



*A film by* Helena Norberg-Hodge, Steven Gorelick & John Page



# *the* Economics *of* Happiness



*Voices from six continents, including:*

Vandana Shiva, Bill McKibben, David Korten, Zac Goldsmith,  
Michael Shuman, Samdhong Rinpoche, Andrew Simms, Richard Heinberg,  
Chris Johnstone, Juliet Schor, Clive Hamilton, Keibo Oiwa, Rob Hopkins

An ISEC  Production

[www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org](http://www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org)

## **Awards**

### **Best in Show**

Cinema Verde Environmental Film Festival, 2011

### **Award of Merit**

Accolade Film Competition, 2011

### **Honor Award**

Skipping Stones Magazine, 2011

## **Film Festivals**

**Environmental Film Festival  
in the Nation's Capital**  
Washington, DC

**Green Film Festival in Seoul**  
South Korea

**Byron Bay Film Festival**  
Australia

**Peace and Sustainable Living  
Documentary Film Festival**  
Hong Kong

**Green Mountain Film Festival**  
Vermont

**Strawberry Earth Film Festival**  
Amsterdam

**Cape May Film Festival**  
New Jersey

**OLAFest**  
Florida

**World Film Festival Kelowna**  
British Columbia

**Siskiyou Film Festival**  
Oregon

**Awareness Festival**  
Los Angeles

## What People Are Saying About the Film

“A **powerful** new film that cuts deeply to the heart of the global crisis. **Magnificent!**”

– David Suzuki  
television host and environmentalist

“*The Economics of Happiness* takes hold of the baton dropped by former Vice-President Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* and runs it all the way to the finish.”

– Andrew Dash Gillman  
Local First Utah

“It’s a **superb** movie. I think it ought to win an Academy Award.”

– Rob Kall  
Executive Director, OpEdNews

“A rare, **thought-provoking** and **inspiring** new film, sure to make BIG NEWS in the local/global debate.”

– The Santa Barbara Independent

“It is good news indeed to find so persuasive an explanation of our ailing world as *The Economics of Happiness*. This film **connects the dots** between climate chaos, economic meltdown, and our own personal suffering--stress, loneliness, and depression. It presents the localization movement as a systemic alternative to corporate globalization, as well as a strategy that brings community and meaning to our lives.”

– Joanna Macy  
author of *World as Lover, World as Self*

“*The Economics of Happiness* offers a **unique global perspective** on a movement that is often reduced as being too small. Not so. The film tells the story of a grassroots movement for localization that is bubbling up from the cracks of a faltering global economy, in every corner of the world. These are the real 'green shoots' to be hopeful about.”

– Anuradha Mittal  
Executive Director, The Oakland Institute

“This is the **best**, most holistic film I have seen on the subject.”

– Jacob Bomann-Larsen  
Nordic New Economy Network

“While some American reviewers have predicted an Oscar for Best Documentary, others have said that this will do for localization/globalization schism what *An Inconvenient Truth* did for our understanding of climate change.”

– Roger Hanney  
Alternative Media Group of Australia

“A **must-see** film for the future of the planet.”

– Zac Goldsmith  
Member of UK Parliament

“Helena Norberg-Hodge delivers a **powerful** message about globalization: It is the small, local economies around the world that are preserving traditions, cultures, and communities, and ultimately safeguarding our happiness.”

– Alice Waters  
chef, author, and the proprietor of Chez Panisse

“...it is a great honor for me to endorse such an **historic** work.”

– Samdhong Rinpoche  
Prime Minister of Tibetan government in exile

## Synopsis (Short)

*“Going local” is a powerful strategy to help repair our fractured world—our ecosystems, our societies and our selves.*

A central paradox defines our time: although the economy is growing, we are working longer and longer hours and our new comforts and luxuries have not brought us happiness. While the ever-expanding global economy is creating immense wealth for the few, it is leaving the majority worse off. Climate change, unstable financial markets, growing inequality, senseless war, fundamentalism: people know something is fundamentally wrong. Across the world they are coming together in the spirit of resistance and renewal. A movement is growing to re-create more just and sustainable communities and re-invent economies based on a new paradigm--an *economics of happiness*.

*The Economics of Happiness* describes a world moving simultaneously in two opposing directions: while government and Big Business push for a globalized economy based on high technology and increased trade, people all over the world are working from the grassroots to nurture smaller scale, ecological, *local* economies.

