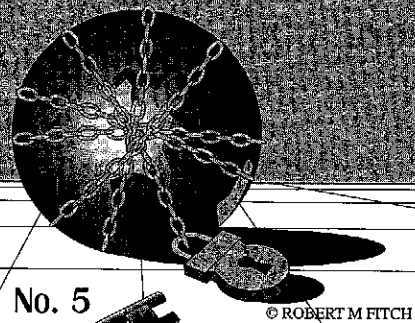


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HARTZOK AND SMITH AMONG "THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES" ESSAYS

Alanna Hartzok and Jeffery Smith, both frequent contributors of articles to GroundSwell, were among the five winners in the "There Are Alternatives" Project. Hartzok and Smith each won \$100 and a nice Certificate. The TAA Project, <http://www.mkeever.com/taa.html>, was sponsored by the McKeever Institute of Economic Policy Analysis, directed by Michael Pierce McKeever, Sr., Economic Instructor at Vista Community College, Berkeley, CA.

Quoting from the McKeever Institute of Economic Policy Analysis website, the "There Are Alternatives" Project arose several years ago when Great Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher "announced that 'There is no alternative' to a world wide system of market based capitalism. This effectively meant that the economic development of lesser developed countries was to be left to market forces. Economic activity in these countries was to be focused on those commodities in which there was a 'comparative advantage' so that merchants in those counties could export those products and import other goods with the proceeds. Sadly, the promise that export led growth would provide benefits to all people has been proven wrong. Growth which depends on market forces brings uneven benefits - some people are helped and some are hurt. Thus arose a need for the creation of alternative economic models so that all people can choose how much to enter or how much to withdraw from the global economy. This project is an attempt to find and publicize such alternative economic models."

Judges of international renown determined the five winners. They were John Jopling, a London barrister and founding member of the Foundation for Economics of Sustainability based in Dublin. Also Terry Manning, a New Zealand lawyer residing in the Netherlands with 20 plus years' experience in the development of water pumping technologies for the world's poor. Plus John O'Connor from SW Florida who had served in senior staff positions at the IMF and World Bank before he took early retirement to study how decentralized decision-making could mesh with top-down processes; some of his process activities feed into the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

McKeever Institute of Economic Policy Analysis can be contacted by email at miepa@mkeever.com, or postal mail to 3060 Curran Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602 USA.

THE ALASKA PERMANENT FUND:

A Model of Resource Rents for Public Investment and Citizen Dividends, by Alanna Hartzok, Scotland, PA

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SUMMARY

Wars are often fought over the ownership and control of land and natural resources. Inequitable ownership and wasteful, unsustainable use of the earth's resources are root causes of both the unjust wealth gap between the rich and the poor and the depletion and collapse of our natural resource base. This paper describes the form and function of the Alaska Permanent Fund as a model governmental institution for collection and distribution of natural resource rents, particularly oil, and makes suggestions for improvement of the Fund. It also presents an analysis of fundamental issues regarding natural resource and territorial claims and urges the establishment of a Global Resource Agency to collect and distribute transnational resource rents.

ALASKA PERMANENT FUND

If you were a third grade student in the state of Alaska, one day in school you would play a game called Jennifer's Dilemma. The game tells the story of a little girl who has discovered a box of valuable coins. Her dilemma is deciding what to do with an unexpectedly large amount of money. It is a way for young children to learn about their own yearly windfall fortunes from the Alaska Permanent Fund. In the year 2000, each one received a dividend check for nearly \$2,000. The Alaska Permanent Fund is a case study in a new concept of the role of government - that of agent to equitably distribute resource rents to the people, thereby securing democratic common heritage rights to land and natural resources. Purchased from Russia in 1867, Alaska became the 49th state in 1959. Under the Alaska Constitution (Article VIII, Section 2, General Authority) all the natural resources of Alaska belong to the state to be used, developed and conserved for the maximum benefit of the people. Ten years after statehood the first Prudhoe Bay oil lease sale yielded \$900 million from oil companies for the right to drill oil on 164 tracts of state-owned land. Compared to the 1968 total state budget of \$112 million, this was a huge windfall. (continued on page 2)