote address in the BRC's Economic Justice Series, "Economics for Human Well-Being: Advancing a People's Agenda," in March 2001. The Boston Research Center's program manager Karen Nardella recently interviewed Dr. Eisler for this newsletter.

*We are concerned about globalization. How would you assess the impact of the current policies of the WTO, IMF, and World Bank on developing nations?*

These policies have been set up to generate a profit for the dominant economies. But what they also do is create alliances among people within the developing world who control a lot of resources. It's important to acknowledge that what it comes down to is the impoverishment of masses of people and, at the same time, the enrichment of those who are in control. We're talking about the structuring of economic relations, social relations, human relations, and political relations in terms of rankings of superiors over inferiors.

To be honest about this, these policies don't really benefit nations as nations. They benefit the elite in those nations. We have to look at the entire economic system and the assumptions about current economic rules. These policies are guided by the wrong economic assumptions — very antiquated economic rules which only value *exchange* as an economic transaction.

Because of these international economic policies, cutbacks in social services have been required in developing countries as part of the tightening of the purse strings. Well, this is thinking only of economic consequences and not of the human beings involved. And it's not even economically efficient. The economic problems that this kind of thinking creates

are horrendous. For example, if you cut social services, you don't have health services for people; therefore, one of the consequences is that you get much less efficient workers.

But there's much more. The assumption is that somebody is going to pick up those services and that somebody, of course, is women. If you look at the study that I did with social psychologist David Loye and sociologist Kari Norgaard called "Women, Men and the Global Quality of Life," you'll see the analysis of what really happens. It is women who start to do much more in order to maintain some semblance of health for their children and their families. They drop out of school to get jobs. They will sacrifice themselves, as they've been socialized to do, so that a child has something to eat. In other words it's a shifting of the burden to those who are not visible in the economic system.

*Would you comment on the influence multinational corporations are exercising in the world?*

There is no question but that we have moved into a system where, to a very large extent, multinational corporations really own governments. In what I call "dominator communism" in the Soviet Union, there was really a state capitalism where the government owned the corporations. What we're seeing now in the so-called capitalist world is a system where the corporations, de facto, own the governments.

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## Riane Eisler

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But it's all part of the same dominator system.

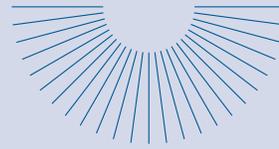
We are always trying to put Band-Aids on the system. There is absolutely no way that we're going to get these corporations to change their ways unless the economic system is restructured. This is not different from what was going on in the Robber Baron Era of late 19th and early 20th century capitalism; it's just that it has become globalized and more visible.

### ***How would your partnership model address this structural problem?***

My partnership model of social organization offers a viable alternative to the complex tensions inherent in relations based on domination and subordination. But change doesn't take place in a linear way. If you look at the last 300 years of modern history through the analytical lens of the partnership-dominator continuum, we have made enormous gains but they have always been made against enormous resistance and punctuated by periods of regression.

We've had one social movement after another challenging entrenched traditions of domination. We've struggled against the divine right of kings to rule over their subjects; the divine right of men to rule over women and children in the "castles of their homes;" the right of one race to rule over another. So we have seen progress. Progress comes in bursts and then there are periods of regression and we have to fight again because we still haven't changed the foundations of the system. It is precisely because we are in a new period of regression that it is so very important that we have a proactive rather than only a reactive agenda.

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## Riane Eisler's Four Cornerstones

According to social historian Riane Eisler, partnership is a way of life based on harmony with nature, nonviolence, and gender, racial, and economic equity. It takes us beyond conventional labels such as right versus left or religious versus secular and moves us into a future of untapped human potential. She describes the four cornerstones for building a just and caring world this way:

### ***The First Cornerstone: Childhood Relations***

The first cornerstone for whether a society adheres primarily to a dominator or partnership model is early childhood relations. It is through our intimate relations that we learn habits of feeling, thinking, and behavior in all human relations. If these relations are violent, for example, children learn that violence is acceptable from those who are *more* powerful toward those who are less powerful. Parental education is needed worldwide, as is a global campaign against violence and abuse in childhood relations.

### ***The Second Cornerstone: Gender Relations***

How a society constructs the roles and relations between women and men is central to the construction of every social institution and to the society's guiding value systems. A sign of hope is that in today's world, there is a strong movement toward real partnership in all spheres of life between women and men. More men are nurturing babies and more women are entering positions of leadership. We must give policy and fiscal priority to a global campaign for equitable and nonviolent gender relations.

### ***The Third Cornerstone: Economic Relations***

Development policies need to shift their focus to women. We must include the work of caring and caretaking still performed primarily by women worldwide in the "informal" economy into national and international systems of economic measurement and accounting. We must also encourage and reward those economic and social inventions that give value to caring and caretaking work, whether it is done by women or men.

### ***The Fourth Cornerstone: Spiritual Relations***

Humans have an inherent drive toward relations based on partnership rather than domination. This has enormous implications for the reconstruction of spirituality. Spirituality becomes not only transcendent but also imminent, not so much an escape to otherworldly realms but an active engagement in creating a better world right here on Earth. To spread this consciousness will require *spiritual courage* from political, religious, educational, and business leaders to actively oppose injustice and cruelty in all spheres of life.

*For further reading and information, please explore [www.partnershipway.org](http://www.partnershipway.org)*

***What is the proactive agenda you would recommend?***

There are certain foundations we have to build. This is really the lesson of the last 300 years. It is not coincidental that the most brutal “dominator” regressions have occurred in places where a very authoritarian, male-dominated family was still in place. Nor is it coincidental that when Hitler came into power, one of the first rallying cries was: let’s get women back into their place in a traditional family. When Khomeini came into power, that was again the rallying cry.

My work in *The Chalice and the Blade* looks at commonalities between regimes or times that orient more to the partnership than the dominator model and vice versa. Again and again, what I see is that our intimate relations—parent-child relations, woman-man relations—are foundational because that’s where we first learn models for relationships. That’s why the proactive agenda I advocate begins with childhood relations and gender relations and builds from there to economic and spiritual relations. These are the four cornerstones.

It’s not coincidental that in those countries that have moved more toward the partnership model—the Scandinavian nations—there are laws on the books making it illegal for parents to hit children. It’s also not coincidental that those are the countries that have come the farthest in gender equity. They’re not perfect, but nothing ever is going to be perfect.

***Are there changes women need to make in their own lives in order to promote a partnership model?***

How women *need* to change and how they *can* change really are two different questions. In many nations of the developing world, women will only be able to change when the laws and customs that prohibit them from owning land are changed. Land is still

the basis for power. They must have equal access to education. Also, education has to change because most education is still by, for, and about men.

It isn’t enough to give women access to the economic system as it is because, given the fact that men are not involved in taking care of children in many of these traditional cultures, this puts another burden on women: external work plus caretaking. They then really have two full-time jobs. So we’re talking about changing the economics, changing education, and also changing family planning. To talk about freedom to a woman who has no reproductive freedom is the most ridiculous thing in the world. If she doesn’t have freedom to even decide what happens to her own body—whether she gets pregnant or not, whether she has to have another child because she hasn’t had a son yet—what is the point of talking of freedom to this woman?