We hear from a chorus of voices from six continents including Samdhong Rinpoche, the Prime Minister of Tibet's government in exile, Vandana Shiva, Bill McKibben, David Korten and Zac Goldsmith. *The Economics of Happiness* restores our faith in humanity, and challenges us to believe that it is possible to build a better world.

## Synopsis (Full)

Economic globalization has led to a massive expansion in the scale and power of big business and banking. It has also worsened nearly every problem we face: fundamentalism and ethnic conflict; climate chaos and species extinction; financial instability and unemployment. There are personal costs too. For the majority of people on the planet, life is becoming increasingly stressful. We have less time for friends and family and we face mounting pressures at work.

*The Economics of Happiness* describes a world moving simultaneously in two opposing directions. On the one hand, an unholy alliance of governments and big business continues to promote globalization and the consolidation of corporate power. At the same time, people all over the world are resisting those policies, demanding a re-regulation of trade and finance—and, far from the old institutions of power, they're starting to forge a very different future. Communities are coming together to rebuild more human scale, ecological economies based on a new paradigm – an *economics of localization*.

The film shows how globalization breeds cultural self-rejection, competition and divisiveness; how it structurally promotes the growth of slums and urban sprawl; how it is decimating democracy. We learn about the obscene waste that results from trade for the sake of trade: apples sent from the UK to South Africa to be washed and waxed, then shipped back to British supermarkets; tuna caught off the coast of America, flown to Japan to be processed, then flown back to the US. We hear about the suicides of Indian farmers; about the demise of land-based cultures in every corner of the world.

The second half of *The Economics of Happiness* provides not only inspiration, but practical solutions. Arguing that economic localization is a strategic solution multiplier that can solve our most serious problems, the film spells out

the policy changes needed to enable local businesses to survive and prosper. We are introduced to community initiatives that are moving the localization agenda forward: urban gardens in Detroit, Michigan; the Transition Town movement in Totnes, UK; and hands-on education in Yokohama, Japan. We see the benefits of an expanding local food movement that is restoring biological diversity, communities and local economies worldwide. And we are introduced to Via Campesina, the largest social movement in the world, with more than 400 million members.

We hear from a chorus of voices from six continents, including Vandana Shiva, Bill McKibben, David Korten, Samdhong Rinpoche, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Michael Shuman, Zac Goldsmith and Keibo Oiwa. They tell us that climate change and peak oil give us little choice: we need to *localize*, to bring the economy home. The good news is that as we move in this direction we will begin not only to heal the earth but also to restore our own sense of well-being. *The Economics of Happiness* challenges us to restore our faith in humanity, challenges us to believe that it is possible to build a better world

## Technical Specifics

<b>Name of Film:</b>	<i>The Economics of Happiness</i>
<b>Produced by:</b>	Helena Norberg-Hodge
<b>Written and Directed by:</b>	Helena Norberg-Hodge, Steven Gorelick and John Page
<b>Production Countries:</b>	USA, Nicaragua, France, Germany, UK, Australia, India, Thailand, Japan, and China.
<b>Production Years:</b>	2005-2010
<b>Screening Format:</b>	Color DVD PAL or NTSC, Region "0"
<b>Running Time:</b>	68 minutes
<b>Film Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org">www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org</a>
<b>Poster Download:</b>	<a href="http://www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org/community-screenings">www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org/community-screenings</a>
<b>Online screener:</b>	contact <a href="mailto:info@theeconomicsofhappiness.org">info@theeconomicsofhappiness.org</a> for link and password
<b>B-roll clips and stills:</b>	contact <a href="mailto:info@theeconomicsofhappiness.org">info@theeconomicsofhappiness.org</a> for link.

## A Note from Producer and Director Helena Norberg-Hodge

**After five years of production we are pleased to announce the release of *The Economics of Happiness*.**

At the International Society for Ecology & Culture, we have spent the last three decades raising awareness of the underlying causes of the many crises we face today. From climate change to terrorism, financial insecurity to the epidemic of depression—we have argued that most of our most pressing problems can be traced back to an unsustainable global economic system. More importantly, we have pointed to a strategic way to address these problems simultaneously: *economic localization*.

*The Economics of Happiness* offers not only a big-picture analysis of globalization, but a powerful message of hope for the future. The thinkers and activists we interviewed for the film come from every continent, and represent the interests of the great majority of people on the planet today. Their message is unambiguous: in order to respect and revitalize diversity, both cultural and biological, we need to localize economic activity. They argue that a systemic shift—away from globalizing economic activity and towards the local allows us to reduce our ecological footprint while increasing human well-being.

