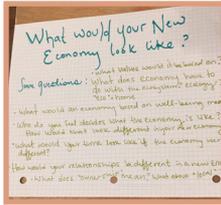


how do we make a new economy?

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Research Residency
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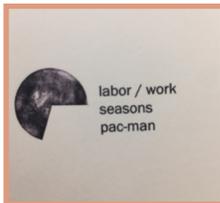
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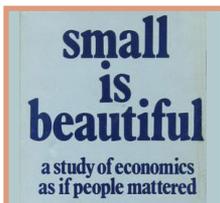
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introduction

This book is the product of a season spent with Practice Space Design Studio in Cambridge asking the research question: “how can we make a new economy?” I write this as fires rage in California, toxic and exploitative working conditions disempower those who grow and prepare our food, and an utter disregard for human empathy on the part of our government is playing like a horror film along our borders. It is hard to think of a question more crucial to ask of ourselves and our communities at this time. Practice Space is an artist-run space experimenting with the notion of storefront-as-gallery, -school, -studio, -museum, and -community center. They operate under the premise that retail can be a platform for social change and ask: what does it mean to be a feminist business operating under a broader system inextricably tied to an extractive economy? We asked this question to understand what a new economy would look like that centered community over capital; and people and place over profit. In my work as researcher I spent time with literatures on the social/solidarity economy sector, historical feminist and cooperative economic movements, and contemporary alternative business practices and economic development models. At Practice Space, we hosted community tea parties where we collectively brainstormed how to build a new economy. Visiting artist Jane Marsching asked the question “What does the notion of Utopia mean to us in this uncertain time?” by hosting a workshop integrating the words of Paolo Freire, local Cambridge utopian texts, and a playlist of utopian songs, while experimenting with inks made from pokeberry, buckthorn, and walnut. Visiting musician Katie Mullins wrote songs from conversations with visitors to the shop and hosted a collective sing-along where we broke down the artist-listener boundaries. Alexandra Williams (see page 24!) and Danielle Freiman hosted a Manifesto + Collage workshop which offered a generative space to coming together with the public to talk about our intentions for a new economy. This question sparked new community partnerships with Practice Space and Make & Mend, a second-hand art supply shop, to co-host open studios, and with The Wine Bottega, Boston’s first all natural wine shop, which offers a community supported agriculture inspired wine share model. We did feminist birdwatching and went on Tim Devin’s “Mapping out Utopia” walking tour. The question is big and this short exploration only scratched the surface of generations working to enact economic alternatives. This report is in no way an exhaustive account of these themes. I just hope it can open a new door for those interested in exploring and worlds of opportunity for economic justice we encountered together this Fall.

What does “new economy” mean?

There have been many attempts over many decades to define the idea of creating alternatives in the pursuit of economic justice and a departure from capitalism. We see the words “community,” “diverse,” “next,” “regenerative,” “social,”

“They are vast and varied and include: cooperatives, CSAs, local currencies, social enterprises, co-housing, and unpaid domestic labor.”

“What if, instead, ‘economy’ is *all* the ways that we meet our material needs and care for each other?”

-Penn Loh

and “solidarity,” placed in front of the word economy, all indicating a desire to shift away from the “capitalocentrism” that locks anything we consider economic to the free-market.¹ Different schools of thought have defined these terms differently, yet, what is common across these ideas is a dedication to principles including (from the U.S. Solidarity Economy Network’s language): “solidarity, mutualism, and cooperation; equity

in all dimensions (race/ethnicity/nationality, class, gender, LGBTQ); social well-being over profit, and the unfettered rule of the market; sustainability, social and economic democracy; and pluralism, allowing for different forms in different contexts, open to continual change and driven from the bottom-up.”² What these “alternatives” look like in practice is as vast and varied as the terms used to describe them. They include (but are in no way limited to) things like cooperatives, community-supported agriculture, local currencies, social enterprises, co-housing, and unpaid domestic care labor.³

