Marjorie Kelly, *Owning our Future: The Emerging Ownership Revolution.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2011. ISBN 978-1-60509-310-9. Paperback $19.95.

In 2001, Marjorie Kelly proposed an alternative to the existing nature of ownership, corporations, and wealth in her book The Divine Right of Capital. In her most recent work, Owning our Future, she follows up on her examination of the role of ownership in the economy and advocates the move to a generative economy—an economy "whose fundamental architecture tends to create beneficial rather than harmful outcomes." In other words, it is designed to "create the conditions for life" as opposed to our current economy which she describes as extractive—designed to extract maximum wealth.

According to Kelly, the financial collapse was ultimately caused by the instability and imbalance caused by extractive ownership. The extractive model has been particularly destructive in the mortgage and banking industry, causing an abnormally large amount of wealth to flow up the financial sphere leaving families and communities weakened. Kelly focuses on the struggle of a particular family, changing identifying information to protect their privacy, but the story she provides is a harrowing one. The family ultimately lost their house of thirteen years after a series of mortgages. The house stood empty for years thereafter, becoming overgrown until someone lined up the financing to buy it.

By this time, however, there was no owner to be located. Somewhere along the line, a financing company had gone bankrupt and even the trail of records and deeds went cold. In the quest to make money, the banks had been so quick to sell off the family's mortgage the ownership of the house ended up "deconstructed beyond recognition." Kelly claims that what happened to this family is ultimately the key reason in the collapse of the larger economy—it's an unfair and thus unstable system. The banks put money before the wellbeing of the family—a type of behavior expected and encouraged across markets in an extractive system of economy.

Kelly suggests using ecological values as the basis of a generative economy, and encourages the creation of "living companies through five core elements of generative ownership design: living purpose, rooted membership, mission-controlled governance, stakeholder finance, and ethical networks." The first step in redesigning our models of ownership is to look at the emerging concern with sustainability, community and sufficiency. An economy based on these values would turn the focus of business on community, sufficiency and sustaining life.

By creating "living companies" that focus on creating the conditions for life rather than generating a large profit for a handful of shareholders, a new economy would be created where "all life can flourish for generations to come." (147) She provides examples of companies around the world—Organic Valley in Wisconsin, the John Lewis Partnership in the UK, Minwind in Minnesota—which she deemed positive models that will draw people in and plant the seeds.

The problem began, as Kelly says, with the belief that the economic explosion would go on forever, but now with less growth, businesses must look at how to balance the system, rather than try to grow the wealth of the wealthier by extracting money from the workers. Within this new system, happiness lies in the ability to "recognize that enough is enough. . . [that] wealth is in reality a kind of relentless, extractive demand laid on the shoulders of those least able to withstand it."

Despite the complex economic concepts and ideas presented by Kelly, she explains them in a way that will be accessible to most general readers. Kelly shows that owning your future is feasible for any group from a housing development, or wind farm, to a multi-million dollar organization like the John Lewis Partnership, and her work provides a thought provoking foundation for changing the understanding of economics. Some have interpreted this generative economy as offering an alternative for capitalism; however, employee ownership can be understood as a better form of capitalism, in which everyone who participates shares in the profits.

-Felicia Wetzig