When people start connecting the dots between climate change, global economic instability and their own personal suffering—stress, loneliness,

depression—there is the potential for a movement that will truly change the world. Featuring a wealth of diverse perspectives, the film illustrates these often hidden connections. We go beyond the narrow analysis of the mainstream to show that antagonism between human needs and the needs of nature is not inevitable.

Resistance to further economic globalization has created powerful new alliances: deep ecologists linking hands with labor unionists, independent businessmen collaborating with small farmers. Now, at the grassroots, localization is also bridging divides in a completely new way—bringing people together across ethnic, religious, economic and even partisan divides.

We have found the process of making this film incredibly inspiring. Simply to see the multitude of grassroots movements afoot has been heartening—a testimony to human goodwill and resilience. We hope that *The Economics of Happiness* will bring the same inspiration to viewers around the world. It provides insight, hope, reassurance and above all, motivation to join in the growing localization movement. Bringing the economy closer to home can not only save us from environmental and economic catastrophe, it can help us to re-discover those essential relationships—both with the living world and with one another—that ultimately give our lives meaning and joy.

## Filmmaker Biographies

### Producer Helena Norberg-Hodge

Helena Norberg-Hodge is the founder and director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) and its predecessor, the Ladakh Project. She is the author of *Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh* and co-author of *Bringing the Food Economy Home*. Her articles have appeared in numerous journals such as *The Ecologist*, *Resurgence*, and *YES!* magazine. As founder of the Ladakh Ecological Development Group, Norberg-Hodge received the Right Livelihood award, or “Alternative Nobel Prize”.

### Co-Director Steven Gorelick

Steven Gorelick is author of *Small is Beautiful, Big is Subsidized* and co-author of *Bringing the Food Economy Home*. Gorelick's work has been featured in *The Ecologist* and *Resurgence* magazines. He currently serves as US Program Director for The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC), is an adjunct professor at Sterling College, and operates a small-scale organic farm with his wife and children.

### Co-Director John Page

John Page is the producer and director of the award-winning film *Ancient Futures*, as well as the short documentary *The Future of Progress*. He is co-author of *From the Ground Up: Rethinking Industrial Agriculture*, and a contributing author of *The Future of Progress*. Page's articles on development and globalization have appeared in *The Ecologist* and *Resurgence* magazines. He currently serves as Programs Director for The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC).

## Voices from the Film

### Jan Barham

Jan Barham, the Mayor of Byron Shire, is the first member of the Green Party elected mayor in Australia. She has been involved with local environment groups and the Green Party for almost two decades.

### Ronald Colman

Ronald Colman is founder and Executive Director of GPIAtlantic. Colman taught for 20 years at the university level and was a researcher and speech-writer at the United Nations. He has researched and written many reports on indicators of community wellbeing and environmental quality. Colman advises governments and communities internationally on indicator work, and regularly speaks on the subject to interested groups.

### Eliana Amparo Apaza Espillico

Eliana Espillico is a member of PRATEC—El Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (The Andean Project of Peasant Technologies), based in the Peruvian Andes. The group works to affirm and invigorate Andean culture and peasant agriculture and provide solutions to the cultural erosion and socioeconomic problems of Andean populations.

### Zac Goldsmith

Zac Goldsmith is an internationally renowned environmentalist and a Conservative MP for Richmond Park in the UK. For nine years Goldsmith served as editor of the popular environmental magazine, *The Ecologist*. His latest book is *The Constant Economy: How to Build a Stable Society*.

### Daniel Greenberg

Daniel Greenberg is Executive Director of Living Routes, an ecovillage study-abroad program in Massachusetts, and a member of the Global Ecovillage Educators for Sustainable Earth. Greenberg has studied and directed community-based educational programs for over 20 years. He has developed accredited educational programs around the world.

### Clive Hamilton

Clive Hamilton is a public intellectual and Professor of Public Ethics at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, a joint centre of the Australian National University, Charles Sturt University and the University of Melbourne. Hamilton is a best-selling author whose books include *Growth Fetish*; *Scorcher: The Dirty Politics of Climate Change*; and *The Freedom Paradox: Towards a Post-secular Ethics*.