Other worlds are not only possible but already exist

Feminist political geographers J.K. Gibson-Graham have led a field conceptualizing alternative community economies for over thirty years, offering a way for us to think about disrupting Margaret Thatcher’s “There Is No Alternative” to free-market neoliberalism (often referred to as “TINA,” which came to dominate 1980s’ Western economic thought). Gibson-Graham stress an anti-essentialist and pluralistic approach to economics. They suggest that by reconceptualizing the narrative of a “capitalocentrism” which views capitalism as wholly essentializing and singular, we can build upon what exists to construct a new way of being.⁴ The economy can be seen to exist on a wide spectrum, a “diverse economy,” consisting of the substantive activities often left out of “mainstream economics,” including bartering, cooperatives, volunteerism, community currency, hunting and gathering, composting, gifting, bartering, and care taking. The diverse economy approach centers the “actually-existing spaces of negotiation and demonstrate[s] why saying that we live in a ‘capitalist world’ or a ‘capitalist system’ is to negate the ways that other worlds are already all around us. Within a diverse “more than capitalist” economy, we can discern multiple pathways for building these other possible worlds.” Many movements within the social/solidarity economy movements share similar lines of thought. Urban Planning theorist and community organizer, Penn Loh writes, “What if, instead, economy is all the ways that we meet our material needs and care for each other? We care for our children and elderly; we cook and clean for ourselves and each other; we grow food; we provide emotional support to friends.”⁵

Honoring the legacies and roots of solidarity

So many of the principles and practices of today's 'new economy' movements are not new at all. It is important to honor and learn from the legacies of historic movements that have come before. Much can be learned from their successes, even when (or especially when) they are overlooked by mainstream history. The principles of cooperation, communalism, and organizing for economic justice has been the bedrock of movements including Black liberation movements, early labor movements, and all waves of feminism, and have been historically led by poor communities and communities of color. In *Collective Courage*, Jessica Gordon Nembhard shows that cooperative economic thought has long been integral to African American communities as a tool of survival and resistance in reaction to "market failures and economic racial discrimination." Building upon this powerful legacy offers important ways for a better future. "They have provided an alternative economic model based on recognizing and developing internal individual and community capacities. They have created mechanisms that distribute, recycle, and multiply local expertise and capital within a community, creating a solidarity economy. The potential is great, and the future of African American cooperatives is wide open not just to continue on the margins but to flourish more fully. The seeds have been planted."⁶

Working within the system to change the system

While it is important to build ways to resist an unjust system, much of the effort to bolster alternatives to capitalism is about redirecting support towards what already grows within the cracks, while at the same time building visions for more radical transformation. As Erik Olin Wright notes in *Envisioning Real Utopia*, "What is needed is what used to be called 'non-reformist reforms,' social changes that are feasible in the world as it is (thus they are reforms), but which prefigure in important ways more emancipatory possibilities."⁷ This notion that we can use what may look just like capitalism in different clothing, such as the fight for \$15 or social enterprises, for more longterm social transformation suggests that one piece of the puzzle to change the system is to start from within. This also avoids what is a common critique of traditional Marxist leftist thought which can be seen as painting social change into a corner waiting for a revolution.

"Building the next economy requires the hard work of transforming a system that privileges capitalism above all else, but there are ways we can enact a new economy every day"

Everyday actions matter

What became clear over the course of our investigation into new economy ideas is that people across many sectors are ready for change and are not waiting for the powers that be to find ways to act. There is an increasing awareness and thirst for

the ideas that form the central pillars of a solidarity sector. These activities are also not relegated to one mode of being or one scale. From structural systemic change, to seemingly small every day rituals, multi-verse of new economic practices unfolds all around us. “Everyone can put solidarity values into practice—to live in solidarity—starting in whatever ways we can,” Loh writes. Although building the next economy requires the hard work of transforming a system that privileges capitalism above all else, there are ways we can enact a new economy every day in the here-and-now. “That is the transformative power of solidarity economics, that it doesn’t have to scale up only by building larger and larger organizations and systems. It can scale up by many people in many places pursuing economics of social justice. We can all begin by spreading the word, sharing our radical imagination of the world that we want to live in.”⁸

What would *my* new economy look like?

