



RECREATING THE WORLD: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Michael Bopp and Judie Bopp
Four Worlds Press

ABOUT THE BOOK

Rooted in decades of work with indigenous communities in the Americas, as well as extensive experience in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the former Soviet Union, “Recreating the World” is really two books woven together. The first is a down-to-earth exposition of models, principles and strategies for understanding what community development is and how it can be promoted. The second is a rich collection of stories, games, activities and tools that can be used to help others to learn about various aspects of community development practice.

In this book, building sustainable community is presented as a primary strategy for solving critical human problems. Community building is not merely viewed as a means to an end, however. Sustainable community is a basic human need, and in its absence, human life becomes distorted, painful, and often self-destructive.

In this interdependent world, at the gateway of the twenty-first century, we are all in the same life-boat. It makes no sense to be thinking in terms of “them” and “us.” As the inimitable Pogo put it, “I have seen the enemy, and he is us.” We are the environmental crisis, the debt crisis, the crisis in spirit, and the crisis in confidence in our leaders and our economy. And it is us, acting together in unity of purpose, and in a harmonization of our methods with our values, that will ultimately enable us to bring about the sorely needed transformation of the fundamental life-systems upon which our families and communities must depend for survival.

The approach to community development presented in “Recreating the World” is:

- practical
- participatory
- oriented to learning as a primary strategy
- culturally based
- principle centered
- values driven
- aimed at fundamental transformation

We invite you to think of community development not as merely rearranging the proverbial deck chairs on the Titanic, but as a process of transforming ourselves and our communities into new models of living that are truly life-promoting and life-enhancing for us, for others with whom we share the planet, and for future generations.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael and Judie Bopp have worked for over twenty years in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the former Soviet Union, as well as in urban and rural North America. They are co-founders of Four Worlds International, a human and community development organization with roots in indigenous peoples’ development work in North America and well known for its ability to bridge between the cultures of communities and the culture of the agencies and professionals who attempt to serve them. They have written and published extensively on many issues related to civil society and learning for human and community transformation.

Michael holds a Masters degree in Community Development and a Doctorate in Education for Development. Although he has worked at one time or another as a university faculty member and program director, as well as a professorial head for a national research institute, Michael’s primary orientation and professional focus has always been hands-on capacity building work with grassroots people’s organizations, and with the agencies that serve them.

Judie has a Masters degree in education with a focus on curriculum development and is, at this writing, completing her Doctoral Thesis in Education, focused on helping organizations to learn the art and the science of participatory development. Judie has focused for many years on the development of civil society, and on the challenge of building institutional capacity to support sustainable development processes.

Michael and Judie now co-direct the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning, based in Cochrane, Alberta, Canada. The Centre is a sister organization of Four Worlds International that focuses on building human and institutional capacity for social and economic development, as well as international research and consultancy activities related to eco-health, civil society strengthening, governance and institution building and indigenous people’s development.

The Bopps have been husband and wife and professional colleagues for more than thirty years. They live on a small acreage backed against a nature conservancy in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, some thirty five-minutes west of Calgary.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT “RECREATING THE WORLD”

“Recreating the World” illuminates profoundly our understanding of renewal. The authors draw upon their extra-ordinary experience to provide gems of practical insight and a complete framework for processes of community development and leadership.

Ronald Heifetz, MD, PhD

Founder of the Centre for Leadership, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and author of Leadership Without Easy Answers

“Recreating the World” is a brilliant synthesis, and the finest thinking I have seen anywhere about community development. Its strength is rooted in the Bopps’ ability to listen to indigenous people and to accurately reflect their struggles, their insights and their vision. In the pages of this book I hear the echoes of the prayers and wisdom of countless indigenous elders who gave everything they had for the healing of their communities and nations.

Phil Lane Jr. (Dakota)

President, Four Directions Int’l; Coordinator, Four Worlds International; internationally recognized indigenous educator and development specialist; recipient of the 2000 Swiss Foundation International Award for Freedom and Human Rights.

“Recreating the World” is beautifully written and full of richness and insight! It is a highly practical primer on the fundamentals of building sustainable communities. Those engaged in community development efforts will find it to be a veritable treasure trove of clarity, delightful insights, and essential tools. The Bopps have readily translated their extensive experience into an excellent and powerful resource for the rest of us.

Sousan Abadian, PhD

International development economist and specialist in trauma recovery and indigenous peoples’ development

“Recreating the World” comes at a time when development agencies are increasingly looking beyond the implementation of time-bound projects, to thinking about the long-term process of social change which alone constitutes real improvements in people’s lives

Always in a colourful and very accessible prose, the book provides a thorough grounding in very practical principles and exercises for participatory development processes.

For anyone interested in pursuing a more participatory and sustainable development, in building partnerships and a strong civil society, in addressing human rights, and in advocating for policies which support

the marginalized, “Recreating the World” provides an invaluable combination of practical theory and thought-provoking exercises.

Darren Hedley

Program Manager, URBAN INSAKA, CARE Zambia

ORDERING INFORMATION

To order “*Recreating the World*” please send the following order form along with your payment to: *The Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning*
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