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# Ecofeminism Turns

## **Ecology Bad - Subjectivity**

Use of a land ethic strips individual identities. No value to life unless related to the land.

Vance, 95[Linda. "Sexist Words, Speciesist Roots" *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations* by Carol J. Adams & Josephine Donovan. Pg. 173]

Another popular theory that tells a story about animals is "the land ethic," a characteristically holistic approach that encourages humans to stop imagining ourselves as superior beings morally entitled to dominate nature, and instead to see ourselves as simple citizens of a biotic community, no more or less privileged than a frog, a tree, or a river. The important unit of moral consideration is "the land," the entire community of beings and processes. Aldo Leopold, whose work has formed the basis of much subsequent holistic theorizing, believed that all action could be judged according to a single moral principle: "A thing is good when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" ( 224). Generally stated, then, the land ethic takes no notice of individuals except insofar as their presence or absence affects the community. Although it avoids the crude "good animal/bad animal" fantasy of anthropocentric positions, the land ethic continues to distinguish between classes of animals. For domestic animals, the outcome of the story is predetermined: they will be meat. For wild animals, a degree of chance is possible: although, as land ethic proponent Baird Callicott observes, "the most fundamental fact of life in the biotic community is eating...and being eaten" ( 57 ), wild animals may exercise their own cunning, luck, and strength to effectively coauthor their life stories. Most significantly, however, the land ethic does not allow for the consideration of particularly situated individuals: everything exists as a specimen, a representative of a type, and is judged as such. An individual life has no value -- unless, of course, that individual is among the last of its kind. And while conflicts between individuals may arise, they are irrelevant unless their resolution will affect "the land."

## Feminism Bad - Nature

Feminism exploits animals’ fate and diffuses patriarchy

Adams, 90[Carol J: teacher at Perkins School of Theology, Dallas. The Sexual Politics of Meat. Pg. 57-58]

Animals’ fate in butchering is exploited in the oppression of women, and it is exploited by feminists concerned with stopping women’s oppression. While animals are the absent objects, their fate is continually summoned through the metaphor of butchering. Butchering is that which creates or causes one’s existence as meat; metaphorical “butchering” silently invokes the violent act of animal slaughter while reinforcing raped women’s sense of themselves as “pieces of meat.” Andrea Dworkin observes that “the favorite conceit of male culture is that experience can be fractured, literally its bones split, and that one can examine the splinters as if they were not part of the bone, or the bone as if it were not part of the body.” We dwell on the T-bone steak or the drumstick as if it were not part of a body.) Dworkin’s dissection of the body of culture resounds with meaning when we consider the concept of animals’ status as absent referent: “Everything is split apart: intellect from feeling and/or imagination; act from consequence; symbol from reality; mind from body. Some part substitutes for the whole and the whole is sacrificed to the part.”64 Dworkin’s metaphorical description of patriarchal culture depends on the reader’s knowledge that animals are butchered in this way. Images of butchering suffuse patriarchal culture. A steakhouse in New Jersey was called “Adam’s Rib.” Who do they think they were eating? The Hustler, prior to its incarnation as a pornographic magazine, was a Cleveland restaurant whose menu presented a woman’s buttocks on the cover and proclaimed, “We serve the best meat in town!” Who? A woman is shown being ground up in a meat grinder as Hustler magazine proclaims: “Last All Meat Issue.” Women’s buttocks are stamped as “Choice Cuts” on an album cover entitled “Choice Cuts (Pure Food and Drug Act).” When asked about their sexual fantasies, many men describe “pornographic scenes of disembodies, faceless, impersonal body parts: breasts, legs, vaginas, buttocks.”65 Meat for the average consumer has been reduced to exactly that: faceless body parts, breasts, legs, udders, buttocks. Frank Perdue plays with images of sexual butchering in a poster encouraging chicken consumption: “Are you a breast man or a leg man?”

## Feminism Bad - Nature

Feminist analysis often erases animal oppression, just as patriarchy does

Adams, 90 [Carol J: teacher at Perkins School of Theology, Dallas. The Sexual Politics of Meat. Pg. 60-61]