To reflect on this research question and the ideas and stories I have encountered along the way, I asked myself: what would *my* new economy look like? Immediately, I saw visions of worker cooperatives gaining momentum in cities across the country, of minority- and women-owned local businesses flourishing down main streets, of civic education and empowerment structures reformed, of our food systems democratized, and of economic and criminal justice won. But on a more personal reflection, over the course of this season, I found myself returning time and time again to the idea of the body and our bodies as they relate to the economy. Our physical bodies are so central to our existence and form the vessel through which we can exist in harmony with the world around us. Yet, our economic system alienates us from them, injures them, neglects them, and abuses certain ones far more than others. The way I visualize our collective bodies being cared for in a regenerative economy is, ultimately, how I think of a new economy more generally. Although each body is individual, it is cared for better and holds immense strength when it is part of a community of bodies in relationships rooted in solidarity and compassion. Can an economy be one that measures success by wellness not by profit margins? One where ecology and economy are not such radically different concepts in our public imaginary?

glossary
of
terms

This glossary is intended to introduce some of the common ideas, concepts, and instruments of a "new economy." This list is compiled from resources produced by prominent practitioners and scholars working on the theory and practice of transforming our economic paradigm. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but hopefully a helpful entry point into some ideas you may already be well familiar with or some which may be totally new.

Aa Alternative / Local Currencies

place-based monetary tools for building sustainable local economies. Sometimes also called "complementary currencies," "community currencies," or "centralized currencies." One example of a local currency program is the BNote which can be used for any local transaction in the Baltimore area.⁹ Visit the [Schumacher Center for New Economies](#) website for more information about alternative currencies such as the BerkShares economic experiment in Western Massachusetts.

Bb B Corp

a for-profit business that has been certified by B Lab, a non-profit that measures a company's social and environmental performance against the standards of accountability, transparency, performance, availability, and cost. Some local B Corps are Cambridge Naturals, Jim's Organic Coffee, and Green City Growers¹⁰

Benefit Corporation

a corporation currently recognized in only 30 states. These companies have legally mandated requirements of higher purpose, accountability, and transparency. A benefit corporation is in many ways similar to a B Corp but differs in its legal status.¹¹

Cc Care Economy

the activities, both material and social, that are concerned with the process of caring for the present and future of the human population as a whole. The care economy consists of all care labor, paid and unpaid, including the provisioning of food, health care, homekeeping, emotional support, etc.¹²

Circular Economy

an economic model focused on rebuilding overall systems health. A circular economy moves away from the consumption of finite resources and towards a regenerative model that designs "products that can be 'made to be made again.'"¹³ Some local examples of a circular economic practice are Make & Mend, a second-hand art supply shop and We Thieves vintage, both in Union Square's Bow Market.

Commons

the cultural and natural resources accessible to all members of society that we inherit and create jointly. The commons consists of things in nature such as air, oceans and wildlife as well as shared spaces such as libraries, public spaces, scientific research and art works.¹⁴

Collective Bargaining

The common method for unionized labor forces to negotiate conditions of employment

with employers. The process typically results in a contract specifying out wages, hours, and other working conditions to be observed by employers for a minimum number of years.¹⁵

Community Land Trust

Nonprofit organizations whose mission is to permanently protect the affordability of housing and other activities by removing land from the speculative market. CLTs are governed by a board of residents, community members and public representatives. CLTs develop rural and urban agriculture projects, commercial spaces to serve local communities, affordable rental and cooperative housing projects, and conserve land or urban green spaces.¹⁶ One of the nation's most successful CLTs is the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston.