### Richard Heinberg

Richard Heinberg is Senior Fellow of the Post Carbon Institute and is widely regarded as one of the world's foremost experts on oil depletion and its consequences. He is the award-winning author of eight books including: *Powerdown: Options and Actions for a Post-Carbon World* and *Blackout*. Heinberg has authored scores of articles that have appeared in such journals as *The Ecologist*, *The American Prospect*, *Public Policy Research*, and *YES!* magazine.

### Rob Hopkins

Rob Hopkins is the co-founder of Transition Town Totnes and of the Transition Network. He is author of many articles and the popular book *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience*. He is the winner of the 2008 Schumacher Award, an Ashoka Fellow, a Fellow of the Post Carbon Institute, and a Trustee of the Soil Association.

## **Pracha Hutanuwatr**

Pracha Hutanuwatr is an author and scholar of globalization and socially engaged Buddhism from Thailand. He is Director of the Wongsanit Ashram near Bangkok; Program Director for Grassroots Leadership Training; and a board member of the Spirit in Education Movement. His latest book is *Asian Futures: Dialogues for Change* (co-authored with Ramu Manivannan).

## **Chris Johnstone**

Chris Johnstone is a specialist in positive social and psychological change. Johnstone works in the British NHS as an addictions specialist, teaches at several universities and has lectured around the world. He is editor of *The Great Turning Times* and author of the book, *Find Your Power*.

## **David Korten**

David Korten is president and founder of the People-Centered Development Forum, co-founder and board chair of the Positive Futures Network, and a board member of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies. He has published hundreds of articles and several books, including *Agenda for a New Economy: From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth*; and *When Corporations Rule the World*.

## **Rodrigo Lopes**

Rodrigo Lopes is a leader of the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST), which has successfully pressured the Brazilian government to redistribute unused land to millions of landless peasants. He has overseen several social agroecology projects throughout the MST settlements. He has also served as an administrator of the National Florestan Fernandes School of Agrarian Reform in the state of Sao Paulo.

## **Bill McKibben**

Bill McKibben is the author of a dozen books, including *The End of Nature* and *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. A former staff writer for *The New Yorker*, he writes regularly for *Harper's*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *The New York Review of Books*. He is a scholar in residence at Middlebury College and lives in Vermont with his wife and their daughter.

## **Keibo Oiwa**

Keibo Oiwa is a cultural anthropologist, environmentalist, prominent public figure and professor of International Studies at Meiji Gakuin University. Oiwa is founder of the Sloth Club, Japan's leading 'Slow Life' environmental group. His books include *Slow Is Beautiful* and *The Japan We Never Knew: A Journey of Discovery* (co-authored with David Suzuki). Oiwa lives in Yokohama with his family.

## **Mohau Pheko**

Mohau Pheko is Coordinator of the African Gender and Trade Network (GENTA), based in South Africa. GENTA delivers economic and social research to parliamentarians, women's organizations and civil servants. As an independent political economist she has advised governments, corporations and international aid programs

## **Samdhong Rinpoche**

Samdhong Rinpoche was elected as the first Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in 2001. In addition to being a prominent political leader, he has served as the director of the Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies, and has led a distinguished career as a spiritual teacher, professor and leading Tibetan scholar of Buddhism and Gandhian thought.

## **Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche**

Khyentse Norbu is a Bhutanese lama and an accomplished filmmaker whose films include *The Cup* and *Travellers and Magicians*. Recognized as the main incarnation of Dzongsar Khyentse (1894-1959) he has studied since childhood with many masters, including H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.

## **Mary-Jayne Rust**

Mary-Jayne Rust is an internationally recognized Jungian analyst and art therapist. She has been writing and lecturing on the links between psychotherapy and environmental issues for many years. Her work has appeared in *Resurgence; The Journal of Psychotherapy and Politics International*; and *Therapy Today*.

## **Juliet Schor**

Juliet Schor taught at Harvard University for 17 years before becoming Professor of Sociology at Boston College. She is a respected scholar of economic sociology and consumerism, and a best-selling author whose books include *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture*; and *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*.

## **Balaji Shankar**

Balaji Shankar is founder of the Kumarappa Foundation, an NGO committed to Gandhian economic thought, the maintenance of self-reliant villages and "economies of permanence." Shankar is also a successful organic farmer, producing numerous indigenous varieties of legumes, rice, ragi, millets, fruit trees, vegetables and dairy products. His organic farming techniques have been featured in *The Hindu* newspaper.