***What do men have to gain from the partnership model of social organization?***

What men have to gain is a much more humane way of living. Shifting from domination to partnership is not a matter of women against men. It is a matter of benefiting both halves of humanity. As the status of women rises, so does the status of those values stereotypically associated with femininity such as creativity, sensitivity, and nurturing. This offers men the opportunity to live fuller lives and express more aspects of their character. Another way that men’s lives might be improved is by being safer. The male socialization process that we live with now pushes them into violent activities, from war to combative sports. In the poorest areas, you see most vividly what the dominator model will do. You see the nutritional preference for boys. If there isn’t enough food, for example, the mother

feeds the boy. The girl becomes malnourished. Now, suppose the girl child survives. She is going to produce children who are below par because her health has been compromised by an unhealthy socialization process. Some of her children will be boys. The cycle is self-perpetuating.

***How should we go about re-educating people for a more balanced society?***

When you have a system where the model for adult relations is one where one type of person is supposed to serve and the other type of person is to be served, what you have then is a model for economic inequity. We need education for children and parents that is gender balanced but that also helps young people to see these connections and how they relate to their own lives. I am currently developing curricula for children of all ages with these goals in mind.

How else are you going to really give young people the opportunity to see that there’s another possibility? They have to participate in partnership structures and the content has to be different. There have to be alternative narratives that form our mental maps. This is what I am proposing in my new book *Tomorrow’s Children*.

***Others who advocate for the economic empowerment of women focus on gainful employment outside the home. You, on the other hand, call for social policies that reward caring and caretaking work. Why this different approach?***

When I was involved in the Women’s Movement, starting in the late 1960s, the want ads in this country used to be segregated into two categories, *Help Wanted: Male* and *Help Wanted: Female*. All the good jobs were for men and all the dead-end jobs for women. We got those categories eliminated. We were really focusing on the empowerment of women as they

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## Riane Eisler

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entered the market economy. But I've realized that while this is important, it is not enough.

The first thing I suggest—and I'm not the only one—is that we have to include all the work done by women in calculations of economic productivity. If you don't measure it, it doesn't exist, and then policies are guided by a totally false system of accounting. If, for example, a business were to leave certain segments of a factory's labor force out of its financial statements, the balance sheet would not be accurate, would it?

Marx wrote about the alienation of labor and I write about the alienation of caring labor. What we really need are economic inventions. I am not saying that women shouldn't have entry into and high reward from good professions, but that's not enough. What we need is a more caring economic system, an economics of caring, and you're never going to have that unless caring work is given higher value both in the formal economy and in the informal economy.

Every single economic institution and rule is a human invention. It can be a dominator economic invention such as slavery or a partnership economic invention like social security. Social security, however, doesn't include women who stay in the house and take care of their children. They only get derivative benefits so they receive less. Can you explain to me why an older woman would need less than an older man? It is because she is devalued: because her work does not count. Yet we wouldn't have a work force if it weren't for that work. Paid parental leave is an economic invention that actually gives visibility and an economic reward for caring and caregiving. We need to give training and tremendous resources for caregiving. Then, that work becomes more visible and more prestigious.

The Scandinavian nations are way ahead of us. Finland was the first country where women got the vote. There was a very well organized women's movement, which was respected. The Scandinavian countries are far more partnership oriented. You don't have numerous homeless people. You don't have extreme poverty. The very rich don't have monumental houses and palaces.

In the end, the whole point is that we need economic inventions, including corporate charters that incorporate the notion of caring—caring for other people and caring for our natural environment. But it's not going to happen without a change of cultural values and beliefs. ■

*For further reading and information, please explore the Web site of Riane Eisler's Center for Partnership Studies, [www.partnershipway.org](http://www.partnershipway.org).*



## BRC BEGINS NEW BOOK ON GLOBAL JUSTICE

DO THE WORLD'S MAJOR RELIGIONS have an impact on the global marketplace and on creating a more equitable distribution of wealth? Should religious leaders tolerate poverty? How can churches address the gender gap in economic opportunities? These are among the questions that serve as points of departure in the new collection of essays the BRC is currently developing. The new work will assess the teachings of the world's major religions on the uses of wealth and the distribution of wealth for the common good. *Subverting Greed: Religious Conscience and the Global Economy* will be edited by Dr. Paul F. Knitter, professor of theology at Xavier University in Cincinnati, and Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, president of the International Movement for a Just World in Malaysia (JUST).

"Our project," Dr. Knitter explains, "seeks to enlist the wisdom and the courage of the world's religious communities in figuring out how 'the management of the human household'—or, our *global economy*—might be carried out in a more just and humane manner. Contemporary economic theory

and practice throughout the world have legitimized greed and made the accumulation of wealth a virtue. The current global system exists at the expense of basic human needs. This state of affairs is antithetical to the fundamental values embodied in religion. The goal of *Subverting Greed* will be to clearly articulate the response of the world's religious traditions to the realities of the global market."

The scholars invited to contribute essays will examine the implications for social justice of the teachings of the religions they represent. They will examine questions such as the following: What is currently being done in the name of religion and what *should be* done if compassion and economic justice are to prevail? How does—and how should—religion relate to the economy? How can the inadequacies of the present world economy be addressed by inter-religious perspectives?

Intended for use in college classrooms, *Subverting Greed* will be published in the fall of 2002 by Orbis Books as part of their "Faith Meets Faith" series.



# WAND CELEBRATES MOTHER'S PEACE DAY

## MILLIE JEFFREY AND ELIZABETH FURSE HONORED

"WE FOCUS ON JULIA WARD HOWE, the first to suggest a 'Mother's Day for Peace,' for her view that if women got together, they could change the world." The resonant words of Sayre Sheldon, president emerita of Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), were spoken a week before Mother's Day at the BRC. Sheldon is well-known as an activist and author of *Her War Story*, but on this occasion she focused her attention on those who had come to the BRC for the WAND Education Fund's celebration honoring long-time national activist Millie Jeffrey and former congresswoman Elizabeth Furse.

Speaking of her friend and colleague Millie Jeffrey, former WAND board member Anne Zill praised Jeffrey's spirit. "This is a woman with a certain amount of mischief in her," she said. Zill lauded the labor leader's efforts in the union movement, the peace movement, and the feminist movement. "Millie Jeffrey is the embodiment of a woman leader who knows that all things are interrelated." National Women's Political Caucus vice president Dolores Mitchell also spoke of Jeffrey's impact on society. "She has been a driving force for years and still is," Mitchell said.

Further remarks came from WAND board member and presenter Eleanor LeCain who reviewed Millie Jeffrey's career by noting that she had begun her work in the 1930s to build strong unions, had been active in the Civil Rights Movement, served in education, worked for women, and had held a leadership role in every progressive women's group. LeCain went

on to present the WAND Leadership Award to Millie Jeffrey "in recognition of her outstanding contributions to increasing public awareness of major human issues in the nuclear age." A rare and important labor reference work will be purchased and housed at Wayne State's Walter Reuther Library in Jeffrey's honor; her papers are already housed at the Walter Reuther Library.