Community Supported Agriculture

model developed around the idea of "know your farmer." A community of individuals pledge to support a farm operation for a set period of time. CSA has its origins in the early 1960s in Germany, Switzerland, and Japan when groups of consumers and farmers formed cooperatives to support farms using ecologically sound growing practices. CSAs began in the United States in the 1980s in Massachusetts. There are now over 12,500 community supported farms.¹⁷ In a traditional CSA model:

- members share the risks and benefits of food production with the farmer
- members buy a share of the farm's production before each growing season
- in return, they receive regular distributions of the farm's bounty throughout the season
- the farmer receives advance working capital, gains financial security, earns better crop prices, and benefits from the direct marketing plan.¹⁸

Cooperatives

businesses governed on the principle of "one member, one vote." There are several types of co-ops and hybrid types including cooperatives owned and operated by:

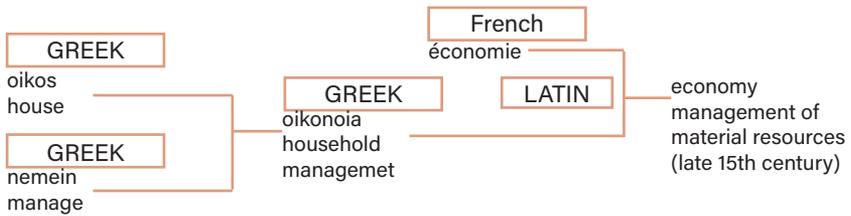
- The people working there (worker cooperatives);
- The people buying the co-op's goods or services (consumer cooperatives);
- The people collaborating to process and market their products (producer cooperatives);
- Groups uniting to enhance their purchasing power (purchasing cooperatives).¹⁹

Read: *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice* by Jessica Gordan Nembhard.

Credit Unions

a type of financial cooperative. Members pool their money in order to be able to provide loans, demand deposit accounts, and other financial products and services to each other. The biggest difference from a bank is that banks function to generate profits for their shareholders, while credit unions operate as not-for-profit organizations designed to serve their members, who also are owners.²⁰ Inman Square in Cambridge was home to the first feminist credit union.

Ee



Economy

the word economy originally mean “household management,” deriving from the Greek word “oikos,” which means “house, abode, dwelling.”²¹

Economic Iceberg

concept introduced by feminist political geographers Julie Gibson and Katherine Graham, who write under the shared name J.K. Gibson-Graham, in their action research projects building “community economics.” The iceberg illustrates that what is usually regarded at “The Economy” is just a small subset of the activities that make up production, exchange and distributed values.²²

Egalitarian Communities

communities operating on the 7 basic principles outlined by the Federation of Egalitarian Communities (founded 1976): Holds its land, labor, income and other resources in common; Assumes responsibility for the needs of its members, receiving the products of their labor and distributing these and all other goods equally or according to need; Practices non-violence; Uses a for, of decision-making in which members have an equal opportunity to participate; Actively works to establish the equality of all people and does not permit discrimination on the basis of race, class, creed, ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity; Acts to conserve natural resources for present and future generations while striving to continually improve ecological awareness and practice; Creates process for group communication and participation and provides an environment which supports people’s development.²³

Employee Stock Ownership Plans

Most common form of employee ownership in the United States. ESOPs are created through a pension plan with two unique features: most of the employee pension money is invested in the company where the workers are employed; and workers may borrow against future corporate earnings to purchase company stock. ESOPs help build community wealth and provide workers greater opportunities to participate in decision-making processes.²⁴

Ff

Feminine Economy

a term recently used by Jennifer Armbrust who runs the Feminist Business School. The feminine economy model is presented as a gendered critique of capitalism, and she asks “If capitalism is an economy that values masculine traits, what could a feminine economy look like?” Principles of cyclical growth, interdependence, collaboration, ease, generosity, intimacy, care, empathy, connecting with nature, embodiment, sustainability are suggested.²⁵ The Feminist Business School runs classes and workshops for creating businesses under this framework.