In constructing stories about violence against women, feminists have drawn on the same set of cultural images as their oppressors. Feminist critics perceive the violence inherent in representations that collapse sexuality and consumption and have titled this nexus “carnivorous arrogance” (Simone De Beauvoir), “gynocidal gluttony” (Mary Daly), “sexual cannibalism” (Kate Miller), “psychic cannibalism” (Andrea Dworkin), “metaphysical cannibalism” (Ti-Grace Atkinson); racism as it intersects with sexism has been defined by bell hooks in distinctions based on meat eating: “The truth is—in sexist America, where women are objectified extensions of male ego, black women have been labeled hamburger and white women prime rib.”72 These feminist theorists take us to the intersection of the oppression of women and the oppression of animals and then do an immediate about-face, seizing the function of the absent referent to forward women’s issues and so imitating and complementing a patriarchal structure. Dealing in symbols and similes that express humiliation, objectification, and violation is an understandable attempt to impose order on a violently fragmented female sexual reality. When we use meat and butchering as metaphors for women’s oppression, we express our own hog-squeal of the universe while silencing the primal hog-squeal of Ursula Hamdress herself. When radical feminist talk as if cultural exchanges with animals are literally true in relationship to women, they exploit and co-opt what is actually done to animals. It could be argued that the use of these metaphors is as exploitative as the posing of Ursula Hamdress: an anonymous pig somewhere was dressed, posed, and photographed. Was she sedated to keep that pose or was she, perhaps, dead? Radical feminist theory participates linguistically in exploiting and denying the absent referent by not including in their vision Ursula Hamdress’s fate. They butcher the animal/woman cultural exchanges represented in the operation of the absent referent and then address themselves solely to women, thus capitulating to the absent referent, part of the same construct they wish to change.73 What is absent rom much feminist theory that relies on metaphors of animals’ oppression for illuminating women’s experience is the reality behind the metaphor. When Mary Daly suggests raiding the Playboy’s playground to let out “the bunnies, the bitches, the beavers, the squirrels, the chicks, the pussycats, the cows, the nags, the foxy ladies, the old bats and biddies, so that they can at last begin naming themselves” we, her readers know that she is talking about women and not about actual bunnies, bitches, beavers, and so on.74 Butr, I argue, she should be. Otherwise, feminist theorists’ use of language describes, reflects, and perpetuates oppression by denying the extent to which these oppressions are culturally analogous.

## Feminism Bad - Nature

Linking animal oppression to women locks them both into inferior positions

Dunayer, 95[Joan. "Sexist Words, Speciesist *Roots" Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations* by Carol J. Adams & Josephine Donovan. Pg. 11]

Through massive and sustained exploitation, humans inflict enormous suffering on other animals. Humans generally justify their exploitation of other species by categorizing "animals" as inferior and therefore rightfully subjugated while categorizing humans as superior and naturally entitled to dominate. So inveterate and universal is the false dichotomy of animal vs. human-arid so powerfully evocative-that symbolically associating women with "animal" assists in their oppression. Applying images of denigrated nonhuman species to women labels women inferior and available for abuse; attaching images of the aggrandized human species to men designates them superior and entitled to exploit. Language is a powerful agent in assigning the imagery of animal vs. human. Feminists have long objected to "animal" pejoratives for women and the pseudogenerics man and mankind. These linguistic habits are rooted in speciesism, the assumption that other animals are inferior to humans and do not warrant equal consideration and respect. 1"

### Addressing the issue of women does not solve other specific environmental issues, and the wholesale rejection links.

### Nagl-Docekal ’99 [Herta: Professor of Philosophy at the University of Vienna, Austria. “The Feminist Critique of Reason Revisited,” *Hypatia*, 14.1, 1999.]

**The thesis that human beings dominate Nature can just as well be formulated without allusion to gender relations.** If it turns out that this thesis itself is in need of critical discussion—for instance in reference to today's environmental crisis—then we are dealing with a specific problem. **We cannot condemn the human domination of Nature simply by underscoring that women's subordination is unacceptable.** In other words, the **demand for women's liberation does not make it necessary**, by the same token**, to give up structures of subordination presumed to be found in any other area of reality.** Though **Keller's** claim to discern explicitly patriarchal thoughts in Bacon's work is doubtlessly justified, her **critique loses plausibility as she considers the detected patriarchal traits a sufficient reason for charging Bacon's entire conception of science to be marked by a masculine bias.** That Keller fails to take issue, in detail, with Bacon's use of gendered comparisons adds an, no doubt, unintended element to her thought: the **wholesale objection** she raises **presupposes** that she, instead of articulating a repudiation, tacitly adopts this very **alignment of scientific rationality with maleness.**

## Feminism Bad - Nature

### Must challenge flawed epistemologies. They equate woman with nature. Wholesale rejection of domination doesn’t solve distinctive problems with the environment.

### Nagl-Docekal ’99 (Herta: Professor of Philosophy at the University of Vienna, Austria. “The Feminist Critique of Reason Revisited,” *Hypatia*, 14.1, 1999.)