## **Vandana Shiva**

Vandana Shiva is a physicist, ecofeminist, environmental activist and author. She is founder and director of the organization Navdanya, and is currently based in New Delhi. She has written numerous books and hundreds of papers in leading scientific and technical journals. Her latest books include *Soil Not Oil* and *Earth Democracy*. She is the recipient of the 1993 Right Livelihood Award, also known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize".

## **Michael Shuman**

Michael Shuman is an expert in community-based economic development and currently serves as Director of Research and Public Policy for BALLE. He has authored or edited seven books, including *The Small Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global Competition* and *Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in the Global Age*.

## **Charles Simmons**

Charles Simmons teaches journalism and media law at Eastern Michigan University. He is the Co-Chair of the Committee for the Political Resurrection of Detroit and is on the board of directors of Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice. His articles have appeared in national and international newspapers, magazines and academic journals.

## **Andrew Simms**

Andrew Simms is Policy Director at the New Economics Foundation. He is the author of the reports *The Green New Deal*, *Clone Town Britain* and the books *Tescopoly: How One Shop Came Out on Top* and *Why it Matters* and *Ecological Debt: Global Warming and the Wealth of Nations*. He serves on the board of Greenpeace UK.

## About ISEC

The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote systemic solutions to today's social and environmental crises. Its in-depth educational work seeks to reveal the root causes of those crises—from unemployment to climate change, from ethnic conflict to loss of biodiversity—while promoting grassroots and policy-level strategies for ecological and community renewal.

For over three decades ISEC, and its predecessor, The Ladakh Project, have organized, hosted and delivered hundreds of lectures, film screenings, workshops and international conferences across the world—from high on the Tibetan plateau to the UK, from Australia to South Africa, Japan and the USA. Its staff experts regularly participate in events ranging in size from informal community meetings to large international gatherings. ISEC also produce books, articles, pamphlets and films. Its materials are used in high school and university classrooms internationally and have been invaluable resources for individuals and NGOs in every corner of the world.

## Films By and About ISEC

### Paradise with Side Effects (2004)

*Paradise with Side Effects* follows two Ladakhi women on a trip to England as part of an ISEC "reality tour." These reality tours introduce Ladakhi participants to everyday life in the West as it really is, thereby helping to balance the glamorized images of the modern world that are generated by tourism, advertising and the media. Director Claus Schenk originally made this film for German and French television.

### Local Futures (1998)

A sequel to the *Ancient Futures* film, giving examples of ISEC's systemic approach to the problems of the global economy. Challenges the commonly-held belief that globalization is inevitable or "evolutionary" and argues that we need to reduce the distance between consumers and producers to strengthen local economies and communities.

### Ancient Futures: Learning From Ladakh (1993)

*Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh* is based on Helena Norberg-Hodge's book of the same title. In America, it won several film festival awards, including a "Gold Apple" at the National Educational Film and Video Festival. In England it was a lead film at the London International Environmental Film Festival. It was also broadcast nationwide on Canadian television, as part of David Suzuki's popular series, "The Nature of Things".

*Ancient Futures* provides a richly intimate look at the traditional culture of Ladakh, and an unflinching description of the psychological, social, and environmental costs of western-style "modernization". The film chronicles some of the negative impacts that unfolded in Ladakh after it was opened to "development" in 1975, challenging viewers to re-examine the meaning of "progress".

Together with the book, *Ancient Futures* has been translated into more than forty languages. In all of these languages and many more, people around the world have told us, "This is our story too."

### The Future of Progress (1992)

A 30-minute video compilation of interviews with Edward Goldsmith, Martin Khor, Vandana Shiva, and Helena Norberg-Hodge. A concise and powerful challenge to the prevailing theories of development.

# *the* Economics of Happiness

Produced by Helena Norberg-Hodge

Written and directed by Helena Norberg-Hodge, Steven Gorelick and John Page

*"A must-see film for the future of the planet"*

-Zac Goldsmith, Member of UK Parliament

A documentary about the worldwide movement for economic localization

Featuring a chorus of voices from six continents, including Vandana Shiva, Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche, Bill McKibben, Pracha Hutuanuwatr, David Korten, Rodrigo Lopes, Michael Shuman, Samdhong Rinpoche, Rob Hopkins, Mohau Pheko, Keibo Oiwa, and Juliet Schor.

From the makers of the award-winning film *Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh*

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