"WAND is at the apex of organizations for its brilliant deployment of its resources and for devising new options, fresh ideas, and innovative strategies to reach its goals. WAND is magic," Ms. Jeffrey said as she received her award. She noted that once again we're beginning to see activists mobilize with tremendous impact by bringing attention to vital issues and changing the conditions of many people. For example, she emphasized the importance of protesting and highlighting issues like debt forgiveness for Third World countries and encouraged those present to continue to work to raise the level of consciousness about what constitutes a living wage. "Are these manifestations of new social movements?" she wondered aloud as she urged her listeners to "Carry on! Carry on!"

The next award recipient of the day was Elizabeth Furse. Former WAND president Beverly Droz introduced Furse by speaking of the courage, passion, and conviction with

which the activist for human rights, peace, justice, and environmental responsibility won her seat in Congress in 1992. She reminded listeners that the former congresswoman from Oregon founded the Oregon Peace Institute in 1986 and has made the effects of military spending on state budgets one of her key concerns.

State Senator Pamela Resor praised Elizabeth Furse for her efforts to convert defense-oriented businesses, for her efforts on environmental issues, and her concern for mentoring young people, for which Shira Auerhahn, co-founder of the Students' Action



Millie Jeffrey and Elizabeth Furse enjoy the celebration as WAND's executive director Susan Shaer looks on.

for New Directions (STAND), also expressed gratitude. "You are a woman in politics we can look up to," Auerhahn said.

Furse was then presented with the Helen Caldicott Leadership Award. To mark the occasion, a gift will be presented to the Portland State University Foundation of the Columbia River Conservation Collection. Furse is currently serving as director of the Columbia River Conservation Project and director of Tribal Programs at the Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University.

"I think there is only one issue, really, and it connects all the others:  
*continued on page 18*



# BRC 2001 EVENTS EXPLORE PATHS TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE

## **Change the World! Building Post-Seattle Alliances for Global Justice**

FEBRUARY 2-3, 2001

This conference is planned in collaboration with sociologist Charles Derber of Boston College and activist Mike Prokosch. Derber is, perhaps, best known as author of *Corporation Nation: How Corporations Are Taking Over Our Lives and What We Can Do About It*. Co-collaborator Mike Prokosch is well-known to a wide constituency as coordinator of the globalization program at United for a Fair Economy (UFE). He has also served as editor of the forthcoming *Globalizers' Handbook*.

The conference will take place at the BRC on Friday evening, February 2, and Saturday, February 3, 2001. Walden Bello, scholar, activist, writer, and director of Focus on the Global South in Bangkok, Thailand, will give a keynote lecture on Friday evening. In it he will evaluate "globalization" in its current corporate-driven form and suggest ways in which international integration could proceed more fairly and inclusively. Saturday's program will concentrate on coalition building and includes a talk by Naomi Klein, author of *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* as well as presentations by Charles Derber, Mike Prokosch, Walden Bello, and other leading experts.

## **Beyond American Consumerism: Constructing a Transformative Politics**

MARCH 9-10, 2001

The purpose of the conference is to initiate a dialogue for creating a criti-

cal and new politics of consumption in the U.S. The conference will begin by analyzing how consumption is changing the culture—the growth of materialist values, the increasing role of consumer goods in constructing personal identity, the commercialization of everyday life, and corporate strategies. It will then move to consider political strategies for achieving a new culture of spending—one which emphasizes values such as ecological sustainability, egalitarian social relationships, creativity, and financial security. Scheduled for Friday evening, March 9, and Saturday, March 10, the conference will feature a keynote presentation by Juliet Schor, a well-known economist and best-selling author of *Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*. Professor Schor will discuss her groundbreaking research on Americans' lifestyles and the politics and culture of consumption. Saturday's topics will include the growing corporate influence on daily life, impacts on community and social connectedness, effects on the environment, and the nascent anti-consumerism movement.

## **Riane Eisler on Partnership**

THURSDAY EVENING,  
MARCH 22 – 6:30 PM

Riane Eisler is author of the international bestseller *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* and president of the Center for Partnership Studies. Her lecture will outline a sweeping vision of a caring society built on the four cornerstones of her partnership model and an innovative approach to education.

After decades of research and writing, Dr. Eisler has concluded that the best way to move communities, societies and nations away from a "dominator" model and toward "partnership," is by providing children with early training in what she calls "the caring arts." Her recent book, *Tomorrow's Children: A Blueprint for Partnership Education in the 21st Century*, describes how this kind of education will lead to a more just economic system worldwide—one in which caring and caretaking are integral to all economic institutions.

## **Amartya Sen on Freedom**

TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 3 – 6:30 PM

The grand finale of the winter/spring series on economic justice will be a lecture by Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate in Economics (1998). The event will be held at the BRC during the first week of April (date TBA). As an eloquent voice for global ethics and a passionate advocate of people-centered policies, Professor Sen will share highlights from his latest book, *Development As Freedom*. This treatise examines the relationship between individual wealth and the ability to fulfill one's desires. After a thorough analysis of topics such as poverty, markets, democracy, women's agency, culture, and human rights, Amartya Sen will show how capacities for political participation, economic development, and social progress arise from human freedom.

Watch for a mailing on these events, or register from our Web site: [www.brc21.org](http://www.brc21.org), after January 1, 2001. We hope you'll join us!

—Karen Nardella



# AFRICAN DIASPORA PROJECT FUNDRAISER REKINDLES FRIENDSHIPS

“NETWORKING IS A POWERFUL FORM of peacemaking,” Virginia Straus said of the individual connections that grow when people come together to pursue common interests. Referring to Daisaku Ikeda’s belief that the twenty-first century will be the Century



Dr. David Snead, Principal of Madison Park High School expresses his appreciation at the Pan-African Forum fundraiser.

of Africa, the executive director of the Boston Research Center affirmed BRC support for the African Diaspora Project fundraiser sponsored by the Boston Pan-African Forum. “We seek out programs that generate hope,” she said.

The African Diaspora Project holds as its fundamental thesis that there is a direct relationship between positive self-esteem and achievement in school. This pilot project is designed to stimulate academic achievement in high school students in urban school systems, by exposing them to a curriculum that portrays the positive contributions of African people to world culture and civilization. The May fundraiser was organized to benefit Madison Park High School students.

Located in the Roxbury section of Boston, Madison Park Technical-Vocational High School has 1,687 students, 92 percent of whom are classified as either black, Asian, or Hispanic. Robert Johnson, Jr., president of the Boston Pan-African Forum—an organization created to promote a widespread understanding of current social, economic, and political issues affecting relations between Americans and people of African descent—said of the students, “They need to know they are rooted in a past.”

An appropriate curriculum is being developed for an after-school program directed to significantly enhancing students’ self-image. What the African Diaspora Project is about, he indicated is “overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles.”

“We’ve got to teach that we’re all from the same place, that we’re all related,” Dr. David Snead, principal at Madison Park High, began. “With your help, these youngsters will learn what they need to know about their history and culture and it will help them to understand that we are all one race—the human race.” Inviting everyone present to come by to visit the school, Dr. Snead praised the rich diversity in the school by referring to the number of languages spoken there.

“Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community,” said Raphael Abiem, vice president of the Boston Pan-African Forum. He was referring to the launch of the African Diaspora Project as he emphasized the critical importance of awakening the natural curiosity of our young people.

Elaborating on this theme, Dr. Vivian R. Johnson, clinical associate professor at the Boston University School of Education, spoke of lessons from the African diaspora. “Nelson Mandela created a life in his mind that allowed him to soar beyond prison,” she said. “If students are to understand who he is and what he did, someone is going to have to explain it. The collaboration between the Pan-African Forum and Madison Park will help tell the story of the diaspora and its lessons.”

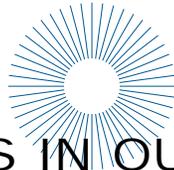
Among the lessons underscored by Dr. Johnson were the following: (1) People are united in their common humanity. The diaspora includes us all. We can make our students aware of the connection as well as the disconnection. (2) It restricts dreams to speak only of *surviving*. We must also focus on *thriving*. Group achievement has to be addressed as fully as individual achievement. Stories have



Vivian Johnson and Mariatou Diallo enjoy the event at the BRC.

to be told and re-told. How can students know unless they are mentored? (3) Among the lessons of collective action are the lessons of quilts, the messages “hidden in plain view” during the time of the Underground Railroad when the sequencing of quilts hung on clotheslines instructed slaves on the times when escapes would be attempted. Such stories, Dr. Johnson said, demonstrate what people do with the resources they have.

*continued on page 15*



# PEACE IS IN OUR HANDS: A TWO-DAY CELEBRATION OF THE POSSIBLE

A BOOK LAUNCH IS SELDOM A community's celebration of itself. The introduction of Elise Boulding's *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History* (Syracuse University Press) in May of this year at the BRC was different. As the book and its distinguished author were honored, the ongoing struggle of the ever-vibrant peace movement was reaffirmed.



Elise Boulding addresses the audience at the CSUN Conference.

## ***Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History***

The book-signing, which provided an evening prelude to the day-long Coalition for a Strong United Nations (CSUN) conference, "Peace Is in Our Hands," began with enthusiastic acknowledgments of Boulding's life and work. Among the speakers was Dr. Vincent Harding, professor of Religion and Social Transformation at the University of Denver's Iliff School of Theology and long-time friend and peace activist. "We come to honor a magnificent human being," he began, "and that's what

humans are supposed to do for each other: to recognize our magnificence and to lift it up and say, 'All praises due!' Today, we give praise for Elise Boulding."

Dr. Harding elaborated by stating that, "We are saying that we have an exemplary elder sister and comrade in the continuing struggle for a more perfect union and a more compassionate and peaceful world. I am grateful for Elise because it seems to me that she manifests and exemplifies some of our best hopes and dreams."

As Elise Boulding reminisced about her life and her work she praised the heroic and constant peacemaking efforts of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. With warmth and dignity, she spoke of how important it is to be part of a community that shares values.

"There are no safe places except as we make them," the prolific author observed. She was speaking about the Second World War and the invasion of Norway, but the phrase seemed emblematic of everything that she believes and commits her energy to. It is a reflection of her wholehearted response to the Quaker query, "Is your home a center of peace and love that refreshes and strengthens everyone who comes there?"

In the course of her remarks Boulding, a sociology professor emerita at Dartmouth, underscored the importance of networking, protest, volunteer efforts, and envisioning a future without war. "The image of sitting together in peace is very old," she insisted, in speaking of one of the fundamental tenets of her

recent book. "We can't work for what we can't visualize."

Reflecting on Boulding, her work, and *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History*, Swanee Hunt, former ambassador to Austria, turned to Elise Boulding when she said, "One of the things I most appreciate about you is your vision. We can't buy into this culture of war; we must have a different vision." As the director of the Women and Public Policy program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, Hunt spoke about the conflicts endured when the ideals of peace and the brutality of war collide in places like Bosnia. She then shared the story of one brave woman in Croatia.

The 80-year-old Croatian woman, Sophia, had one job she cherished. "Every day at noon Sophia was to go to the church. She would unwrap the

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**"I am grateful for Elise because it seems to me that she manifests and exemplifies some of our best hopes and dreams."**

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ropes and she would pull on the ropes and ring the bell. When the steeple was all shot up, Sophia went out to the church. She looked around and there was the wood splintered on the ground in front of the church. There in front of the church was this big, old bell, no longer in the steeple. From that day forward, right at noon, you could see Sophia make her way to the churchyard and lean over and with her gnarled hands grab the end of that clapper and swing her arms and ring that bell." Turning again to Elise Boulding, Swanee Hunt said, "And that's our job, isn't it, Elise? You insist on keeping on ringing the bell."

## Year 2000: UN-Designated Year of a Culture of Peace

A mural filled with colorful images of brilliant sunshine, rainbows, highways, and cities greeted conferees attending the Saturday conference, "Peace Is in Our Hands," sponsored by CSUN and hosted by the BRC. The mural was created by children and contained a series of messages concealed under appropriate images. For example, under a picture of a slide, was this: "All kids should have a park so that they won't be bored. Slides make you happy."

Another message declared, "All kids should have a chance to be with their family." Still another, under a basketball, said, "A child is supposed to be a child." The fundamental messages conveyed by the children of the Fourth World Movement were simple ones: Peace consists of meeting basic human needs; and every child needs a chance.

As the CSUN event co-chair Peter Smith welcomed conferees, he invited them to "take a minute to feel a connection with the six billion people in the world." Looking at a peace rose on the podium beside her, Elise Boulding added that we should also work hard to feel the connection not only with people but to all living beings. In her introductory remarks she reiterated one of her fundamental themes, "War begins in the minds of people; it is in the minds of people that the structures of peace must be built."

Boulding praised UNESCO "for all of the wonderful things it has done," including the attention it has paid to the nearly 10,000 ethnies, as well as to states. She criticized the United States for withdrawing from UNESCO as she emphasized the importance of celebrating diversity rather than fighting over it.

Referring to one of the favorite sayings of her husband Kenneth, the peacemaker reminded her listeners, "What exists is possible. Since peace

exists in many places, peace in the world is possible."

Keynote speaker Vincent Harding turned on his boom box and the voices of *Sweet Honey in the Rock* began to sing choruses of "Ain't gonna study war no more," the song became the invisible bond pulling everyone in the room together. "Who would have thought that the children of Africa

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**"What exists is possible.  
Since peace exists in  
many places, peace in  
the world is possible."**

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would have so much to teach us about the meaning of freedom?" Vincent Harding reflected aloud.

Professor Harding suggested that the practice of peace requires the practice of becoming vulnerable; it requires putting down the instruments of conflict, including both the sword and the shield. "We need to be deeply open to new possibilities for our lives," he said. He posed the key question: "What shall we do to help build a culture of peace?" then answered by focusing on children. "Encourage the children. Seek out the children. Value the children fully," he said.