Keller's understanding of science is burdened with this problem, as can be seen in the way she seeks to prove the masculine character of modern science's concept of rationality. As illustrated by the previous quotes, she argues that **Nature is oppressed in two ways: on the one hand, insofar as it is the object of knowledge and, on the other, insofar as it is dominated. Supposing this description of Nature's oppression is correct, the decisive question still remains unanswered: Why should this statement be taken to imply necessarily that modern science is based upon a subordination of woman? Evidence for a male claim to supremacy can only be found here on the condition that "woman" has already been identified with Nature.** Yet **this equation** is by no means compelling. On the contrary, it **must be challenged**, especially **from a feminist perspective.** The reason this problematic implication of Keller's argument has hardly been addressed until now may be that some of the motives behind her critique of science as such are legitimate. **It is**, in fact**, necessary to reject an epistemology that hinges on a naive confrontation between subject and object.** Likewise, the **scientism of modern research is in need of critical investigation from the point of view that it introduces into the realm of the humanities a way of looking at people that supports sociotechnological kinds of action.** But **what is problematic here is not that science has connotations of masculinity; rather, the problems are with the specific concepts of subject/object relationship and of scientism that call for a more sophisticated theory.** Further, we must consider that both these issues have already led to very complex debates that are in the center of the contemporary theory of science and the humanities. Keller's work, however, tends to oversimplify. A couple of examples must suffice here. **Where Keller denounces domination in general, a wide range of distinctions is necessary—say, between the justifiably criticized disenfranchisement of human beings** on the one hand **and**, on the other hand, **a use of natural resources that is necessary for** human **survival. Also, considering the world's current ecological crisis, a wholesale dismissal of thoughts about human control over Nature is not advisable.** Rather, in this case, **it is necessary to distinguish between irreversible destruction of natural resources and the kind of use that leaves intact the resources' regenerative potential.**

## Feminism Bad - Nature

**Comparing woman to nature falls prey to the problems of animism, which is anthropomorphic, denies agency, and assumes hierarchies within ability to theorize**

**Nagl-Docekal ’99** (Herta: Professor of Philosophy at the University of Vienna, Austria. “The Feminist Critique of Reason Revisited,” *Hypatia*, 14.1, 1999.)

**Keller's premises also do not give her the means to address the differences between the natural and the social sciences. Based on her subsumption of woman to Nature, she claims that the scientist's attitude should be inspired by the model of empathy**—of love, in fact—**between subjects.** Thus, she endorses [End Page 55] June Goodfield's point of view: "If you really want to understand about a tumour, you've got to be a tumour" (1981, 63). Goodfield also stands for the view that, in the practice of scientific research, "the best analogy is always love" (1981, 213), a view Keller endorses, too. [7](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hypatia/v014/14.1nagl_docekal.html" \l "FOOT7) Now it appears dubious whether the concept of love is appropriate at all as a category in theory of science, but it could still be interpreted in terms of the hermeneutic understanding of the social sciences. However, **the vague use of the concept when applied to science in general makes Keller's suggestions for a renewal of the natural sciences** sound almost **animistic.** The topic of "animism" is addressed also by Val Plumwood, but in a twofold manner. While she is criticizing "an anthropomorphic 'respiritualisation' of nature," Plumwood endows the term "animism" with some positive connotations (1993, 136). Her general aim is certainly plausible: rejecting a merely mechanistic model of nature, she pleads for a more complex conception. Yet the way she seeks to achieve this goal is problematic. Plumwood suggests to reintroduce the concept of "intentionality," which, she hopes, will allow us to discover that "mindlike qualities are spread throughout nature" (1993, 134), and to understand human difference "against an overall background of kinship, forming a web of continuity and difference" (1993, 134). It is in this context that she notes: "There are many ways to readmit intentionality . . ., and some forms of animism are ways of stressing continuity" (1993, 134). But what, exactly, does she have in mind? Plumwood explains: "We already have much of the vocabulary of natural agency: 'That stone doesn't want to come,' says the mason of one that is indeed a being thoroughly embedded in the context and mysterious history of its place" (1993, 136). There are two ways to interpret this statement, both of which lead to difficulties. The first confronts us with a self-contradiction: **by attributing agency to a stone, Plumwood seems to advocate precisely the "anthropomorphic 'respiritualisation' of nature" that she sets out to discard.** In other words, interpreted in this manner, her considerations do not provide a way out of the problem just diagnosed with reference to Keller's use of the term "love." The second option is to understand the mason's way of expressing himself as **metaphorical**. In this case, however, because he **would not** actually **attribute agency to the stone in question**, the thesis of continuity, so crucial for Plumwood's argument, would no longer be evidenced by his words. At this point, I would like to note a further instance of self-contradiction: formulating her claim of continuity, Plumwood **addresses readers to whom she attributes the specific competence of theorizing about this continuity. She fails to discuss the faculties that make it possible that "*we can distinguish*, without ordering as a hierarchy, items within a complex differentiated field in which mind is expressed in a family of related intentional concepts"** (1993, 135; emphasis added). [8](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hypatia/v014/14.1nagl_docekal.html" \l "FOOT8)

