

# Rising Sun

Women  
Proutists of  
North  
America

July 2018

## Winning Words

By Miirabai Price and  
Dada Maheshvarananda

We all would like to think that we're in control of all of our perceptions and our decisions. The suggestion that we may have been manipulated into buying something, whether it's a dress or political rhetoric, is repugnant.

Yet it happens all the time. Why? Because as human beings, we have strong emotions that shape our perceptions and influence our opinions. According to cognitive linguist George Lakoff most thought lies below the level of consciousness. He argues that our political decisions are not rational, but are filtered through unconscious metaphors that shape our thinking about everything from how children should be raised to how nature should be regarded to how the government should be run.

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2018 Asheville Women's March

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## Do Men Need to be Feminists?

By *Nirmala Nydia Barone*

That's a funny question for anyone who is a progressive thinker. It's like asking, why should all people have equal rights?

It's happening everywhere. The workplace, social settings, clubs, on the street and in homes everywhere. Women are paid less than men for the same job; women are still the main caretakers in families with children. On an average day, 67 percent of men do some housework compared with 85 percent of women (Rennison, 2002).

Single women shoulder the burden of financial stability for their children and many women are still either harassed or ignored when they have something to say. It's not only women who are abused or harassed, but that's the majority of cases. Ninety-one% of the victims of rape and sexual assault are female, and nine% are male (Filipovic, 2016).

Most of the men I know believe in respect, generosity and compassion for all beings, plants, animals and of course, fellow human beings. Many men today are femi-

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# What is Prout?

**PROUT** is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory which was propounded in 1959 by Indian philosopher Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. PROUT presents a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist socio-economic models. Neither of these theories has adequately met the needs of humanity.

Proutists are seeking to convey the comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT theory, which combines the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self reliance and the spirit of economic democracy. As women who are Proutists, in this magazine, we are attempting to focus on the particular struggles that women face in attaining self reliance in society. However, we also wish to present the complete vision of Prout as a new ideology for a new world.

Toward the goal of being inclusive, we invite Proutists and others who are interested in providing a platform for social change to submit articles, letters to the editor, poetry, blogs, and other writings to Rising Sun. We want to take the pulse of the 99 percent and to try to reflect in some small way the voice of the people.

## Key Principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism:

**Neo-humanism** expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a theoretical base for creating a new era of ecological balance and planetary kinship.

**Basic necessities guaranteed to all:** In order to be able to actualize their highest aspirations, people need to have their basic needs met. Access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

**Balanced economy:** Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of wealth.

**Women's Rights:** Prout encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. Prout's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

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

## Rising Sun July 2018

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## Mission Statement

Women PROUTists are working together to create a world in which all people have the opportunity to develop their full potential. We educate and organize our communities to resist oppression, exploitation and discrimination. Women PROUTists support the all-round physical, economic, intellectual and spiritual development of women.

**Submissions:** We invite you to submit articles 500-1000 words, poetry, photos, graphics and news of your projects. Deadlines are six weeks before publication—May 15th for the July 1st issue and November 15th for the January 1st issue. Send to [womenproutists@gmail.com](mailto:womenproutists@gmail.com). Content from this newsletter may be used in any Prout publication with credit given to Rising Sun. We prefer if you ask permission to reprint articles, and we suggest that you contact the authors of articles for specific permission to use individual articles. Thank you.

# Cooperative Leadership

## What Makes for an Effective Leader?

*A regular column by Satya Tanner*

Leadership development can be thought of in two ways: competency vs. behavior. The competency-based approach might mean 'fixing up' the boss who does not have so great problem solving abilities, communication skills, and relationship management skills. But attending a communication course alone rarely makes someone a better leader. What is often required is a change in mindset. What goes on inside of you, manifests outside of you.

Many of the leadership effectiveness models instead assess leaders based on two key axes. One axis has a task vs. relationship focus. A leader who is too task-focused risks becoming the subject of Bob Sutton's book, *The No Asshole Rule*. For example, s/he may be a bossy dominating, perfectionist, argumentative person who doesn't consider the people around them. On the other hand, a leader who focuses too much on relationship at the expense of the task may become 'spineless'. Such a leader is too scared to make a hard decision for fear of losing the relationship, running away from conflict and being steam-rolled. The ideal is to have a balance of task and relationship: Through healthy relationships you can achieve the task.

The second axis in many leadership effectiveness models is related to defensive vs. assertive mindset, or as Robert Anderson and William Adams call it in their book, *Mastering Leadership*, playing-not-to-lose vs. playing-to-win. In the playing to win game, we 'play' life as though there is nothing to win or lose. When we are playing to not lose, we don't focus on winning, rather just not losing. Adams and Anderson explain that this deeper mindset is like an operating system on a computer. Upgrading the operating system makes all the software (i.e., leadership competencies) run better.

Playing defensively only gets you so far, but playing with your full passion and heart means that you can transcend the patterns that otherwise bind you to the same old outcome. For example, there is the leader who makes sure that there is always cake and takes good care of people, but doesn't have the courage to stand up to an employee who is taking advantage of their good nature. Likewise, there is the leader who is always critical about every suggestion rather than being open to new ideas, or one who doesn't trust people's motivations and so dominates rather than empowers others to make decisions.