As if on cue, grade school, high school, and college dancers from the Haitian Coalition, based in Somerville, Massachusetts, burst into fantastically rhythmical dancing, their red and yellow turbans, flowered mini-skirts, red and black shirts, gold hoop earrings, and bare feet broadcasting an island beat that was irresistible.

Concurrent workshops examined local peacebuilding and human rights initiatives in the Greater Boston area. When Bruno Tardieu spoke of the work of the International Fourth World Movement, he observed that the poor suffer more from contempt than from cold and that "we have to

take a stand against the exclusion of people. We can believe in change," he insisted. Each of the workshop leaders elaborated on organizational and personal efforts to live a life of peacemaking. For some, the most viable approach involves moving away from a spirit of consumption and competitiveness to simplicity and inclusivity; for some peacemaking means a concerted effort to fight racism and racist practices; for others, peacemaking is a commitment to youth at risk and to working to create a truly open society with active healing and forgiving.

Conferees had the opportunity to engage in open dialogue and to share their own experiences and observations as agents of change. Some spoke of what they had learned in the Peace Corps; some spoke of grassroots efforts like the Heifer Project where families in small villages receive the gift of an animal, which will be bred and provide food and other products to the community. Still others detailed the work of the Agape community toward peace and spirituality. As Bob Irwin put it, "People are doing so many heartening things."

Toward the end of the conference, a letter urging President Clinton to cease his support of the Star Wars II Missile Shield was circulated for signatures from conferees. The letter said, in part:

"We implore you to lay down your support of the Star Wars II Missile Shield. Not only in the U.S., but around the world, multitudes of people are crying out for peace, for a culture of peace where, as a child stated, 'No one needs to be afraid.' We believe creating this anti-ballistic missile system will launch a new arms race instead of help us establish a new century where we can strive to abolish weapons of mass destruction and make war obsolete."

Seven children from the Boston Tapori Movement shared a song with

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# EARTH CHARTER LAUNCHED AT THE HAGUE

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TO CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION OF the Earth Charter document, 350 activists from all continents gathered for a one-day event to support the launch of the education and implementation phase of the Earth Charter process on June 29, 2000 at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands. A youth representative symbolically presented an illustrated copy of the Charter to Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands who attended the event as guest of honor. Ruud Lubbers, former prime minister of

to our home, this Earth. We don't need information. We need the will, or motivation to change our ways. Intellectual understanding is not enough. We need moral conviction and fearlessness."

He went on to say that we have to dig deep into ourselves in order to find the motivation for change as our actions are always based, consciously or not, on our subconscious feelings or attitudes. He connected current patterns of consumption in the world to our beliefs about what is most important in life. "That is why it is only a shift in these values that will enable us to forge new patterns of sustainable development," he added.

Among several distinguished speakers, Professor Wangari Maathai of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya spoke of the need to reflect deeply on every phrase of the Earth Charter. "What is a truly 'just' society?" she asked. "How many people in the North feel that they need the South and cultural diversity and biodiversity? Do we really feel a shared responsibility for world hunger and debt?" She urged everyone to take time to reflect on these issues so that we can be moved to action.

In a heartfelt address, former Soviet president and Earth Charter Commission co-chair Mikhail Gorbachev said that as Soviet president, he signed many important documents and conventions, but to him the Earth Charter is more significant than any of these. Furthermore, he stressed that the Charter represents the hopes and dreams of millions of people, and noted that actually changing our behavior to be in tune

with the Charter is the hardest perestroika change all of us must make—as individuals, as families, in our work, whether in business, politics or even the military.

Steven Rockefeller also spoke at the milestone launch ceremony. Rockefeller is well-known within the Earth Charter community for his painstaking work of coordinating the input on the text from thousands of organizations and individuals all over the world over a five-year period. "Interconnectedness and responsibility are the two main themes of the Earth Charter," he stated. "The spiritual challenge facing us in the twenty-first century is to integrate the head and the heart, science and faith, and intelligence and compassion."

Director of the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century Virginia Straus described the extensive consultations on the Earth Charter held at the Center which brought together representatives from different schools of Buddhism. She said that at least one phrase from a consultation held at BRC had made its way to the final text: "We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about *being* more, not *having* more."

Straus also outlined the work being done by members of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) to spread awareness of the Charter, especially in the U.S. and Asia. She explained how this work highlighted the importance of linking Earth Charter consciousness-raising to practical projects and focused discussions on local social issues. She then read a message from BRC founder Daisaku Ikeda: "We can use the Earth Charter as a tool for transformation—transforming first ourselves, then our families, communities, countries. But we cannot do this if it remains on paper, filed neatly away. We must unwrap it, open it, paint its visions."

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BRC executive director Virginia Straus addresses the group at the Earth Charter Launch in The Hague.

the Netherlands, chaired the launch which was hosted by the Dutch National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development.

Maurice Strong, co-chair of the Earth Charter Commission and chair of the Earth Council, highlighted a theme that was stressed several times during the festive launch ceremonies. "We have lost our innocence," he said. "We know what we are doing

All participants at the launch agreed that we are now entering the unknown territory of how to put the Charter into action. Clearly, many groups and individuals will need to struggle with the meaning of this new era and the practical application of the Earth Charter.

As an illustration of the possibilities, Jim Poirot of the World Federation of Engineers Organizations outlined the steps being taken to promote the Earth Charter among the federation's 8 million members:

- 1) Ongoing involvement and input into the development of a living Earth Charter document
- 2) Spreading information and raising awareness among members, through newsletters, etc.
- 3) Expanding acceptance and agreement among members to support the Earth Charter
- 4) Developing guidelines for use in the daily practice of engineering.

Mr. Poirot stressed that he is keen to get to the fourth stage so that the Earth Charter and its values can have a real impact on engineering practices. He hopes that in time, engineers will know that they can be expelled from the federation for breach of such "sustainable development guidelines," as much as for breaches of safety regulations.

One vast region which is seriously considering adopting the Earth Charter and its values as a framework for sustainable development is Central Asia. Now in the process of the difficult transition from socialist, centrally planned economies to unrestrained free markets, some countries want to choose a third way by creating a territory of tolerance and sustainable development based on the Earth Charter. (This endeavor might involve Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Khazakstan, and Kyrgystan.)

Dr. Parvez Hassan of the World Conservation Union described the

links between the Earth Charter and the IUCN Draft Covenant on Environment and Development.\* He stressed the need for the Earth Charter to be supported by a legally binding, international instrument on the environment and development. "It is only when the lofty principles of the Earth Charter become binding legal obligations and are implementable by people all over the world that the Earth Charter will have achieved its full potential."

A presentation was given by the local indigenous people's movement of the Netherlands, who presented a symbolic stone to the Peace Palace as a reminder of their harmonious value system and their support for the Earth Charter. The Charter seems to find immediate recognition among indigenous peoples, women and youth—perhaps because they are usually marginalized and feel that their voices are not heard. As a spokesman of the Earth Charter committee from the Dominican Republic said, "Ordinary people often understand and relate to the message of the Earth Charter much more than politicians do."

As we strive to find new ways to put the Earth Charter into practice, the grassroots process of dialogue and awareness-raising must continue. Resources are needed such as trainers and curriculum materials, and the Earth Council is now acting as a clearing-house to make such resources available on their Web site, [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org).