## **Essentialist**

Ecofeminism is essentialist

Alaimo, 94 [Stacy. “Cyborg and Ecofeminist Interventions: Challenges for an Environmental Feminism. *Feminist Studies*,20.1, 1994.]

The social organization, communicative actions, and "personality" of animals makes blurring boundaries between people and animals much easier than crossing the broader human-nature divide.23 How should an ecologically conscious feminism engage nature? Ecofeminism, as Carolyn Merchant explains, valorizes both women and nature: "The radical form of ecofeminism is a response to the perception that women and nature have been mutually associated and devalued in western culture and that both can be elevated and liberated through direct political action."24 Parallel to the way Luce Irigaray reverses the values of traditional femalemale oppositions, ecofeminism recognizes that women and nature have long been linked in Western systems of thought, and instead of trying to break the ties that many would argue keep women oppressed, ecofeminists reaffirm them in order to fight for both women and nature. They accept the ideological terrain, complete with its Victorian throwbacks of woman as nurturer. Even when ecofeminists strive toward a nonessentialist connection between women and nature, they still describe women primarily as mothers and homemakers: "Women who are responsible for their children's well-being are often more mindful of the long-term costs of quick-fix solutions. Through the social experience of caretaking and nurturing, women become attentive to the signs of distress in their communities that might threaten their households."25 Despite its shortcomings from a poststructuralist feminist perspective, ecofeminism would seem a productive oppositional discourse for contemporary U.S. culture. In Ynestra King's words (paraphrased by Judith Plant), it is a "strand of feminist thought that, indeed, was not interested in an equal share of the same old carcinogenic pie."26 Ecofeminism's conception of ordinary "female" activities and experiences as the basis of planet saving could attract women who feel left behind by what they perceive as a feminist movement that is only concerned with women achieving "successful careers." The potential for ecofeminism to attract women who define themselves in traditional roles could benefit both the environmental and feminist movements.

## Links to Self

More fluid/mobile subjectivities link to the Enlightenment rhetoric they criticize

Pritchard, 00[Elizabeth A.: Religion department at Bowdoin College. “The Way Out West: Development and the Rhetoric of Mobility in Postmodern Feminist Theory,” *Hypatia*, 15.3, 2000.]

**When postmodern feminists deploy metaphors of mobility and displacement and repudiate the closure or fixity of patriarchy and/or modernity, they unwittingly betray the legacy of this Enlightenment logic of development.** **Postmodern feminist critiques of the Enlightenment have largely focused on disclosing the gender, race, and class biases of the supposedly "universal subject" of the Enlightenment. In so doing, these feminists have revealed the exclusive location of the vaunted "view from nowhere."** This insight into the locatedness of the Enlightenment subject is, however, a perennial hobby of Enlightenment, that is, smoking out the parochialism of pretenders to the boundarylessness of the universal. Indeed, **Enlightenment thinkers and postmodern feminists share a common language: the description of what they oppose or have left behind as static and closed and their siding with that which represents mobility and openness. For both, progress or development consists in a more extensive reach, a more dynamic and mobile subjectivity.**

## A2: Rape

The term “rape” renders those affected, both animal and woman, invisible

Adams, 90 [Carol J: teacher at Perkins School of Theology, Dallas. The Sexual Politics of Meat. Pg. 54-55]