However, playing to win, or an assertive mindset is not easy to do. It involves letting go of fear and fear is often deep rooted. In my personal experience, letting go of fear is an act of surrender and trust. It's something that takes practice; it operates on a deeply emotional level and thus requires good emotional awareness. It's hard to rationalize your way out of fear; you have to feel your way out of it,

## Ananda Vanii

“In the transitional period of civilization, honesty in individual life is a prime necessity. We shall have to remain ever vigilant that the darkness of petty self-interest may not shroud this supreme human treasure. With the very extinction of honesty, civilization too will not survive; the long sádhaná of the human race will go in vain, and all intellectual achievements will become meaningless. Book knowledge that cannot be utilized in life has no value.”

– Ananda Púrñimá 1958

*Ananda Vanii Samgraha is a collection of seventy-four inspiring spiritual messages given by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti on special holidays. The first message in the book was delivered on January 1, 1956 and the last message was presented in May of 1990.*

usually with the help of good emotional hygiene and the application of an emotion that removes fear, such as love. For example, when you really love and care for the people you are leading, then you want them to feel empowered and you will help them develop themselves through methods such as giving them more decision making power. This is not to say that you hand over a very significant decision to someone who is not ready for it, but rather that you really consider if you are holding on too tightly out of fear and thus preventing people from growing.

Thus, leadership effectiveness combines focus on task, relationship, and the 'operating mindset' we are using. A defensive mindset keeps us locked up in our patterns of behavior, but 'playing to win' opens us up to new possibilities and reaching greater heights.

## References

Anderson & Williams, *Mastering Leadership*  
Sutton, Bob, *The No Asshole Rule*



*Satya Tanner had a 16-year career as a pilot and aerospace engineer in the Royal Australian Air Force, leading people and managing projects. She has studied Prout at a post graduate level and has a passion for helping organizations and communities that are in search of innovation, leadership, healthy cultures and conscious business principles.*



## Hats for Haiti: An Inspiring Project for Women

By Sara Giita Flores

Can we create a world of true equality? How do we maintain our motivation when injustice and inequality reign around the globe? In addition to spiritual nourishment, I look to success stories for inspiration.

Here in Denver, USA, we are celebrating the success of our recent benefit concert for the AMURTEL projects in Haiti. After the concert, my co-organizer, Kusuma Donnelly, told me, "it exceeded my wildest dreams!" We raised over \$3,000 with an audience of 150 people.

We were two women organizing an event at a woman-owned concert venue, with the proceeds going to a woman-run project... yet gender was never an issue in any part of the process. We were met with

nothing but open doors; we were treated with nothing but respect.

Let me illustrate the point for you. I sent a media pitch to a popular local magazine. The title of my email read "Assault Survivor/Songwriter Creates Benefit for Orphans in Haiti". The male magazine editor forwarded my pitch to a male reporter, who promptly contacted me to set up an interview. I was sexually assaulted by a friend's dad at age five, and the reporter wrote a beautiful article about how my experience as a survivor has driven me to heal the world through music.

I believe we must tell our stories of healing after injustice, and I was met with more respect and open doors.

While I am inspired by my experience, I am aware that my reality is a sharp contrast to the reality of women in Haiti, and women in poverty everywhere. Human trafficking, barriers to education and a lack of opportunities haunt so many women, in addition to the problems of sexual assault and unequal pay that I have experienced in my life. Yet we must build on our success stories. Kusuma has twice volunteered in Haiti and has taught knitting to women, men and children. Using old T-shirts or plastic bags, the hard-working Haitians learn to create marketable items. The AMURT and AMURTEL projects in Haiti are creating an oasis of hope and progress.

Reflecting upon our fundraising concert, I experienced living proof that a post-gender world is possible. I realize that it exists in a bubble, among progressively minded, well-educated people. Yet I believe we must start with creating progress and empowerment in small circles. We can create a world of equality and respect, beginning small and creating ripples in ever-expanding circles.

*Colorado singer/songwriter Sara Giita's music chronicles her journey from assault survivor to empowered diva. Her clear, shimmering voice breathes life to her message of personal transformation and spiritual awakening. You can hear her music on Spotify, YouTube, and iTunes, or connect with her at [saragiita.com](http://saragiita.com) or [facebook.com/saragiita](https://facebook.com/saragiita).*



# Healing from Within Achoo Yet Again!

*A regular column by Dr. Diane Moan*

The grass and trees are lushly green and the bushes and trees are budding and flowering. Spring is a lovely season, but it can be miserable for people with environmental allergies. The most typical reactions are sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, runny nose, nasal congestion, scratchy throat and hives. These symptoms are caused by the release of histamines into the blood from chemical mediators called mast cells.

Mast cells take their orders from IgE antibodies in response to contact with the offending allergen. Over-the-counter drugs, such as Zyrtec, Claritin, Allegra and Benadryl, help by blocking the histamines from attaching to cell receptors. These drugs often have side effects such as drowsiness, dizziness, headaches, dry mouth, nose or throat, increased appetite and weight gain, upset stomach, thickening of mucus, constipation, diarrhea, and feeling nervous, excited or irritable. These antihistamine drugs all contain two or more of the following: carcinogenic dyes, polyethylene glycol, waxes, titanium dioxide, talc, corn and lactose (milk). Better options for symptom suppression are natural antihistamines like quercetin, nettle leaf and bromelain. These substances come from food. They work by preventing the mast cells from producing histamines.

The histamines that cause allergic symptoms also cause inflammation. Effective natural anti-inflammatories include: curcumin (a turmeric derivative) and aloe vera juice.

Naturopathy likes to get to the root cause of health issues. Often, people have overburdened adrenal glands which, due to their weakened state, make people more vulnerable to having allergic reactions. Natural adrenal gland strengtheners are: pantothenic acid (vitamin B5) found as a supplement or in Royal Jelly or bee pollen, vitamin C, rest and stress reduction.