Gg

Gift economy

“A community of shared purpose, such as an academic discipline, whose members give time and creativity to the community and reap benefits in return. In gift communities

relationships are rooted in personal, particular and historical experiences of each individual, and cannot be converted into cash or any other fungible unit.²⁶

Ii

Impact Investing

Investments made to generate not just profit while also creating positive, measurable social or environmental benefits. The two main types of impact investments are:

- Socially Responsible Investments (SRIs): investment strategies that individuals employ to generate financial returns while promoting social good.
- Mission-Related Investments: investment strategies that foundations and anchor institutions employ to generate financial returns while promoting mission-related goals.²⁷

Mm

Mondragon Corporation

considered one of the world's most renowned examples of a cooperative movement, Mondragon was founded in 1956 in the Basque Region of Spain by a collection of workers working in a disused stove factory producing. Now, the federation of cooperatives is the tenth largest business group in Spain and consists of over 280 cooperative institutions in areas ranging from manufacturing and retail to agriculture and civil engineering.²⁸

Oo

Open Source

a term originating in reference to software development referring to source code that anyone can inspect, modify, and enhance. Open source can also refer to a broader set of values for projects, products, and initiatives built upon principles of open exchange, collaboration, transparency, meritocracy, and community development.²⁹

Pp

Participatory Budgeting

a democratic process through which community members directly vote on how to spend part of a public budget. The City of Cambridge is an example of a city that has engaged in Participatory Budgeting since 2013. The process has been used to fund things like a public toilet in Central Square, solar panels, bike repair stations, a freezer van for prepared food rescue, street trees, water bottle fill stations, and bilingual books for children learning English.³⁰

Ss

Social Enterprise

contrary to traditional commercial enterprises, social enterprises are businesses that seek to maximize their benefits to society and their environment while also making a profit.³¹ For example, Kara Weaves is a social enterprise working with cooperatives in south-west India to create fair-trade handwoven textiles. You can find Kara Weaves at Practice Space.

Ww

Worker-Owned Cooperative

values-driven businesses that puts worker and community benefit at the core of its purpose. They are defined by economic and governance participation by all workers, and worker-owners often control the day-to-day operations through management structures.³² There are over 300 worker-owned cooperatives in the U.S. in a diverse range of industries. Worker owned cooperatives are often small businesses in the retail and service sectors, but can also be larger companies or in other sectors like skilled trade. Broadway Bicycle in Cambridge has been a worker-owned cooperative since 1972.

examples of everyday new economies

food co-ops
cooperative housing
community kitchens
eating seasonally
clothing swaps
car-pooling
composting
bartering
garage sales
little free libraries
caring for a sick loved one
buying second hand
fixing broken items
sliding scale pricing
pay-it-forward menus
permaculture
profit sharing business models

Adopted J.K. Gibson Graham 's Diverse Economy
Iceberg concept.

(communityeconomies.org)

stories of
a new
economy

I asked a small sample of the women in the Cambridge-Somerville-Boston area who are working in diverse ways to *do capitalism differently*:

“what would a new economy would mean to you?”

The pages that follow contain just a few of the ideas they discussed that I kept coming back to.



Emily Duma

composting the finance industry

Emily is a longtime member of [Resource Generation](#) and currently serves on the Board of Directors. Resource Generation is a multiracial membership community of young people (18-35) with wealth and/or class privilege committed to the equitable distribution of wealth, land, and power. In 2013, Emily co-founded Regenerative Finance, which works to shift the economy by transferring control of capital to communities most affected by racial, economic, and environmental injustices. As she describes it, this work involves "laundering" money. "We are trying to take capital, wash it, and reuse it for good." She helped direct \$250,000 to create a revolving fund supporting indigenous- and women-led cooperatives in the Global South. "We are helping build the new and change the script." Emily came to this work after living in an intentional community where the household shared all resources collectively. She realized that in order to further push back against capitalism, she needed to learn more about how capitalism actually works, which boiled down to the systems of "cancerous" finance, in which capital feeds on capital in endless cycles of growth. Emily prefers to call it a "regenerative economy." By this she means a way of existing grounded scales of community that hold people accountable by the force of relationships. This is not a new economy, she says, but a return: "these are things we know Black folk have done for generations as a way to survive outside of the system and these are indigenous systems that are from the past but that are also still living actively all over the world." Envisioning what that return looks like, she noted, is part of why this work is liberating. "I get to learn the things we aren't taught about what alternatives look like." Emily is getting her masters degree in Urban Planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design in order to better understand how to build the next system.