Rape, too, is implemental violence in which the penis is the implement, of violation. You are held down by a male body as the fork holds a piece of meat so that the knife may cut into it. In addition, just as the slaughterhouse treats animals and its workers as inert, unthinking, unfeeling objects, so too in rape are women treated as inert objects, with no attention paid to feelings or needs. Consequently they feel like pieces of meat. Correspondingly, we learn of “rape racks” that enable the insemination of animals against their will. 48 To feel like a piece of meat is to be treated like an inert object when one is (or was) in fact a living, feeling being. The meat metaphors rape victims choose to describe their experience and the use of the “rape rack” suggest that rape is parallel and related to consumption, consumption both of images of women and of literal animal flesh. Rape victims’ repeated use of the word “hamburger” to describe the result of penetration, violation, being prepared for market, implies not only how unpleasurable being a piece of meat is, but also that animals can be victims of rape. They have been penetrated, violated, prepared for market against their will. Yet, overlapping cultural metaphors structure these experiences as though they were willed by women and animals. To Justify meat eating, we refer to animals’ wanting to die, desiring to become meat. In Samuel Butler’s Erewhon, meat is forbidden unless it comes from animals who died “a natural death.” Resultingly, “it was found that animals were continually dying natural deaths under more or less suspicious circumstances…It was astonishing how some of these unfortunate animals would scent out a butcher’s knife if there was one within a mile of them, and run right up against it if the butcher did not get it out of their way in time.”49 One of the mythologies of a rapist culture is that women not only ask for rape, they also enjoy it; that they are continually seeking out the butcher’s knife. Similarly, advertisements and popular culture tell us that animals like Charlie the Tuna and Al Capp’s Shmoo wish to be eaten. The implication is that women and animals willingly participate in the process that renders them absent.

## A2: Mother Nature

“Mother Nature” strengthens patriarchal discourse that is bad for women and the environment

Alaimo, 94 [Stacy. “Cyborg and Ecofeminist Interventions: Challenges for an Environmental Feminism. *Feminist Studies*,20.1, 1994.]

"Love Your Mother" demands a bumper sticker bearing the image of the planet. Mother Earth, the single most popular image of feminized nature, has been promoted by ecofeminism, male-dominated environmentalism,11 and capitalist patriarchy. In 1980 , Carolyn Merchant, in The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution, an ecofeminist analysis of the scientific revolution, warned about the Earth Mother image. It is not the purpose of this analysis to reinstate nature as the mother of humankind nor to advocate that women reassume the role of nurturer dictated by that historical identity. Both need to be liberated from the anthropomorphic and stereotypic labels that degrade the serious underlying issues. The weather forecaster who tells us what Mother Nature has in store for us this weekend and legal systems that treat a woman's sexuality as her husband's property are equally guilty of perpetuating a system repressive to both women and nature.12 This warning has gone largely unheeded by the environmental movements that have reclaimed this image. Although the ecofeminist celebration of Mother Earth attempts to recover the image in support of a feminist environmentalism, portraying the earth as a mother strengthens a patriarchal, capitalist discourse harmful not only to women but also to the environment.13

### The feminizing of nature perpetuates its victimization, allowing environmental crises to become depoliticized as “women’s work” and strengthening patriarchal capitalist ideology.

Alaimo, 94 [Stacy, “Feminist Studies, Vol. 20”,]