Environmental allergens often cross react with certain foods. Many people who have environmental triggers have food triggers that may be the root cause. I think everyone who has environmental allergies should be checked for food intolerances (IgG and IgA antibody-delayed reactions). The IgE food tests are usually not necessary (except in children)



because these cause immediate, anaphylactic responses that most people already know they have. Lastly, some foods are higher in histamines than others – like alcohol, fermented and aged cheeses, and pickled foods. It would be best to avoid these foods when having allergic symptoms. Fresh foods are lowest in histamines and also have the most vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

This time of year, we start having more fruits available to us, especially berries. Berries have more antioxidants, are more anti-inflammatory and are lower in sugar than other fruits. I attached an easy berry recipe for you to try. Enjoy!

## **Creamy Berry Pops**

2 cups plain yogurt (coconut or cashew) or one 14 oz. can whole coconut milk  
1 cup berries  
1 medium to large banana  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 tablespoon agave nectar or maple syrup or a couple of drops of liquid stevia to taste

Blend all ingredients in blender. Pour into popsicle molds. Freeze three or more hours. Makes 10 pops.

Variation: add ¼ cup cocoa or carob powder and two tablespoons nut/seed butter.



*Dr. Diane Moan is a Naturopathic Doctor, who graduated from Bastyr University in Kenmore, Washington, an accredited naturopathic medical school. Licensed in the state of Washington, she practices in Seattle at Dahlia Natural Health Clinic.*



### Ingredients:

- 5 potatoes/4 cups chopped
- 1 cup carrots (2 carrots)
- ½ cup bell pepper (½ a pepper)
- ½ cup celery
- ¼ cup pickles or cucumbers or artichoke hearts
- ¼ cup olives
- 2 Tbsp dill (fresh if available)
- 2 Tbsp fresh basil
- 2 Tbsp fresh cilantro
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- salt to taste
- 1 cup vegan mayonnaise

Liina writes:

"I love to cook from scratch. I prefer simple, all natural ingredients, the fewer the better. I was raised on the sentient Margii diet, so I cook without onions, garlic, mushrooms, eggs, or meat. Check out my sentient recipes at [recipessdeliina.wordpress.com](http://recipessdeliina.wordpress.com)."

## Recipe Corner

*A regular column by Liina Laufer*

### Vegan Potato Salad

Potato salad is a great dish to bring to a picnic, both healthy and hearty. Here's my variation:

Boil potatoes until they can be pierced easily. Rinse in cool water or let cool down. Peel off skins, and chop into half-inch pieces.

Chop vegetables and herbs, and mix together with cubed potatoes in a bowl. Add mayonnaise and vinegar (white, rice, or apple cider.)

Add spices and salt to taste. Best prepared in advance and refrigerated before serving. Makes 7 cups.



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# Garden Gems



A new column written by Guest Gardeners.  
Mirra Price is this issue's guest author.

## Hugelkultur

Hugelkultur are no-dig raised beds. They hold moisture, build soil richness, and are great spaces for growing fruit, vegetables and herbs. These beds are stuffed with rotten wood and other organic materials, which as years go by, makes the soil rich and alive. Please see the photos from Nina's gardens.

Hugelkultur, pronounced Hoo-gul-culture, means hill culture or hill mound. Rather than hauling wood to the dump, chipping it, or putting it in bins for yard waste, make hugel raised beds. Simply make a mound of leaves, grass clippings, straw, cardboard, petroleum-free newspaper, ma-

nure, or compost and similar materials. Then top with soil and plant your veggies.

(<https://www.permaculture.co.uk/articles/many-benefits-hugelkultur>)

Hugelkultur raised garden beds can be built only two feet tall; they will hold moisture for about three weeks. These beds can be raised a foot or so every year so that neighbors may not notice. If you build the beds high enough, you won't need to irrigate. Start by building six feet tall (seven to account for shrinkage) because the beds will shrink, mostly in the first month.

(<https://richsoil.com/hugelkultur/>)

The first few years, this composting process will make the soil a bit warmer, extending the growing season a little. The woody parts keep an excess of nutrients from passing into the ground water, and then refeeds nutrients to your garden plants later. A hugelkultur system could even grow plants in the desert with no irrigation.

The ideal wood to use for your beds are: alder, apple, cottonwood, poplar, willow (dry) and birch. Avoid cedar as it full of natural pesticides, anti-fungal, and anti-microbial chemicals. Maple would probably be good, as well. Prefer rotten wood over slightly aged wood. Rotten wood does not rob the garden of nitrogen as less seasoned wood does.

You will enjoy the luscious vegetables, herbs, and fruits of any kind grown in hugelkultur raised beds. Join the hugelkultur movement! Check out the You Tube How to Hugel video.

### Reference

<https://www.permaculture.co.uk/videos/huw-visits-charles-dowdings-productive-no-dig-garden>

Photo by Nina Shapiro from her garden.

## Do Men Need to be Feminists? From page 1

nists in their own right. The challenge is how to put that belief into action. It's still a work in progress. We thank the women who have spoken up about injustice of various kinds and they continue to make their voices heard.

Now it comes to the men. We are hearing the phrase, "speak truth to power". We know that it means standing up for what you believe in. It's time for our feminist brothers to do the same.