Find out more about Resource Generation's economic justice organizing at resourcegeneration.org

“

When I think of “economy”
as literally meaning
“management of home”
it takes me to a whole
different place.

That feels like the most important part
of whatever a “next” or “regenerative”
economy can be.



Kimberly Scott

communicating values and changing narratives about natural wine

A self-made natural wine expert, The Wine Bottega owner Kimberly Scott became involved in wine after working various jobs in the restaurant industry and found herself drawn to the natural wine movement's philosophies. In 2016, Kimberly bought an existing wine shop in a tiny brick space tucked away in Boston's North End and dedicated her life to transforming the space into the City's first and only all-natural wine shop. "I really care about what I do," she says. "I've literally leveraged everything I own to do it!" The Wine Bottega sells only natural wines, which contrary to "natural food" labels, carries more meaning. The wines they sell are exclusively made with what she calls "clean farming" practices in the vineyard and with no chemical intervention in the cellars, or to put it simply: "just grapes and time." She sees her shop as a space to change the ways dominant wine culture negatively effects the environment, culture, and biodiversity. Resisting a culture of isolation and individualism in the shopping experience by restoring the human value in the exchange of things, Kimberly is committed to communicating deeply with customers so they walk away understanding the stories of the wines she sells and "cultivating joy" through education and experiences within her shop's operations. Centering values within a retail space "is a rad positive way to have an impact on the community." The Wine Bottega is a space dedicated to feminine values in the workplace and in consumption. "Natural wine is inherently feminist and inherently about farmers." Kimberly is utilizing a solidarity economic model by introducing a CSA-inspired wine share.

Visit the shop for weekly wine tastings or sign up for a natural wine CSA share at thewinebottega.com

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Having a shop that cares
about things is a way of
trying to holistically change
the world.

I care about the health of my business
and the health of the movement.



Katrina Jazayeri

leading a workplace revolution in the restaurant industry

Katrina started was headed for a career in public health, but after graduating with a degree in social justice studies and time spent working in a social enterprise incubator, she started to ask how she could address social issues and public health disparities through business. Getting connected to the food world in Boston provided the refinement of this idea that would eventually turn into Juliet, a tipless, profit-sharing restaurant in Union Square. Experiencing the sub-minimum wage tipping system as a worker made her realize how broken and unjust it is. So she created a model to change it. "Tipping is a wage system based in slavery," she says. "[At Juliet] we think it's time to end, and we want to provide the test case for how." Beyond eliminating tips from the restaurant, Katrina and her partner Josh also participate in open-book management. This creates more autonomy for all members of the staff and was designed to address issues of "equity and dignity" in the restaurant industry. By sharing all of the financial data about the business openly, everyone on staff understands exactly how their job effects each line item. The whole team engages collectively about how to grow the business. And as a result of this growth, profits are distributed throughout the team. One of Katrina's goals for Juliet is to inspire wider change in the food service industry, which has an effect on so many lives. When asked why Juliet didn't open as a worker-owned cooperative model, Katrina noted that they wanted to create a no-tip restaurant that could serve people who weren't necessarily part of activist movement already. "If we had put it out there that we were doing this as a co-op we would have attracted a very different set of people." By operating Juliet as a "normal" business but with different values, she wants to inspire others to transform their own systems. "How many other businesses – capitalist businesses – could look at what we are doing and replicate it?" That, she argues could have transformative impact.

Find out more about Juliet or book a table at julietsoverville.com

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We want to show you can be a successful business owner while also protecting your employees, buying from good purveyors, not having a negative impact on the environment, talking about the issues that matter.

It is about basing the measures of success on more than just money.