It is not the purpose of this analysis to reinstate nature as the mother of humankind nor to advocate that women reassume the role of nurturer dictated by that historical identity. Both [women and nature] need to be liberated from the anthropomorphic and stereotypic labels that degrade the serious underlying issues. The weather forecaster who tells us what Mother Nature has in store for us this weekend and legal systems that treat a woman's sexuality as her husband's property are equally guilty of perpetuating a system repressive to both women and nature.12 This warning has gone largely unheeded by the environmental movements that have reclaimed this image. Although the ecofeminist celebration of Mother Earth attempts to recover the image in support of a feminist environmentalism, portraying the earth as a mother strengthens a patriarchal, capitalist discourse harmful not only to women but also to the environment.13 For example, the way Mother Earth was used in the 1990 television Earth Day Special14 undermines both the environmental and feminist movements. Mother Nature, played by floral-crowned Bette Midler, stars in this program. The basic plot of the media fest is this: poor Mother Earth is sick, victimized by humanity. This perfectly selfless mother doesn't really mind that she herself is dying but worries about the people who need her. She is placed in the town hospital and doctored by male physicians. Yet what saves Mother Earth is not medical science but, lo and behold, capitalist consumers and good housekeepers. The old association between women and the earth is deployed here in a contradictory way. Mother Earth is a near-dead victim, to be saved by commercial capitalism (buying the right products); this echoes Merchant's account of how during the Scientific Revolution "living animate nature died, while dead inanimate money was endowed with life."15 The way that the show manages to articulate environmentalism with capitalism supports Hall's explanation of why the Right has been more successful than the Left in connecting with popular trends: "Their strategy has been to align the positive aspirations of people with the market and the restoration of the capitalist ethic, and to present this as a natural alliance."16 The Earth Day Special not only supports a capitalist ethic but also a patriarchal one, because it portrays the planet as a victimized female and suggests that everyday environmental problem solving is "women's work." Even though the program displays both men and women suggesting environmental solutions, the message of the program (and, it seems the whole mainstream Earth Day mentality)--"what you can do at home to save the earth"-places the blame and responsibility on women, who do the majority of the shopping and housecleaning. Domestic imagery makes earth saving just another domestic chore. For example, the Bundys' bad housekeeper is admonished: "Imagine that your house was the earth. If you just dusted your house once in a while, imagine what the earth could be like." And, as the Cosbys inform us, if we just wouldn't open the lids on stovetop pots, we'll save energy and save the earth. Domestic dust and escaping steam cloud our view of more threatening substances such as nuclear waste or incinerator smoke. Furthermore, these pat solutions to systemic problems cast environmentalism as women's work, thus tightening women's domestic ties while letting corporate and governmental polluters off the hook. Ironically, the program opens with Robin Williams as a smarmy Everyman boasting of Man's great exploits, technologies, and environmental dominations. Williams's many phallic allusions to missiles and power worship show an ironic awareness of feminist critiques of phallotechnology. The program quickly transforms systemic shortcomings into mere personal failings, however, as Everyman and the industrial polluter who confess their misdeeds are both represented as bad boys who have disappointed their mother nature. The industrial polluter says the government controls and the system are fine and don't need to be changed-he just has to start behaving. Mother Earth ideology here codes the earth and by feminine association, women, into passive victims at the same time that it depicts polluters as mere naughty boys, thus making the problem personal and familial instead of political and systemic. It shifts the focus from patriarchal capitalism to the home and places the blame and responsibility, not on corporate polluters, scandalous lack of government controls, or waste-oriented capitalism but ultimately on homemakers, who had better use cloth diapers and keep those pots fully covered. Just as patriarchal capitalism can pocket Mother Earth, a conservative environmentalism can embrace the "nurturing" discourse of ecofeminism. In The Conservator, the magazine of the Nature Conservancy, the title of the 1990 article, "Stewardship: Empowering the Land," juxtaposes the conservative Christian idea that God appointed Man as the Steward of nature with the leftist language of empowerment that places the land in the position of oppressed groups, leaving us with a weird amalgamation of an oppressed-but-soon-to-be-empowered land with an old-timey land that needs to be managed. This article about volunteers borrows the language of ecofeminism: "Linda Wark may have articulated the leadership role of stewards best when she said, 'stewardship is not only the care and nurturing of natural areas, it's the care and nurturing of volunteers.'"17 Why does the Nature Conservancy, an organization seemingly untouched by feminism, here employ its "care and nurturing" language? The feminized language supports The Conservator's conservative politics: by alluding to the motherly realms of care and nurturing it places the ecological volunteer work into the sphere of the domestic, fencing it off from the public sphere of business, economics, and politics--issues that this organization, partly funded by big business, does not disturb. Deane Curtin warns that an "ethic of care provides a very important beginning for an ecofeminist ethic, but it runs the risk of having its own aims turned against it unless it is regarded as part of a distinctively feminist political agenda that consciously attempts to expand the circle of caring for."18 Limiting the realm of caring to the private world leaves government and corporate polluters undisturbed. Of course, the what-I-cando-at-home-to-save-the-earth movement has increased recycling and consumer awareness of environmental problems. People can have an effect as consumers; and women, who constitute the majority of household shoppers, may be empowered by our potential to promote ecological causes even while shopping. Yet, as beneficial as these gains may be, they are achieved with the risk that the environmental movement will get sidetracked into a depoliticized, indeed, procapitalist, privatized mode-and the potential for ecologically conscious consumerism to save the planet is limited. Thus, the ecofeminist exultations of Mother Earth and the exhortations to mother the earth are congruent with a patriarchal, capitalist politics that casts the earth as a feminized victim and throws the blame on to housekeeping, nurturing women--leaving capitalist America free to mind its own business.