Sexism is in the fabric of our culture. In all of our American history, white males are the dominant group. We all forget sometimes to be conscious of what we say and how we behave. Men need to wake up to the subtle things they say and the subtle things they don't say. A change in attitude is the beginning; behavior is the way forward.

Stand up for a woman when you hear someone (male or female) telling sexist jokes, discuss equal opportunities in the workplace; listen to a woman if she feels that she has not been treated with respect. Develop compassion and nurturing in your own children, both girls and boys. Set an example of respect for one another. Maybe a better name for the movement should be

'personism'.

We are headed for a great future where both wings of the bird will be equally strong in order for it to fly.

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*Nydia Barone-Labensart is a writer, yoga instructor and retired English teacher. She has taught writing to sixth and seventh graders for over 20 years. Her writing has been published in The Sun Literary Magazine and the RAWA newsletter.*



# Winning Words

*From page 1*



## Frames and Metaphors

Framing and the use of metaphor is necessary to say what you believe. It is a false idea that reason is conscious, universal, logical, literal, and unemotional. We think that if we merely provide the facts and figures on any issue, that people will grasp our meaning and will reason to the right conclusion. According to Lakoff, this is not accurate for the following reasons:

- Ninety-eight percent of thought lies below the conscious level.
- Reason requires emotion. Studies have shown that people, who had brain injuries which disabled the parts of their brains which control emotions, were unable to reason.
- We have different world views. Politics is about morality, not issues. Politicians propose policies they feel are right. People can be bi-conceptual, and can hold views, some of which are progressive and some of which are conservative. Progressives can be progressive in one area, but conservative in another area. There is no line dividing the Left from the Right, nor is there a political ideology of the Middle.
- We always think in frames.

Framing and the use of metaphor is necessary so we can say what we believe. Every word is defined with respect to a frame. If you say a word, it activates a frame. For example, I say, "Don't think of an elephant." Invariably, listeners will picture an elephant, despite my instruction not to do so. As in formal debates, and according to linguist Deborah Tannen in *The Argument Culture*, there are always two sides on each issue, a pro and a con. To have two positions, you must use the same frame for both issues. Therefore, a frame will be set from the perspective of one of the two positions. The corporate-owned media in the United States frames debates on all major issues between the conservative Republican Party and more liberal Democratic Party. For example, for the Iraq War, the Republicans stated:

- The United States has vital interests in Iraq (oil)

- The War on Terror was authorized by Congress based on the best available information
- The War on Terror is winnable.

The Democrats said:

- The war does not serve the national interests.
- The war is based on false information; Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction.
- The war is unwinnable.

The media frames the debate, using the same terms so that people can understand the two positions, and in this way, tries to show fairness. The Republican frame sounds coherent and consistent. By negating that frame, the Democrats activate it, empowering the Republican terms, 'national interests', 'information', and 'winnable' (even if it is 'unwinnable'). Calling The War on Terror an 'invasion' and an 'occupation' gives a much different image, because an invasion sounds criminal and an occupation does not sound 'winnable'. This terminology (our public 'interests' and 'best information available' although from unreliable intelligence) wedded 9-11 terrorism with the Hussein regime in Iraq in the mind of the American public. The United States began waging war on Iraq in 2003, finally toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein in 2011.

**Frames are in your brain. Once frames are there, you cannot erase them. All you can do is create alternative framing or to add to the frame, like making fun of it.**

## The Political Climate

In the United States, unlike most other societies, many working class people are conservative and vote for conservative candidates and conservative causes. This happens for several reasons. First, because people need meaning and purpose in their lives. They vote based on their moral values. Conservative churches talk about the breakdown



and crisis in families and in the country, and say that the cause is selfishness. The Left rarely, if ever, mentions this issue. Conservative churches also offer their members a feeling of belonging and connection.

**Capitalism gives people a lot of pain, frustration, and stress in the family, because it makes the majority who are not succeeding feel that it is their own fault. Many people feel it's their fault if they cannot find a job. Why? Meaningful work is a human right. It is society's duty to provide an honest, meaningful job with an adequate wage for every person who wants it.**

The second way that the Right wins support is that it argues that selfishness in our society arises from “special interest groups”—immigrants, women, LGBTQ, Blacks, Muslims, etc. They claim that if these groups get more rights and more access, working class white people will lose the little that they have. This allows frustrated working class people to shift their sense of self-blame for their lack of success and “not being enough” onto a social problem caused by other groups. It allows people to understand the pain they feel without having to blame themselves.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton said, “you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the ‘basket of deplorables’. Right? They're racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic—you name it.” In this way, she insulted her political opponents. Today many opponents of President Trump say that those who voted for him are stupid or worse. Some on the Left also dismiss all people who are religious as ignorant or just plain stupid. If you insult someone, you will never win that person over to your side.