We are just at the start of a journey. As with the Universal Declaration, it will be over the next 50 years that this process will take root and stimulate change. In the words of former chair of the IUCN Commission on Environmental law, Dr. Parvez Hassan, "I have faith that, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Earth Charter will unleash energies and expectations that will

change human societies in their relationship not only to each other but also to our planet Earth." ■

—Joan Anderson

*\* The BRC's 1998 publication, "Human Rights, Environmental Law, and the Earth Charter" focuses on the relation between the "soft law" Earth Charter and its "hard law" counterpart, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Draft Covenant on Environment and Development.*

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## Boulding

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the assembled guests, "Every Child Should Have a Chance." Thanking them and acknowledging how important they and their song were to the conference, Vincent Harding evoked the image of another child, 14-year-old Emmet Till, beaten, murdered, and dumped in a river in Alabama in 1955.

When the photo of the terribly abused body of Emmett Till appeared in *Jet* in 1955, it served as a catalyst to black and white citizens alike to join the Movement that would forever change America, the Civil Rights Movement. When a certain Faye Bellamy, 16 years old, saw what had been done to Emmett and learned of the sit-ins and the Freedom Rides, she wanted to know, "What's the address of this movement?"

Today, Vincent Harding announced, there are still people asking the address of the movement that will change the great divides among us. "The address of the movement is written in our hearts," he explained. "We are that address. I see it in your eyes and on your face. You *are* the address. Don't get tired—at least not for too long. As *Sweet Honey in the Rock* reminds us, 'We are the ones we've been waiting for.' Know that. Know that deeply and act on it." ■



# WORKSHOPS EXPLORE SPIRITUALITY AND THE EARTH CHARTER: BUDDHIST AND CHRISTIAN APPROACHES

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SEATTLE, WASHINGTON IS WELL KNOWN as the home of the coffee renaissance that swept across America in the 1980s and 1990s. Its hometown favorite, The CoffeeBrand, first appeared in 1971 in an open-air farmers' market; the popular round green logo now seems to appear on the streets of every city and suburb of the world.

But what really impresses the visitor to the Seattle-Tacoma area is not The Coffee; it's The Mountain. When you look to the Southeast, it rises there, big and craggy and snow-cov-

expectant teacher as we convened on the wooded campus of Pacific Lutheran University for the Sixth International Conference of the Society of Buddhist-Christian Studies (SCBS). More than 170 scholars, students and practitioners (and scholar-practitioners and practitioner-students) joined in a week of dialogue, study, and reflection on the theme "Buddhism, Christianity and Global Healing."

The conference opened with blessings from both the Buddhist and Christian traditions and with musical performances representing the traditions of the west—the passionate resonance of the pipe organ; and East—the evocative sounds of the simple bamboo *shakuhachi*.

Boston Research Center (BRC) founder and president of Soka Gakkai International,

Daisaku Ikeda, sent a congratulatory message to the gathering praising their efforts and noting the key areas in which Christianity and Buddhism can make complementary contributions to the issues facing the world.

The theme of global healing provided an excellent opportunity to focus on the Earth Charter. Under the title, *Spirituality and the Earth Charter: Buddhist and Christian*

*Approaches*, co-chairs Professor Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College and BRC Executive Director Virginia Straus assembled a rich program of presentation and dialogue, which included some of the most renowned scholars, activists, and scholar-activists of the Earth Charter movement.

Professor Mary Evelyn Tucker of Bucknell University began by introducing the Earth Charter not as a document, but as a living movement, whose activities are inspired by the ideals and guidelines contained within the Charter. Dr. Tucker, who played an active role in the shaping of the Charter, spoke of how the input of various constituencies (indigenous peoples, developing economies, businessmen, political leaders, and yes, the lawyers) was solicited, considered, and where appropriate given voice in the Charter. She noted that we now have what will be—more or less—the final form of the Charter. Our next step is to make it come alive in our behavior as individuals, communities, businesses, and nations.

Virginia Straus spoke of the contributions of the global Buddhist community to the Earth Charter process. It began with Professor Steven Rockefeller's call for participation, which led to contributions by prominent Buddhist leaders and scholars to the Charter language, scholarly and grass-roots consultations, publications by the Buddhist Peace Foundation (BPF) and the BRC, and the efforts of Buddhist organizations and engaged scholars to build grass-roots support for the Charter.

Straus noted that the Charter now reflects central Buddhist beliefs, with its clear recognition of interdependency and its emphasis on a change of mind or heart, and on "becoming more" rather than "acquiring more".

Jay McDaniel rounded out the Earth Charter introduction by pro-

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ered, and alone. It dominates the horizon. Even when you're not looking at it, or when it's obscured by the morning haze, you feel its presence. The Mountain... that's what the locals call it, as if it were the only one in the world.

Those of us from other parts of the country call it Mount Rainier, but it looms large just the same. And from August 5th through 12th, it seemed to watch over us like an

viding a very personal Christian perspective, giving special attention to those elements of the Charter that speak to the human soul. As an example, he highlighted the broad spiritual and moral vision contained in Article 16(f) defining peace as “the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which we all are a part.”

Noted theologian John Cobb provided an analysis of the changing central organizing principles for human society. With the Treaty of Vincennes in 1371, the cultures in the North Atlantic Basin moved from an era of Christianity to Nationalism, where the central organizing force shifted from the church to the nation state. As the two world wars of the twentieth century revealed the evils of this idolatry, prosperity became the new object of veneration for the war-battered peoples of Europe and later the United States. As the economy increasingly became the central force of life, it would ultimately transcend national differences, with transnational corporations becoming ever more influential in our new global society.

What force can counteract the powerful consumption-production cycle of this idolatry of economism? Here Cobb feels that the counterbalancing force may well be “Earthism,” where the protection of our environment becomes a central organizing force of life. If so, then the Earth Charter provides an excellent framework for this movement, outlining both a moral vision broad enough to include many of the world’s peoples and specific enough to form a guideline for concrete practical steps which can be taken by individuals, families, businesses and communities.

Christian theologian Paul Knitter of Xavier University spoke of the need to bring both prophetic and

mystic qualities to the task of moving the Earth Charter from vision to reality. “To announce the visionary message of the Earth Charter, we are going to have to prophetically denounce some of the fundamental ways in which our postmodern, neo-liberal world works.” He emphasized, however, that this courage to denounce must be balanced by compassion and the mystic’s view of the unifying forces that unite us all. Without this balance the fervor to denounce destructive systems and practices could lead to a fracturing of relationships along ‘good-guy/bad-guy’ lines and, he warned, “There can be no healing where relationships are broken.”

As our thoughts shifted from ideas to action, from framework to movement, we benefited greatly from the advice of Buddhist peace activists like Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka and Thai human rights activist, Sulak Sivaraksha. Each brought home to us the message that social action must move hand-in-hand with an internal struggle to reform our hearts and minds. The leaders of any movement cannot be elitist, but rather must organically work side-by-side with others, and lead through their example.