# Third World Feminism

U.S. Feminisms are privileged, and therefore more focused on economic issues and deprioritize identity

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In my own context **I** would **identify three** particular **problematic directions within U.S.-based feminisms**. First, **the increasing, predominantly classbased gap between a vital women's movement and feminist theorizing in the U.S. academy has led** in part **to a** kind of **careerist academic feminism whereby the boundaries of the academy stand in for the entire world and feminism becomes a way to advance academic careers rather than a call for fundamental and collective social and economic transformation.** This gap between an individualized and narrowly professional understanding of feminism and a collective, theoretical feminist vision that focuses on the radical transformation of the everyday lives of women and men is one I actively work to address. Second, **the increasing corporatization of U.S. culture and naturalization of capitalist values has had its own profound influence in engendering a neoliberal, consumerist** (protocapitalist) **feminism concerned with "women's advancement" up the corporate and nation-state ladder. This is a feminism that focuses on financial "equality" between men and women and is grounded in the capitalist values of profit, competition, and accumulation.**10 **A protocapitalist or "free-market" feminism is symptomatic of the "Americanization" of definitions of feminism —the unstated assumption that U.S. corporate culture is the norm and ideal that feminists around the world strive for.** Another characteristic of protocapitalist feminism is its unstated and profoundly individualist character. Finally, **the critique of essentialist identity politics and the hegemony of postmodernist skepticism about identity has led to a narrowing of feminist politics and theory whereby either exclusionary and self-serving understandings of identity rule the day or identity** (racial, class, sexual, national, etc.) **is seen as unstable and thus merely "strategic." Thus, identity is seen as either naive or irrelevant, rather than as a source of knowledge and a basis for progressive mobilization.**11 **Colonizing**, U.S.- and Eurocentric **privileged feminisms**, then, **constitute some of the limits of feminist thinking that** I believe **need to be addressed at this time**. And some of these problems, in conjunction with the feminist possibilities and vision discussed earlier, form the immediate backdrop to my own thinking in the chapters that follow.

### Western feminists writing about Third World women is colonizing and always places Third world women into a position of subordination

### Mohanty ‘3 [Chandra Talpade: Professor and Chair of Women's and Gender Studies Sociology, Cultural Foundations of Education, Dean’s Professor of the Humanities, 2008 Honorary Doctor, Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University. *Feminism Without Borders*, 2003. Pg. 39-40]

**What happens when this assumption of “women as an oppressed group" is situated in the context of Western feminist writing about Third World women? It is** here that I locate **the colonialist move.** **By contrasting the representation of women in the Third World with** what I referred to earlier as **Western feminisms' self-presentation** in the same context, we see how Western feminists alone become the true "subjects" of this counterhistory. **Third World women**, in contrast, **never rise above the debilitating generality of their “object” status. While radical and liberal feminist assumptions of women as a sex class might elucidate** (however inadequately) **the autonomy of particular women's struggles in the West, the application of the notion of women as a homogeneous category to women in the Third World colonizes and appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of different groups of women in social class and ethnic frameworks; in doing so it ultimately robs them of their historical and political agency.** Similarly, **many** Zed Press **authors who ground themselves in the basic analytic strategies of traditional Marxism also implicitly create a "unity" of women by substituting "women's activity" for "Labor" as the primary theoretical determinant of women's situation. Here** again, **women are constituted as a coherent group not on the basis of "natural" qualities or needs but on the basis of the sociological "unity" of their role in domestic production and wage labor** (see Haraway 1985, esp. 76). In other words, **Western feminist discourse, by assuming women as a coherent, already constituted group that is placed in kinship, legal, and other structures, defines Third World women as subjects outside social relations, instead of looking at the way women are constituted through these very structures.**

# **Perm**

## Policy Key

Ecofeminism neglects politics. Need action-oriented policy to avoid threats.

Alaimo, 94 [Stacy. “Cyborg and Ecofeminist Interventions: Challenges for an Environmental Feminism. *Feminist Studies*,20.1, 1994.]

As environmental destruction increases, interest in ecofeminism grows. The new Ms. includes ecofeminism as a regular feature, and Hypatia6 recently devoted an entire issue to it. Yet critics charge that recent ecofeminist writings neglect politics. For example, Ariel Salleh critiques the latest ecofeminist anthologies: "Both Plant Healing the Wounds ( 1989 ) and Diamond and Orenstein Reweaving the World ( 1990 ) are, with the exception of one or two essays, largely preoccupied with ethics, life-style, selfrealization, cultural ritual and art--this, while 465 million people starve today, and one more species will have died out by midnight."7 Similarly, Stephanie Lahar contends that the "reference to political praxis has decreased relative to earlier discussions" and asks: "Can we afford not to have an action-oriented philosophy at a crisis point in social and natural history, when we are literally threatened on a global scale by annihilation by nuclear war or ecological destruction?"8 These critiques may signal a move back to the politically engaged ecofeminism exemplified by the 1983 anthology Reclaim the Earth: Women Speak Out for Life on Earth, edited by Leonie Caldecotte and Stephanie Leland. Although the above critiques still share the basic values and goals of ecofeminism, Janet Biehl Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics rejects ecofeminism in favor of Murray Bookchin's social ecology. Much of Biehl's dismissal stems from her repudiation not just of women/nature metaphors but of all metaphors. "Insofar as the ecofeminist bases for ethics--interconnectedness, aliveness, 'women's caring'--are mediated by the metaphors of 'woman=nature,' they avoid the problem of objectivity in the real world. Thus, if an ethic is to be based strictly on metaphors, it becomes wholly tenuous." She later explains that metaphors should not found political movements because "one of the functions of a political movement, let alone a radical one, is to explain the world, not to obscure it."9Biehl critiques ecofeminism from an epistemologically simplistic ground where "reality" and "metaphor," "reason" and "myth" stand as pure polarities. But any ethics or politics-- indeed, any way of thinking--is shaped via metaphors and ideologies. Instead of castigating ecofeminism's use of metaphors, it would be more productive to analyze the specific effects of those metaphors within their context.