## **How Conservatives Manipulate Public Opinion**

Conservatives in the United States have spent decades defining their ideas, carefully selecting the language with which to present them, and building the Fox News Network as an infrastructure to communicate them. Conservative advisor Frank Luntz is a master of opinion polls and using focus groups to find out what words resonate with people and sway them. He has advised Republicans to alter their political language in the following ways:

- Instead of talking about ‘smaller government’, they should talk about ‘more efficient and effective government’, which appeals to more people today. Government spending should be condemned by calling it ‘waste’.
- Instead of ‘tax reform’, talk about making the IRS tax code simpler, flatter, and fairer. People hate the complexity of the U.S. tax code. Inheritance tax should be condemned as ‘death tax’.
- Instead of mentioning drilling for oil or fracking for gas,

Luntz proposes using the phrase ‘energy exploration’

- Whereas healthcare is something everyone wants, guaranteeing it to everyone should be condemned by conservatives as ‘government takeover’
- Rather than discussing economic opportunity and growth, Republicans should talk about creating a healthier and more secure economy. Logically, everyone should benefit if ‘economic health’ is restored. And while economic opportunity would be nice, security is a necessity.
- Instead of talking about curbing crime, discuss public safety, appealing to people's primal needs to be safe and secure.
- Today many people in the United States have a negative image from the word “capitalism”. Luntz suggests that conservatives should avoid the word, and instead call capitalists as ‘job creators’ and bonuses for super-rich corporate executives as ‘pay for performance’. Most interesting of all, he advises conservatives to call capitalism itself as ‘economic freedom’. ‘Freedom’, which sounds very positive to almost everyone, here means ‘freedom to accumulate wealth without limits or taxes’.

## **Choose Winning Words**

As activists, we want to appeal not just to fellow activists or to a small segment of society; we want to reach everyone with our message. Our words should appeal to both those on the political Left and the political Right.

**The bottom line is to frame language in a way that resonates with people and activates internal, subconscious frames. Most of the frames that people hold are embedded in their subconscious. There are some words that trigger positive frames in almost everyone, such as appeals to decency, fair play, safety, security, trust, respect, freedom, family values, honesty, truth, win-win, love, happiness, belonging, level playing field, practical, peace of mind, integrity, honor, responsibility, justice, harmony, transparency, hope, prosperity, and change.**

Using some of George Lakoff's ideas as a model, we need to (1) build an effective communication system, (2) communicate our general progressive value system, (3) repeat the truths that reveal what is right about those values, and (4) act with courage to promote the sense of courage, confidence and hope that allows the truth to be meaningful and powerful.

For example, to stop oil drilling in the Arctic, name a single truth: oil companies destroy the planet for their short term profit. Point out that when there are oil spills and pipeline leaks, livelihoods of people in the affected areas are compromised. People's personal safety is put at jeopardy. Many animals are injured and killed. The government

wastes money cleaning up the environmental disaster. These points activate people's mental frames for safety, security, and financial well-being. This takes the debate to a personal level rather than framing it as an issue for a clean environment, which is much more abstract.

## Conclusion

Truths are made meaningful by values, which are wedded to them. Make truths matter. Win with words that resonate by activating already existing frames, by using words that embody moral values, and by respecting each person in your audiences.

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# Spiritual Practice for Liberation

*A regular column by Annie Girresch*

**"You must have a flaming moral purpose so that greed, oppression and exploitation shrivel before the fire in you."**

- Shrii P.R. Sarkar, *The Jamalpur Years*, p. 7

Does deepening into the Divine necessarily call us to the shores of liberation? Does liberation work call us to engage with the Divine.

These were the questions we danced with at a recent St. Louis workshop, "Sowing the Healed Future." During this day-long intensive, I got to sit at the feet of three powerful teachers who live at the crossroads of spirituality and social change: Rebecca Bennett, founder of Emerging Wisdom and co-chair of Missouri's Forward through Ferguson Commission; Carolyn Griffeth, my spiritual director and practitioner of shamanic energy medicine; and Taya Shere, founder of the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute. In a room full of activists and spiritual seekers of many faith traditions, this was a very juicy conversation.

Many spiritual traditions, especially in the West, have emphasized dualism—dualism of the mind and body, dualism of private and public responsibility, dualism of spiritual experience and material reality. Often in the U.S., religious folk avoid responsibility for societal oppression by claiming separation of church and state—



*Isaiah Hammett and his mother, Gina Torres.*

let politics be politics, and let prayer be prayer. It doesn't matter how immoral Donald Trump's policies or personal behavior become; evangelical Christianity continues to pledge its unwavering support.

Another way that I experience this is a deep rift between spiritual groups and those laboring for liberation from all oppression. My spiritual teacher, Carolyn Griffeth, talks about how these are often two completely different camps of people who are often at odds with one other. On the one side, spiritual folk want to meditate away from all of the world's problems. Spirituality becomes that great "opiate of the masses"—even the liberal masses—that Karl Marx warned of. On the other side, those working for social change are so consumed by the struggle itself that they lose themselves. In their organizations and their interpersonal ways of being, they embody the very evils they are seeking to eradicate.

However, there are also traditions across the world that are born uniquely out of the re-unification of these parts. The beauty in PROUT is that it sees no separation: Sarkar taught that our relation to the Supreme Consciousness necessarily calls us to build a healthy human society. In my last column, I talked about how working for liberation is a spiritual practice. Today, I'm reflecting on how our spiritual practice can ground us in the deep waters of abiding peace so that we are sourced enough to face the evils of our unjust society.

In the last few years, I've witnessed how exhausting and even traumatizing the work of social change can be for activists and organizers. One of the clearest examples I know of is the fight that Gina Torres has led for justice to be served for her son Isaiah Hammett, who is among the tragically long list of victims murdered by police. On June 7th, 2017, a St. Louis police SWAT team raided Gina's home, killing 21-

year-old Isaiah within minutes. He rushed to protect his disabled grandfather, a Vietnam Veteran, from the incoming stream of bullets. Anyone who enters Gina's home can see the bullet holes scattered through the walls and the floor, and the beautiful shrine she's built to honor Isaiah's life.

Though the St. Louis police have claimed that Isaiah fired first, an independent forensic expert concluded that all shots fired—over 100 rounds—were directed at Isaiah.

