



It's 2011!!! We've decided, at the bakery that this is year to finally get a new oven. Brother Ray hooked us up with an old White-Westinghouse oven in a surplus furniture warehouse, and after a lot of phone calls, hand-wringing, wrench borrowing and heavy lifting (thanks Mikel, Gabe, Serena, Emily, Paola, and Tahz), we hooked it up to Noah's gas line at the absolute last minute (this morning at 10:30 AM), and started to bake. After slogging along with Noah's old, underpowered oven, it's a joy to bake breads that come out with such gorgeous color and texture. And, thanks to Ray, we have extra oven racks which makes granola go much faster! This is the year!!!

**Jan 3, 2011
5:17 PM**

Co-ops in Argentina

This week's study session topic was co-ops and economy, and we watched some film clips about unemployed workers movements in Argentina, the role of co-ops in the movement there, and the ways that folks have organized. Here are some of our reflections on what we saw:

- One thing that a participant said about their organizing was (paraphrasing), "we do stuff with our hands and then we figure out a name for it." This feels a lot like how we've done things in the bakery – creating structures as we go.

- From what we've learned about the MTD (Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados), it looks like these movements were rooted in a neighborhood, found out what folks needed, and then from there took over roadways/factories/schools from there. It seems like with the bakery, rather than identifying needs and then providing them, we are already starting with bread. What does this mean if we are interested in being more deeply rooted in a neighborhood?

mutual aid societies

Last week in our study sessions we also spent time reading about the history of African-American co-operative economics in the United States. Ray had told us about a lot of community survival projects in Durham specifically, but for a broader national and historical view we turned to work by Jessica Gordeon Nembhard and Ajowa Nzinga Ifateyo, members of the Grassroots Economic Organizing collective. Ajowa is also a board member of the US Federation of Worker Cooperatives and they both are inspiring storytellers, connecting the rich history of African-American worker and consumer co-ops with present-day movements and with the history of state and capitalist racism.

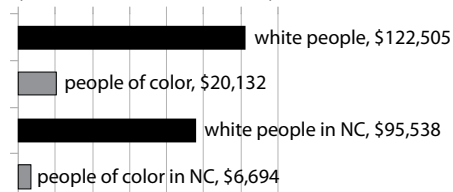
Mutual aid societies or beneficial societies are one of many names for what happens when a group of people comes together to pool (mostly financial) resources to provide for each other's needs themselves, rather than relying on the market or the state. For example, members might

- How to fund our movements without giving up our autonomy from foundations/government – these are autonomous movements, and some of them will not take any funding or support from the government, in order to maintain their autonomy. However, a couple of people in the video also said that they autonomous because they make decisions together about what they do, and are not controlled by the government – but they still accept food baskets from them because those resources rightfully belong to them.

- One thing that was very present in what we saw was solidarity & support within different aspects of the movement. How do we see ourselves interacting with and being in solidarity with other co-ops, alternative economies, and movements?

- One woman described how she came into the movement. She began working at a sewing co-op because she needed a job, and then after a while started coming to meetings, and really being a part of all the work that was happening. For us this highlighted the importance of organizing around creating spaces that are useful.

Median household net worth by race, 2006 (total assets minus total debts)



inspired by the Color of Wealth, source
<http://scorecard.cfed.org>

each pay a small amount of money into a pool on a monthly basis, with the agreement that any member can, with the group's permission, use some of the pool for a down payment, starting a business, or paying for education (this specific example is also called a rotating savings and credit association or ROSCA, also known as a 'hui' in Vietnamese, 'ekuh' in Ethiopian, and 'partners' in Jamaican. Mutual aid societies have arisen around burial expenses, freed slaves pooling money to buy their family members out of slavery, health insurance, health care (putting money in collectively to hire a doctor on call), mortgages or property ownership.



melanie and other folks working at Two Ton farm

Granola (510g/portion)

ingredients: Organic Oats (50%), Dried Cherries (9%, contain sugar & oil), NC Honey (9%), Canola Oil (7%), Organic Pumpkin Seeds (6%), NC Pecans (6%), Organic Raisins (6%), Organic Fair-Trade Molasses (5%), Organic Sunflower Seeds (2%), Salt, Cinnamon, Cardamom

Half-wheat sourdough sandwich (840g/loaf)

Water (36%), OG ww flour (30%), OG white

One of the first mutual aid societies in the United States was the Free African Society, founded in Philadelphia in 1787 by a group of self-described free Africans "in order to support one another in sickness, and for the benefit of their widows and fatherless children". Members paid in one shilling per month, and after having been a member for a year could receive payments of 3 shillings, 9 pence each month that they were in need. Here in Durham, the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance company itself grew out of a mutual aid society in the late 18th century.

For more, see the GEO article "Other Economies are Possible", online at <http://bit.ly/fe21Ab>



flour (30%), veg oil (3%), NC Honey (1%), Salt

Whole-wheat sandwich bread (840g/loaf)

OG ww flour (57%), Water (35%), Vegetable oil (4%), NC Honey (2%), Fair-Trade Molasses, Salt, Yeast

"Jewish" Rye bread (789g/loaf)

Water (40%), Organic unbleached white bread flour (34%), Organic whole rye flour (16%), Organic whole wheat bread flour (6%), Caraway Seed (1%), Salt (1%), Canola Oil (1%), Cumin, Fennel

Tierra Negra Summer Squash Muffins (470g/half-dozen)

Organic whole-wheat pastry flour (33%), Yellow squash from Tierra Negra farm (23%), Organic coconut milk (14%), Vegan egg substitute (12%: water, ground flaxseed), Fair-trade sugar (12%), Baking soda, Vegetable oil, Lemon juice, Salt, Vanilla, Baking powder, Nutmeg, Cinnamon

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