

The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics *Eisler, Riane
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Accomplished feminist social theorist and activist Eisler follows up her 1987 international bestseller *The Chalice and the Blade* with an inquiry into the nature and causes of "the real wealth of nations" in a contrarian work of grand economic theory. She begins with her original thesis: that we inherit and inhabit a personal and social world that masculinity has built by consistently devaluing and subordinating the feminine. Pointing out the socially and ecologically destructive flaws inherent in both capitalist and socialist economies, she then asserts that our emerging global society needs a new story of what human nature and economics are and can be. For Eisler, economies are social inventions imbedded in larger social systems. She offers a clearly written and compelling account of how the masculine "dominator" mentality brought us to our present juncture, and how a feminine "partnership" mentality can help us redefine key concepts such as "value" and "needs." Citing the most recent economic data and offering numerous relevant examples of places where efforts to practice a caring economics have succeeded both in pre-industrial and modern societies, such as the Nordic nations, the book is ambitious in breadth, depth and scope. Eisler delivers another impressive work that's remarkably well referenced, well argued, insightful and hopeful. (Apr.)