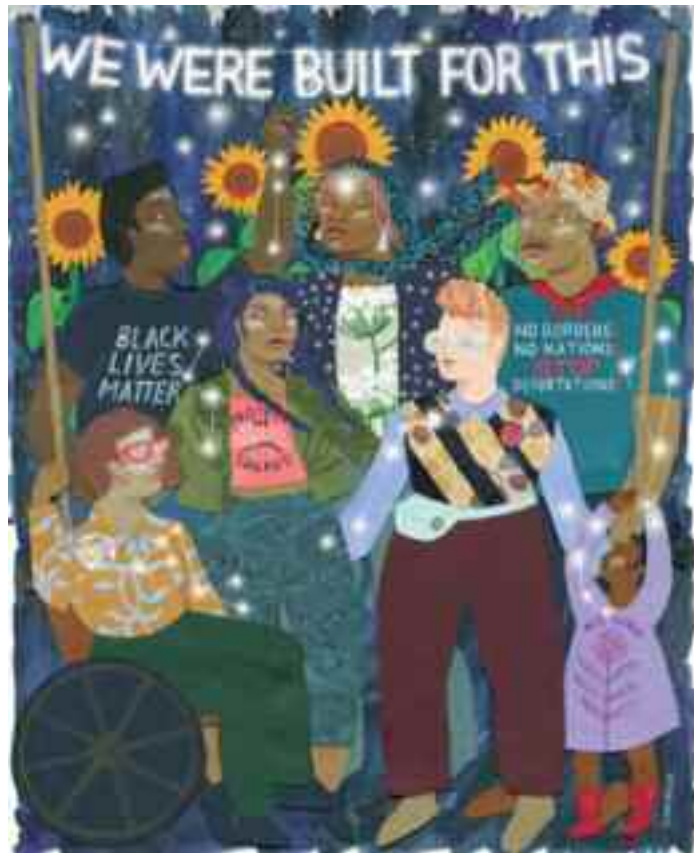
Since last June, Gina has boldly publicized her grief in the fight for an investigation into this heinous crime. The St. Louis Police Department has dragged its feet in a supposed on-going investigation, and the city has withheld basic information and reports from the day of the murder from Isaiah's family and their attorney. On June 7th, the family along with local activists honored the one-year anniversary by holding a protest, in the form of a memorial, outside of St. Louis City Hall. Tragically, Isaiah is only one of many

victims killed with impunity at the hands of police. This is the reality of the fight for liberation.

Where is God in the face of such evil?

I'm not sure I know the answer to that question, but I know that I see God in Gina's fight to seek justice for her son. I see it too, in all of the mothers who bear this painful witness to a rotten system where those who are deemed protectors of justice become the most brutal perpetrators of injustice. And I know that my spiritual practice is what grounds me enough to keep showing up in love and support for this liberation struggle.

*Annie Girresch is a lover of trees, an apprentice to the healing arts of the Web of Life, and a divinity student at Eden Theological Seminary.*



*"Built for This". Artwork by Molly Costello, [www.mollycostello.com](http://www.mollycostello.com). Used with permission.*

# The United Nations New Urban Agenda has PROUT Values and Goals

By Alanna Hartzok

*This is a shortened version of the original article, which may be viewed at [proutwomen.org](http://proutwomen.org).*

## The Global Context

The United Nations Center for Human Settlements, commonly known as UN-HABITAT, has recently issued the New Urban Agenda, the agency's detailed plan for the next 20 years. Adopted by a consensus of all UN member states, the Agenda was finalized at the major global conference held in Quito, Ecuador from 17 to 20 October 2016 and endorsed by the UN General Assembly on 23 December 2016.

The process of creating the New Urban Agenda (NUA) was inclusive of all stakeholders. Several preparatory conferences were held in several countries prior to its final formulation in Ecuador. Heads of State and Government, Ministers and High Representatives, subnational and local governments, parliamentarians, civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities, the private sector, professionals and practitioners, the scientific and academic community all had opportunities to give specific input.

Among the NUA's 175 numbered paragraphs (henceforth "paras") in its 30 pages are several statements relevant to the vision, values, goals and policies of PROUT.

While admitting that improvements have been made in the quality of life for millions of urban inhabitants since UN-HABITAT was founded in 1976, para 3 admits that "the persistence of multiple forms of poverty, growing inequalities and environmental degradation remain among the major obstacles to sustainable development worldwide, with social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation often an irrefutable reality...."

Para 5 states the diverse concerns and goals of the New Urban Agenda of readdressing the way cities

## The Global Context

Cities today occupy just 2% of the total land, however they provide/use about:

- 70% of the Economy (GDP)
- Over 60% of Global Energy Consumption
- 70% of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 70% of Global Waste

and human settlements are planned, designed, financed, developed and managed. The New Urban Agenda will help end poverty and hunger by promoting sustainable economic growth, achieve gender equality and empowerment, improve human health and protect the environment.

Other themes relevant to Prout are stated through the NUA, including local decentralization by fostering local economies, using resources efficiently and progressively, promoting cultural heritage, and the empowerment of women and girls in all levels of decision making, gender pay parity with the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

## A Key New Urban Agenda Public Finance Policy

The five great global United Nations conference of the 1990s produced excellent documents with high ideals and a positive vision for building a world that works for everyone. The problem of how to finance all the good things then emerged. So the UN started another focus area, that of Financing for Development.