Singer + Songwriter
Beacon, NY
Practice Space Musician-in-Residence



Katie Mullins

searching for an economy that respects the body's limits

Katie is a former opera singer and actress who left a formal career in opera in Berlin to create her own singer/songwriter practice in New York. During a residency at Practice Space, Katie investigated questions related to her life as a musician working in the "gig economy." Over the course of her residency she co-created songs with the community, weaving together lyrics collected through interactions with people who visited the shop and stopped to talk on the street. Katie lives in upstate New York in what she called an "intentionally slow" community of artists. In her work to create a new economy, Katie is focused on challenging what she calls the "myth of productivity" that perpetuates an assumption that "if we suffer, we are giving the most." She centers intimate relationships and bodies in her work as an educator and artist and hopes to break down the idea that only "creatives" are given permission make things in society if they are intended to make a profit. "No!" she says, "People make things!"

Find Katie's music and practice at katiemullinsmusic.com

“

Nothing in nature blooms all
the time.

We have lost all the poetry of what it
means to live in terms of the economy.
Not all things grow straight up. We have
seasons and things need to lie fallow.



Alexandra Williams

helping people get back in touch with their bodies and the world

Alexandra has an active multidisciplinary practice as artist, bookbinder, printmaker, designer, holistic herbalist and educator. Her current work explores the relationship between bodies and landscapes with a focus on collaborations, teaching, and personal growth through experimenting with new forms and processes. Alexandra's focus on holistic wellness in her herbalism practice is representative of her visions for how we can create a new economy. "A new economy has to happen at a local level, and even before that, on a personal level." She is working to reform the Western ideals of medicine "part of my goal as an herbalist is to help people on that very personal journey towards change. Towards having a healthy relationship with their bodies and with the world." Alexandra sees this as part of a bigger picture to subvert capitalism, not only to disrupt how different forms of care labor is valued but also because she sees that capitalism's dominant ideals are literally making our bodies ill. If you think about cancer, she points out, it feeds on all the things that our current economic system tells us we need to be doing in order to keep the growth. "High stress, high sugar, low movement. So working all day in a stressful environment, grabbing quick foods to eat because that's what's available, and going everywhere in your car and not going out into nature because you have to sit in your job all day eating packaged food. That is literally what cancer feeds on."

You can find Alexandra's work at alexandrajanevilliams.com

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There needs to be an
up-leveling of the value of
humans and their work.

a new economy would be one
where ALL of the work that people do
is valued and compensated.

Co-Founder + Artistic Director
Practice Space
Somerville, MA



Nicole Lattuca

using retail as a platform for social change

With a background in fine art and exhibition and museum studies, Nicole works at the space where art, pedagogy, and curation meet. She opened Practice Space in 2016 with partner Diana Lempel as an experimental retail storefront and community design studio where they are always asking questions (like this one!). As a design studio they work with local community organizations, such as Just-A-Start, an affordable housing nonprofit. Nicole refers to the shop as having multiple existences. "It is an artist-run shop AND ____; a storefront AS ____." It is a model she and Diana were familiar in California and Canada where they have their roots, but rarely found when they came to New England. One of their functions in the community has been as an awareness campaign for changing how we think about where our material goods come from and what it means to forefront ethics over the bottom line. They engage in deep communication with customers about design processes, labor processes, and environmental practices. The shop also changes spatial notions of what retail means. "Both of us had come from institutions like museums and galleries where people walk by and feel 'that's not for me.' We wanted to create a space that invited people in with hospitality." The shop has layered uses, with an in-house library, frequent treats from local providers, and community events such as feminist bird watching or collage workshops. Nicole sees a new economy as one where "people have more of a collective consciousness and collective sense of empathy about where our things come from, and about what we have in our homes."

You can find Nicole's work at www.nicolelattuca.com.

“

Collective consciousness,
collective awareness, and
collective empathy about
where our objects come
from and what we have in
our homes.