Professor Sallie King of James Madison University spoke of the developmental character of Buddhist ethics as a useful guide for any broad-based Earth Charter educational movement. “Buddhist ethics are developmental, addressing us in different ways at different stages of our development. For those who only care about themselves, Buddhist ethics speaks in a voice of enlightened self-interest (i.e. karmic retribution), while for those who feel a bond with other beings, [it] speaks of nurturing wholesome attitudes and behaviors.” Professor King also pointed out that the Earth Charter approach was similar in that it sought to be both practical and idealistic, hoping to address

people in an encouraging way at whatever point they were on the spectrum of earth-awareness.

While there is no single conclusion to draw from this dialogue between East and West, there was much to reflect on. And one sensed a growing synergy between these two different, yet—in some important ways—complementary world-views. As Paul Knitter pointed out, “The earth in its beauty and mystery and in its pain and danger is providing a rich common ground for interreligious dialogue.”

Then, of course, throughout each day, there was The Mountain, our teacher and our constant reminder. For the present, there could be no more appropriate symbol of the challenges that lie ahead on the path toward global healing with its promise of the vistas to be enjoyed along the way. ■

— *Bill Aiken*

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## African Diaspora Project

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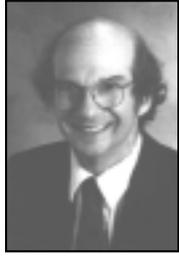
Approximately 45 students are in the Culinary Arts and Bakery program at Madison Park High. These students helped to prepare the festive meal served at the fundraiser, for which they received grateful applause. Along with nourishment for the body, there was food for the soul: Boston’s own “Divine One” Eula Lawrence sang an assortment of favorites with the Eula Lawrence Quartet, emphatically demonstrating how important music can be in finding common ground. She held the audience riveted as she sang favorites like “Blue Moon,” “Motherless Children Have a Hard Time,” “Isn’t It Romantic?,” “Crazy He Calls Me,” and “What a Difference a Day Makes.” ■

— *Helen Marie Casey*

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## Change the World

*continued from page 1*



Charles Derber

financial markets and corporations that now dominates the world. There are over 45,000 corporations on the globe today, but the 200 largest companies rule, with sales comprising over 25% of the total GDP of the world. Financial institutions are especially important, and not just because the 100 largest banks control 21 trillion dollars in assets, about three-fourths of the world's wealth. With over \$1.5 trillion racing around the planet for maximum profit each day, the financial markets are the ultimate masters of the universe, controlling not only government but the corporations themselves. Corpocracy is about money making money, a departure from the days when the economy was driven by producing useful goods.

The corpocracy unites economic, political, and ideological power, much as the Catholic Church did in the Middle Ages. The Church owned the most land, dominated new nation states, and created a global faith. With its concentration of wealth and political power, today's corpocracy creates a new religion of the market.

But the best historical model of corpocracy is the U.S. Gilded Age, when Robber Barons such as John D. Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan created a ruthless, financially-driven corporate economy in the U.S. Then as now, government, unions, and other "enemies of the corporation" were weakened and ultimately taken over by the corpocracy. The U.S. became a democracy in name only, as both Republican and Democratic parties became handmaidens to the wealthy. Today, globalization spreads nominal

free election systems around the world while undermining democracy.

Corpocracy ultimately justifies itself by the magic of new technology and dynamic growth, promising prosperity for all. But global corpocracy, which grows out of the legacy of four centuries of European colonialism, is actually transferring wealth from the Third World to the U.S., Europe, and Japan where the big corporations are headquartered. The per capita gap in income between rich and poor countries tripled from 1960 to 1993. Three billion people mainly living in the global Southern Hemisphere now live in dire poverty—half of all humanity. The World Bank's own statistics indicate that there are more poor people in Africa, Latin America, and Southern Hemisphere Asia than there were two decades ago. The global economy is growing, but at the expense of the Third World.

A world-wide popular movement against corporate globalization is inevitable. In the Gilded Age, the populist movement mushroomed to challenge Rockefeller's monopolies and to expose the contradictions between corpocracy and democracy. It was defeated but led to the progressive and New Deal reforms that created rights for labor and a new 20th century middle class.

The "Battle of Seattle" signaled the rise of a new global populism. The twenty-first century will be the story of the contest between the new global corporate elites and the post-Seattle movement. The new forces of resistance combine the anti-colonial movements of the Southern Hemisphere that helped define the last century and today's labor, minority, feminist, and environmental movements that have become the main hope for democracy and social justice in the U.S. and Europe.

The new movement aims to base the emerging global society on principles of human rights and democracy

rather than property. The corpocracy—through the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—is drafting a global constitution with no Bill of Rights. At Seattle it became clear that ordinary people are insisting on a global charter of human rights that will protect people over property.

The new movement is different than any prior social movement. It is made up of a world-wide coalition of labor, environmentalists, women, minorities, students, and others who have not spoken with one voice before. This reflects the enormous transformative impact of globalization on all the planet's people, and the growing recognition that they must come together to oppose global elites. Feminists and students, for example, increasingly understand that corporate globalization's exploitation of female and child sweatshop labor has become a priority for the new century. The labor movement in the U.S. now sees that repressive working conditions in Mexico and Indonesia are undermining fair working conditions in the U.S. Virtually all grassroots social movements see the same global corpocracy as their principal new enemy.

How to organize and sustain a truly global social justice movement is the current challenge. We know that it must be a democratic coalition based on tolerance and diversity. It must be led from the Southern Hemisphere, so as not to create yet another neo-colonialism, but it must engage workers and communities all over the Northern Hemisphere as well. It must become as skilled in the technology of the Internet as in the art of democracy. This improbable movement has already had more success than anyone anticipated, striking terror in the hearts of the corporate and financial elites. Whether it can survive and change the world is the great challenge of social justice activists in the coming century. ■



# CHANDRA MUZAFFAR REFLECTS ON A JUST WORLD

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR VISITS BRC,  
YENCHING INSTITUTE, BRANDEIS

DR. CHANDRA MUZAFFAR ACCEPTED the BRC's invitation to conduct an on-site luncheon seminar in early September on the crisis in Malaysian politics and to expound on his vision of a just world. He brought insights derived from his work as an international scholar as well as from his own political experiences. Muzaffar is president of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST) and deputy president of the National Justice Party of Malaysia.

## Seminar Series Opens with Exploration of Crisis in Malaysia

Muzaffar addressed his remarks to the audience of peace activists, anthropologists, theologians, Nieman fellows, and scholars of international relations. "We must analyze global inequities," he began. "We must provide an intellectual and a moral basis for the evolution of a more just world. Religion and spirituality will play a very big role in the twenty-first century. However, we are concerned about certain trends."

Praising Malaysia's multi-ethnic heritage, the scholar-activist stressed that the growing authoritarianism in his country threatens democracy, not only in Malaysia but also in other young democracies which look to Malaysia as a model of support. The recent firing and imprisonment of Anwar Ibrahim on trumped-up charges and Muzaffar's removal from his academic post at the University of Malaya as a result of his support for Ibrahim were offered as clear examples of this authoritarianism. He went

on to explain that while there has been a distribution of wealth in Malaysia, it has been uneven. "There is a tremendous gap between the *have-a-lots* and the *have-a-littles*."

