

The Future of Consumer Society and the Potential of New Co-operative Arrangements

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There are growing indications that the system of mass consumption that blossomed in the US and other countries following World War II is now eroding due to demographic ageing, increasing income inequality, and political paralysis. At the same time, steady jobs are being replaced by freelancing and contingent work. Such circumstances are making perpetuation of consumerist lifestyles difficult. The rise of the sharing economy, the growth of do-it-yourself production, and the spreading popularity of economic localization are evidence that people are striving to find new ways to ensure livelihoods for themselves and their families in the face of profound change. Historical experience points to the importance of mutual assistance during eras of transformational upheaval, and this presentation will outline the role that worker-consumer co-operatives could play during a turbulent period when government-sponsored initiatives are unlikely to be forthcoming.

Maurie is also an associate faculty member with both the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University and the Rutgers/NJIT Urban Systems Program, as well as an associate fellow at the Tellus Institute. He is editor of the journal *Sustainability: Science, Practice, and Policy* and co-founder and executive board member of the Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative. His books include *The Future of Consumer Society: Prospects for Sustainability in the New Economy*; *Putting Sustainability into Practice: Applications and Advances in Research on Sustainable Consumption* (with Emily Huddart Kennedy and Naomi Krogman); and *Innovations in Sustainable Consumption: New Economics, Socio-technical Transitions and Social Practices* (with Halina Szejnwald Brown and Philip Vergragt).

Friday, 28 April 2017, 2:30–3:30 pm
Prairie Room, Diefenbaker Building, U of S Campus
Reception to follow in the River Room, Diefenbaker Building

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