Design processes,
labor processes, and environmental
practices that are considered.

research guide

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For more readings and resources, see the complete New Economy Resource List at practice-space.com

some milestones in new economy movements*

1844

The Rochdale Pioneers

considered the prototype of modern cooperative society, the Rochdale Pioneers founded the modern Cooperative Movement in Lancashire, England. The earliest record of a cooperative, however, is from Scotland, where local weavers formed the Fenwick Weavers Society in 1761.³³

1956

Mondragon Corporation

Ulgor, a paraffin stove manufacturing company became a model for the future of Mondragon cooperatives. Mondragon is a socio-economic business-based initiative with a commitment to solidarity and democratic organization and management. The federation of worker cooperatives now has 266 companies and cooperatives, employs 80,818.³⁴

1965

Delano Grape Strike and Boycott

led by the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee and the United Farm Workers whose founders include Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez. In 1970, table grape growers signed their collective bargaining agreement, granting workers better pay, benefits, and protections.³⁵

1969

New Communities, Inc

founded in Albany, Georgia during the Southern Civil Rights Movement, New Communities Inc is considered the first Community Land Trust. Under the leadership of Slater King a cousin of Martin Luther King, Jr., amongst others, the farm collective provided a safe haven for black farmers who were being forced off the land by racially discriminatory practices and the mechanization of agriculture.³⁶

1969

Freedom Farm Cooperative

founded by American civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, the farm was part of Hammer's life work to empower Black farmers and sharecroppers. The cost of membership for the cooperative farm was \$1. Only 30 families could officially afford membership, yet another 1,500 families belonged to the cooperative despite inability to pay.³⁷

1972

Wages for Housework

launched by the International Feminist Collective, the Wages for Housework campaign was an international movement demanding the acknowledgement of housework be recognized as paid labor. The movement also fought for health care and reproductive rights, social security protections and the rights of sex workers.³⁸

* This is an entirely incomplete list. There are countless moments throughout history of workers and scholars creating new frameworks for economic thinking and organizing for economic justice. This incredible work has largely been led by communities of color.

1980

Schumacher Center for New Economics

founded in Great Barrington, Massachusetts to promote the 'new economy', including theoretical research and practical application of ideas such as buy local, local currency and self-sufficiency. The Schumacher Center helped launch the Berkshares program. Under the local currency system, residents can purchase BerkShares at 95 cents from local participating banks and spend them at supporting businesses for a dollar, which supports the local economy, ecology, sustainability, and community, and creates a five percent discount incentive for those using the currency.³⁹

1986

Slow Food

founded by Carlo Petrini when McDonald's first chain was set to open in Rome. In 1989, The Slow Food Manifesto was drafted by co-founder Folco Portinari to condemn the "fast life" and its implications on culture and society, stating: "We are enslaved by speed and have all succumbed to the same insidious virus: Fast Life, which disrupts our habits, pervades the privacy of our homes and forces us to eat Fast Foods."⁴⁰

2012

International Year of Cooperatives

the United Nations General Assembly declared 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives, highlighting the contribution of cooperatives to socio-economic development, particularly their impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration.⁴¹

2017

Movement for Black Lives Platform

a collective visionary agenda set forth by the Movement for Black Lives Policy Table as a response to sustained and increasingly visible violence against black communities. The platform includes a demand for "economic justice for all and a reconstruction of the economy to ensure Black communities have collective ownership, not merely access." The demands call for restructuring tax codes, federal and state job programs that target the most economically marginalized black people and compensation for those involved in the care economy, a right to land, clean air, clean water and housing, the right for workers to organize and more.⁴²

2018

Teachers' strikes across the U.S.

starting in West Virginia, public school teachers went on strike to protest low wages for teachers and support staff, inadequate school budgets, overcrowded classrooms, and other problems. Teachers' strikes followed in Oklahoma, Arizona, Kentucky, North Carolina, Colorado. The strikes led to a school bus driver strike in Georgia.⁴³ These movements can be seen as emblematic of a new wave of labor organizing taking place in care economy sectors, being led by nurses and other professions traditionally associated with "feminine work"

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