

Kate Raworth's *Doughnut Economics* gets animated & includes students' ideas

By David W Brown Middletown, Rhode Island June 2019

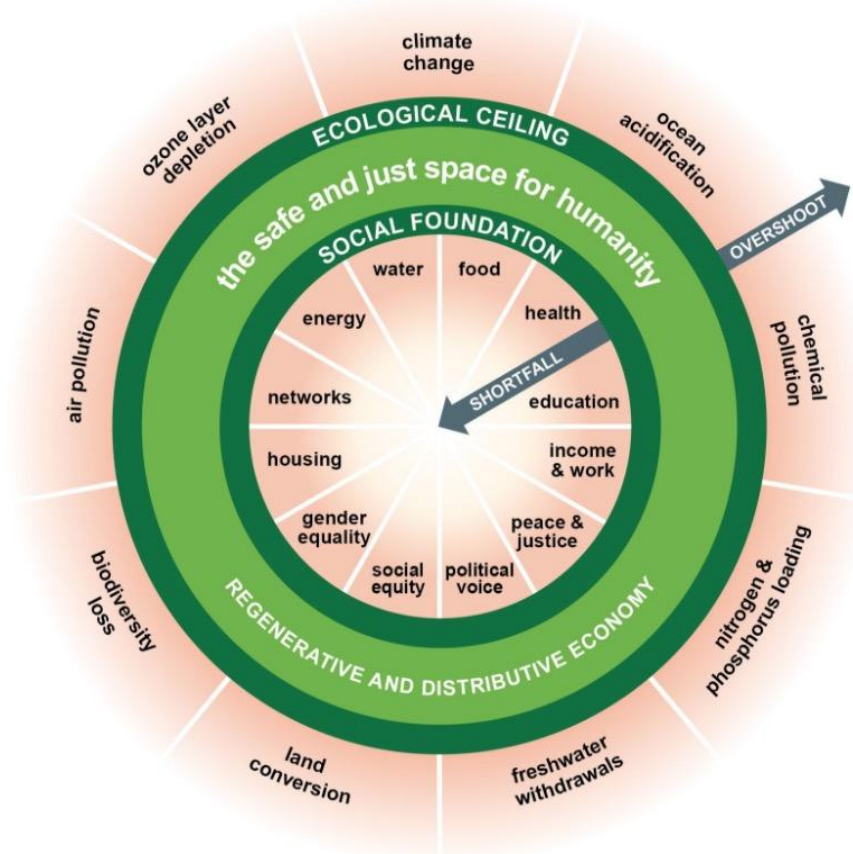
With thanks to Cheryl Brown for her thoughts about Kate's diagram

If I were a young student again, I'd be hearing about the world's urgent human needs and ecological limits. But the disjointed headlines and debates about how to deal with these would have me confused. I'd be wishing for something that relates those big global challenges to my own learning and life planning in a connected way.

We economists can help more than we have been. We could link our studies of specific problems, places and policies to the broader picture. We could help pinpoint the key choices and considerations. We could be communicating our concepts and findings to more people in clearer ways.

So it has been refreshing to find that English economist Kate Raworth is 1) embracing key concerns of human wellbeing and world survival that are on the minds of many; 2) bringing economics to bear on those concerns; and 3) seeking to reach students, teachers, adult citizens and leaders who are not economists.

She has published a book: **Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: 7 ways to think like a 21st century economist*** (Chelsea Green, White River VT, 2017). It features a neat diagram—the kind that one can use as a handout or backdrop in classes and discussions, to help tie things together and view specifics in broad perspective.



Since 2017, Kate Raworth has reached out further to young people as well as adults via a lively website which even has [animations that depict her 7 Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist](#). Kate's seven ways are:

1. *Change the goal.*
2. *See the big picture.*
3. *Nurture human nature.*
4. *Get savvy with systems.*
5. *Design to distribute.*
6. *Create to regenerate.*
7. *Be agnostic about growth.*

Kate Raworth's interesting blog keeps her approach up to date: <https://www.kateraworth.com/blog/>
 In it she looks at certain countries, international meetings, university curricula, and writings of others through the lens of Doughnut Economics. There's even an Economic Man vs. Humanity puppet rap!

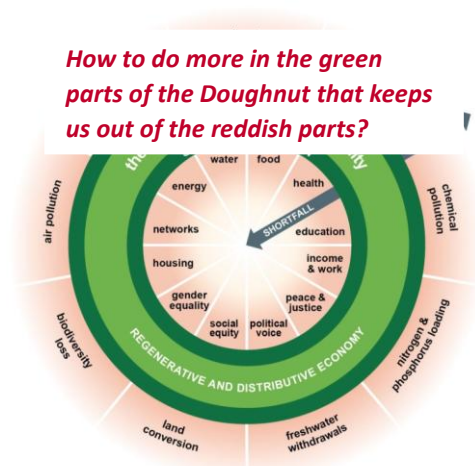
In early 2019 Kate had a contest that encouraged students to send in their ideas about key components of an **8th way to think like a 21st century economist**. On her blog (see above) she has combined their entries into a beehive of fresh ingredients for economic analyses.

All this does not mean that traditional economics should be tossed out. Within the broad frame of *Doughnut Economics*, there are still needs for in-depth facts and analyses...

- of supply and demand (what would happen if no interventions?),
- of best ways to achieve ecological aims in our own surroundings,
- of options for affording equitable access to education, jobs, housing, etc. and much more.

Economics isn't the only social science that's useful. Econ focuses on what to try to do. Fields like social psychology, cultural anthropology, behavioral decision making, diplomatic negotiation, social marketing, and development administration are very useful too. They can help shape how to get things moving faster and further in those directions amid the diverse hurdles that show up in this world.

These analyses shouldn't be all "macro" from the outside looking in. Equally important are personal stories, grassroots surveys, case studies, and realistic calculations that look at choices and pathways through the eyes of real people. What prevents individual communities and enterprises from meeting key social needs? What would it take to enable and spur them to adopt good ecological practices, and still provide economic livelihoods?



The first page of Kate Raworth's book has this:
The most powerful tool in economics is not money, nor even algebra. It is a pencil. Because with a pencil you can redraw the world.

I'll bet that you and others who read this could take cues from her, and redraw your own worlds in your own unique ways!