Ecofeminist movement is depoliticizing and feminizing

Alaimo, 94 [Stacy. “Cyborg and Ecofeminist Interventions: Challenges for an Environmental Feminism. *Feminist Studies*,20.1, 1994.]

Just as patriarchal capitalism can pocket Mother Earth, a conservative environmentalism can embrace the "nurturing" discourse of ecofeminism. In The Conservator, the magazine of the Nature Conservancy, the title of the 1990 article, "Stewardship: Empowering the Land," juxtaposes the conservative Christian idea that God appointed Man as the Steward of nature with the leftist language of empowerment that places the land in the position of oppressed groups, leaving us with a weird amalgamation of an oppressed-but-soon-to-be-empowered land with an old-timey land that needs to be managed. This article about volunteers borrows the language of ecofeminism: "Linda Wark may have articulated the leadership role of stewards best when she said, 'stewardship is not only the care and nurturing of natural areas, it's the care and nurturing of volunteers.'"17 Why does the Nature Conservancy, an organization seemingly untouched by feminism, here employ its "care and nurturing" language? The feminized language supports The Conservator's conservative politics: by alluding to the motherly realms of care and nurturing it places the ecological volunteer work into the sphere of the domestic, fencing it off from the public sphere of business, economics, and politics--issues that this organization, partly funded by big business, does not disturb. Deane Curtin warns that an "ethic of care provides a very important beginning for an ecofeminist ethic, but it runs the risk of having its own aims turned against it unless it is regarded as part of a distinctively feminist political agenda that consciously attempts to expand the circle of caring for."18 Limiting the realm of caring to the private world leaves government and corporate polluters undisturbed. Of course, the what-I-cando-at-home-to-save-the-earth movement has increased recycling and consumer awareness of environmental problems. People can have an effect as consumers; and women, who constitute the majority of household shoppers, may be empowered by our potential to promote ecological causes even while shopping. Yet, as beneficial as these gains may be, they are achieved with the risk that the environmental movement will get sidetracked into a depoliticized, indeed, procapitalist, privatized mode-and the potential for ecologically conscious consumerism to save the planet is limited. Thus, the ecofeminist exultations of Mother Earth and the exhortations to mother the earth are congruent with a patriarchal, capitalist politics that casts the earth as a feminized victim and throws the blame on to housekeeping, nurturing women--leaving capitalist America free to mind its own business.

## Coalitions

Feminism needs to learn how to build coalitions with other movements, single issue organizing is politically ineffective and fails to recognize the interlocking nature of oppressions

Fixmer & Wood, 05 [Natalie, Julia T., “The Personal Is Still Political: Embodied dPolitics in Third Wave Feminism.,” Women's Studies in Communication, Vol. 28, 2005]

Consistent with third wavers' insights is Heckman's (2000) argument that feminism must "move from identity politics to a politics of identification.... in which political actors identify with particular political causes and mobilize to achieve particular political goals" (p. 304). This kind of identification leads third wavers to become "true compatriots and allies because of our dreams and perceptions, which match much more closely than our skin and hair" (Bondoc, 1995, p. 179). Third wave feminists' allegiance to inclusive solidarity and politics also seems to embody Laclau's belief that to engage only the struggles of one's own specific group is to be politically ineffective. In an interview, Laclau (Worsham & Olson, 1999) stated that, "if only the particularity of the struggle is recognized without entering into relations of solidarity with other groups and engaging in wider struggles at the level of society, then the group will be totally enclosed in its particularized demands and its actions will have no hegemonic consequences at the wider level" (p. 149). In this way, third wave politics reflect a commitment to building coalitions and a kind of solidarity that fully recognizes and attempts to work with both interlocking facets of identity and the interlocking nature of oppressions.