This writer is pleased that the NUA has a great deal of clarity in its approach to public finance policy for funding infrastructure and other needed public goods. There is no mention made of taxing wage income and productivity, as the NUA I aims to promote "full and productive employment and decent work for all" (14b) and these are PROUT goals as well.

Rather the NUA recommends land value based public finance policy which promotes the use of legal and economic foundations of value capture, including the quantification, capturing and distribution of land value increments.

Land value based public finance fits well with many of PROUT values and goals. This practical public fi-

nance policy is understood by many to be based on what PROUT founder P.R. Sarkar called “cosmic inheritance.” According to Sarkar:

As members of a joint family human beings should safeguard this common property [the earth and her resources] in a befitting manner and utilize it properly. They should also make proper arrangements so that everyone can enjoy it with equal rights, ensuring that all have the minimum requirements of life to enable them to live in a healthy body with a sound mind.

## Possible New Urban Agenda

### Actions for PROUTists

UN-HABITAT will continue to be inclusive of all sectors of society as it moves into the implementation phase of the NUA. UN-HABITAT staff, in preparing the Action Framework for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda carefully reviewed the entire document in order to facilitate the conversion of the NUA into a pragmatic and efficient framework of implementation. For this purpose, the contents of the NUA have been analyzed in fifteen categories, including the four cross cutting principles of the strategic plan of UN-HABITAT, available on their website: <http://nua.unhabitat.org/list1.htm#>.

PROUTists thus have many opportunities to broaden and deepen support for the several aspects of PROUT that are in alignment with the NUA. They can engage in the Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (<http://nua.unhabitat.org/AFINUA19thApr.pdf>).

PROUTists are hereby encouraged to read the entire New Urban Agenda in order to determine the particular areas and categories of activity for which they can best make a contribution. The New Urban Agenda can be found in 11 languages here: <http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

*Since 1973 Alanna Hartzok has worked for economic democracy and Prout with a particular focus on land tenure and public finance policy. Her book – The Earth Belongs to Everyone – received the Radical Middle Book Award. She is a United Nations ECOSOC NGO representative and the International Liaison for the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. She has twice been a candidate for US Congress.*



## Clothes Closet

By Nancy Pulley



Here, I brush against  
my discarded costumes:

bell bottom pants swirling  
at a bar in downtown Indianapolis  
tangled in protests and rebellion,  
young love and the kind of hurt  
the heart will only let you feel once.

Overalls that were rough and real  
on a Farmall tractor, lunging over stones  
in a Southern Indiana field.

That leather jacket  
and go-to-hell sock hat  
that screamed John Paul  
Sartre.



Button down the side  
Dr. Kildare blouse  
worn by a girl who could give her heart  
to some dream man in a minute.

Green army jacket, drab attire  
for anti-war rallies, a uniform of sorts  
when we all wanted to be the same  
in our differences.

Just clothes, my spring skins, sloughed off  
and me arranging them, stroking each  
with an old hand, remembering.



*Nancy Pulley is a graduate of the University of Indianapolis. Her poems have appeared in The Flying Island, Arts Indiana Literary Supplement, Passages North, Plainsong, The Sycamore Review, Humpback Barn Collection, A Linen Weave of Themes, and The Tipton Poetry Journal. She received a 2013 Indiana Arts Commission Individual Artist Grant in Poetry. Nancy has published two chapbooks and Warren Avenue, a full length poetry book, published by Chatterhouse Press in 2014.*

# Making Primary Health Care Work in the Nigerian Village

By Dada Daneshananda

AMURT started the maternal health program in Nigeria's Ebonyi State in 2010. When the first Rising Sun article came out, we had just passed one thousand births. Today we are close to ten thousand births. The number of health centers has grown from five to eight.

The growth of the program can be attributed to the strategy of community mobilization and participation, made possible through local capacity building and intensive and extensive health education campaigns.



*Training for Maternal Health Promoters*

## Maternal Health Promoters forming a grassroots network for change

In 2014 AMURT conducted village meetings throughout the five project areas. With the support of the male population, the women in each village elected from among themselves women to be trained as a Maternal Health Promoter. The number of maternal health promoters active in the AMURT project areas is now 179.

The Maternal Health Promoters' duties include identifying local pregnant women and to conduct monthly support group meetings for all the pregnant women. One health worker from the local health center attends to help teach and answer questions. The maternal health promoter guides and encourages each pregnant woman to attend prenatal check-ups at the health center to go there to give birth. She also monitors home births for those who still chose give birth at home. AMURT offers free delivery to the women who attend meetings and postnatal check-ups at the local health center.

The maternal health promoters have grown into a dynamic grassroots network for health promotion.



*Good prenatal education leads to successful births.*

## Capacity building and scholarships for young health workers

AMURT recruits staff from the local project areas to help ensure 24-hour service in the health centers. The presence of locals on the staff helps to strengthen the bond between the health centers and the communities, resulting in community confidence and higher patronage.

AMURT offers a scholarship program to give the most talented and committed of these community volunteers the opportunity to become qualified health workers. Through employment and support for further education, AMURT has given dozens of young rural women, and some young men, a career and opportunity to serve their communities.

Today 81 % percent of the health workers in AMURT in the AMURT assisted health centers stem from the local areas. Seven women are studying on AMURT scholarships to become qualified health workers, with an additional ten set to receive scholarship this year.