Among Muzaffar's concerns about the crisis in Malaysia is the fact that people are losing hope. When people lose hope, they often resort to violence, he explained. "Institutions of democratic government must become stronger than the individuals who preside over them," he added, yet



Chandra Muzaffar (center) of the University of Malaysia at the BRC.

acknowledged that effecting change may be difficult because the level of concern among the people has not reached the kind of outrage that leads to action.

## Dialogue with Colleagues at Yenching Institute

Muzaffar also gave a talk at Harvard's Yenching Institute entitled *Religious Resurgence in Asia: A Critical Analysis of Inter-civilizational Dialogue*. In his remarks, the prolific author asked a rhetorical question: How can there be

a resurgence when religion has always been so important in Asia? Recent endeavors provided the answer. There are now efforts to reconnect religion with the transformation of society, Muzaffar indicated. We see evidence of this in Pakistan where there is an attempt to build a society according to Islamic norms, in India where the effort is to create a state based on Hinduism, and in Sri Lanka where the influence of Buddhism is manifest in the efforts to decentralize political power.

Muzaffar suggested that this renewed emphasis on and return to religion is a response to the colonial efforts to exclude religion from the public arena and "privatize" religion to individuals and families. He also expressed his view that the rise of interest in religion is also a reaction to modernization. Individuals want to

re-interpret their position in society and to turn away from the secularization of the public domain, he suggested, going on to explore ways in which secularization has failed to "deliver the goods." There is a mass movement, he observed, toward religion and the rediscovery of a sense of human dignity and against the corruption and decadence that is evident in society.

Muzaffar further explained that while it is too soon to properly tally

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## Chandra Muzaffar

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the performance of religious elites in power, some tentative conclusions can be drawn. In Muzaffar's view, Pakistan's efforts to establish a polity that was exclusively Muslim has been a total failure. Mass poverty continues, there is rampant corruption, and the treatment of women and minorities is unacceptable. In India, efforts to combat poverty and subdue corruption have also been unsuccessful. The effort to alter textbooks in order to glorify Hindu aspects of Indian history is ill-advised and is contrary to the multi-cultural spirit of India. The targeting of Christians and Muslims is another matter of serious concern.

In Malaysia where the freedom to practice one's religion has always been protected, small but significant changes are occurring which reflect a dangerous kind of exclusivity. The influence of a Muslim elite is seen in a denigration of the "other," including women and minorities, and in an obsession with sexual morality.

"One is forced to conclude," he said, "that when in power, the religious resurgents are no different from any other forces in power. One cannot tell the difference between them and secular forces." He went on to suggest that religious resurgents will outgrow this phase and concern themselves with compassion and justice, arriving at a desirable inclusivity. This will come about, in part, because of the influence of globalism on religions and because of the influence of new technologies.

### Dialogue with Students at Brandeis University

As he sat with students engaged in peace studies with Professor Gordon Fellman at Brandeis, Dr. Muzaffar emphasized that although absolute

poverty is decreasing, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing at an alarming rate and, furthermore, the situation is only going to get worse. In addition, he explained, new technologies will not make it any better for the wretched of the world. The "trinity" of power, wealth, and knowledge is held by a very small minority whereas the vast majority are dispossessed and deprived.

The president of JUST framed the key question as he addressed the students: What are the causes of global poverty and poverty within regions? "Quite simply," he said, "the misallocation of resources is the root of the problem." He implored his listeners to look at what we commit to military expenditures, directing their attention to India where seven times as much is spent on the military as is spent on the education of grade school children, in spite of having the biggest concentration of the poor in the region. That same misallocation occurs in Pakistan and Eastern Asia. Deplorably, the United States is the biggest exporter of arms in the world. The speaker suggested that vested interests and a global ideology which places private gain above public good condone this kind of resource misallocation.

Muzaffar also focused on neo-liberalism that promotes excess and decadence and a kind of "casino capitalism" in place of an ethic of hard work as one of the factors that should give us cause for concern. We should be asking questions about resource allocation and its consequences: Is this good for humankind? What if we allocated more of our resources to public health, parks, and education?

Projecting into the future, Muzaffar indicated that if present

trends continue, by 2020 the percentage of humans trapped in poverty will be so great that they will be the vast majority of humankind. "Is this what we want?" he asked.

Responding to students' questions, Muzaffar suggested that the United States is a democracy that has been "hijacked" by special interests of the rich and privileged. "Effecting change," he explained, "will require a massive change of consciousness, a process that will require time." Quoting John Donne, he reminded students that "No man is an island." ■

— *Helen Marie Casey*

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### WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE...

The BRC is pleased to announce that Dr. Muzaffar has agreed to co-edit a collection of essays on economic justice entitled *Subverting Greed: Religious Conscience and the Global Economy*. Dr. Paul Knitter of Xavier University is also serving as co-editor. The book will be published by Orbis Books in the autumn of 2002.

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### WAND

*continued from page 7*

sensible budget priorities," Congresswoman Furse, said in her acceptance remarks. "After all, it's our money," she added. She suggested that we wrongly continue to live with the myth that, somehow, if we don't want to spend money on the military we are unpatriotic. Recommending that we step aside from this myth she urged that "we rededicate ourselves to volunteering and to stopping this arms race. Just stop it." ■

— *Helen Marie Casey*



**What you'll read about  
in the next  
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**BEYOND THE USUAL ALTERNATIVES?  
BUDDHIST AND CHRISTIAN  
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Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies  
(in conjunction with the American  
Academy of Religion Annual Meeting)  
November 17, 2000  
Nashville, Tennessee  
*(BRC executive director presented a  
Buddhist response)*

**ECONOMICS FOR HUMAN  
WELL-BEING: ADVANCING A  
PEOPLE'S AGENDA**  
*(Please see article beginning on page one  
for more details about this series)*

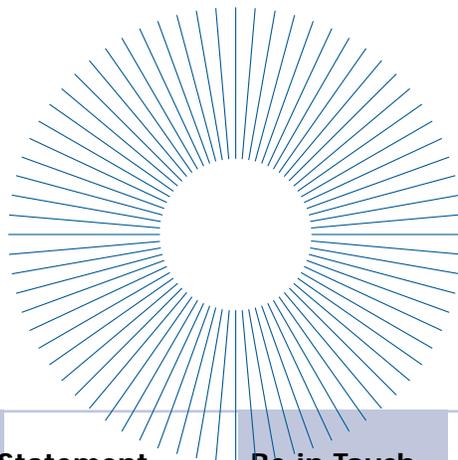
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**BRC FOUNDER'S 2001 PEACE  
PROPOSAL: REFLECTIONS BY  
DAISAKU IKEDA**



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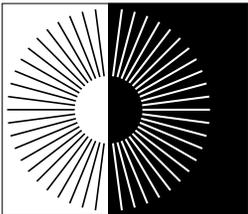
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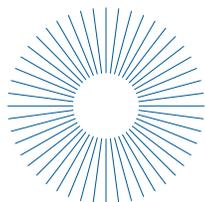
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