## Family planning reaching the rural areas

In Nigeria's rural villages, children are highly valued. A popular woman's name is 'Nwankaego' which means 'children are better than money'. The child mortality rate has been high, and families have many children as they fear that some of their children may not survive. Nearly 100 % of the families are farmers and often state the need for help on the farm as a reason for having many children. Finally, children are seen as a gift from God and as such are welcomed warmly. Even among very young unmarried women, the culture is supportive for a pregnant woman. Abortion is seen as an abomination. There is much pressure on women to produce children. Childbearing is seen as the primary work of the rural



women. The women who don't have children don't get respect and are looked upon with pity or even spite. With very few opportunities for education or careers in business, young women have no options, and often marry and have children early, settling into a life of farming and child rearing like their mothers before them.

Ebonyi state's fertility rate is 5.3 births per woman, while in the remote villages where AMURT works many women have many as eight or ten children. Maternal health promoters organize programs for the AMURT health education team to raise the awareness and acceptance of the health benefits of child spacing. In the AMURT assisted health facilities, the rural population now has access to counselling and a variety of contraceptive options.

In 2017, 261 women accessed injectable contraceptives and 836 chose implants. We did 16 IUDs and four bilateral tubal ligations. Hundreds more chose natural birth spacing methods.

Long held cultural beliefs are evolving as families put health first. The awareness of a woman's right to decide if and when she wants to get pregnant is gradually starting to gain acceptance among the women and also the men. There is still much work and a long way to go on reproductive health and reproductive rights in Nigeria's rural villages.

### **Economic Empowerment for women who are sole breadwinners**

Through the health centers, AMURT encounters many women who are the sole breadwinners in their families. Most are widows; others have husbands with disabilities. Local traditions continue to place widows at a big disadvantage. In the economic empowerment program, indigent women come together to cooperatively manage a revolving credit scheme. Interest free loans are made available to the women to start their own businesses. After two months, they start paying back 10 % monthly. After one year the loan is fully paid back.

Every month a new member is empowered by the group. AMURT provides basic training in business planning and bookkeeping. Over 150 women in six different groups have been supported to start businesses through this cooperative program. The capital, managed by the women, remains intact as new members are welcomed.

The AMURT primary healthcare program in Ebonyi State now has a staff of over 160, including seven doctors, three laboratory scientists, nine midwives, and 120 health workers in the village health centers. We have 13 vehicles, including five ambulances. Odeligbo Health Center was upgraded to a Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Center, and has already done 45 cesarean sections. There are plans for upgrading two more centers in 2018.



*Successful families thrive in a community of health education and support,*

It's the dedication and hard work of the health workers that has enabled AMURT to set the standard for primary health care in southeast Nigeria.

Dada wrote a previous article, "Community Driven Maternal Health Programs in Nigeria" in the January 2014 issue of Rising Sun.

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*Dada Daneshananda has spent the last eighteen years in West Africa coordinating primary health-care, maternal health and water projects, first in Ghana, then in Burkina Faso and currently in Nigeria. The photos in this article were taken by Dada of educational programs offered by his program.*

# Fight Pseudo-Culture

By Didi Ananda Ruchira

The German philosopher Theodor Adorno coined the term 'pseudo-culture' in a 1959 essay "Theory of Pseudo Culture". He explains that the existent "crisis in culture" cannot be solved by more education; rather, he concludes that the decline in culture is a product of culture itself:

What has become of culture, now deposited as a kind of negative objective spirit ... can be deduced from the laws of social movement, even from the concept of culture itself. Culture has become socialized pseudo-culture – the omnipresence of alienated spirit (T. Adorno, "Theory of Pseudo-Culture", p. 16.)

A lack of true culture is not the problem; instead, pseudo-culture develops out of the very attempt to make culture independent from its historical roots. When that happens it reduces culture into its pseudo opposite: "Any culture... which posits itself autonomously and absolutizes itself, has thereby become pseudo-culture." (T. Adorno, p. 17). Pseudo-culture and culture are locked in an intimate yin-yang relationship.

Indeed, capitalist consumerism is the main perpetrator and beneficiary of pseudo-culture. Capitalists exploit culture, instantly transforming it into ubiquitous pseudo-culture. What could be a better example than "Open a Coke, open happiness"? Villagers in remote places may not have enough food, or may have to walk 20 kilometers daily for water, yet everyone drinks Coca Cola.... and knows the latest slogan.

We are so immersed in pseudo-culture that it's difficult to extricate ourselves from it. Pseudo-culture will have us all with same value system – as least as far as our consumer preferences. We may be out protesting in the streets against -or for- guns, mass murderers, global warming, or the latest political scandal, but we'll all be wearing this 2018 season's Rose Violet, Coral Blush and Azure Blue garments. It can hardly be avoided because those colors will be the only ones in the stores this year.

Facebook is perhaps the ultimate in pseudo-culture. It started off with a grand idea—to be connected online with your friends.

For the most part, it quickly became the ultimate in pseudo relationships, turning your private life into consumer fodder. Facebook's debacle with regards to its complicity in the Russian manipulation of the USA 2016 elections, really opened a lot of eyes to how deep a hole we've slid into.

Is there a way out? At this point, this writer thinks at this time in this era, there's no way out completely. Turn off your phone? Stop using your credit card? Shut down your internet provider? Not many can do this.

Still, one must fight against it at every step. Becoming aware, becoming active in fighting the causes of exploitation and sharing that awareness with others is probably the only practical solution.



A MacDonald's in Thailand.

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*Didi Ananda Ruchira, has been a yoga and meditation teacher for more than 40 years. She was the founding chairperson of the Kenyan Society of Homeopaths, and is the Director of Abha Light Foundation, [www.abhalight.org](http://www.abhalight.org),*

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