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ECOFEMINISM

Toward global justice and planetary health

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Like many other modern progressive movements, ecofeminism has its roots in the social change movements of the 1960s and 1970s.[1] Texts such as Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (1962), Rosemary Radford Ruether's *New Woman/New Earth* (1975), Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology* (1978), Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (1978), Elizabeth Dodson Gray's *Green Paradise Lost* (1979), and Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980) provided the foundation for what would become a full-blown feminist approach to ecology and environmentalism in the 1980s. The first conference to address the parallel oppression of women and nature, "Women and the Environment," was held at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1974, and was later followed by a number of other conferences.[2] To date, four anthologies, a number of articles, and whole volumes of journals have been devoted to the topic of ecofeminism.[3] Initially, writers sought to accomplish two goals: to establish the connection between feminism and ecology, and to demonstrate the inadequacies of environmental theory for accommodating the insights of feminism. In these essays, writers legitimized the project of ecofeminism by showing why such a theory is useful and how it is unique in relation to other environmental theories.

This confluence of writers, scholars, and activists has answered four questions in developing a theory of ecofeminism: what are the problems that ecofeminism has addressed; how did these problems arise; why should these problems concern feminists; and why might ecofeminism offer the best framework for analyzing them? In this essay, we will explore ways that ecofeminists have answered each of these questions.

What are the problems?

Even in the United States, which is among the most affluent of nations, most people will acknowledge that the world is not what it should be. While many people are aware of the gross injustice in the distribution of wealth globally, for example, few realize its magnitude—85 percent of the world's income goes to 23 percent of the world's people.[4] In effect, the industrialized countries (the 'North') are draining the Third World[5] (the 'South') of resources. "A person in the North consumes 52 times as much meat, 115 times more paper, and 35 times more energy than a Latin American," according to Margarita Arias of Costa Rica.[6] With only 5 percent of the world's people, the United States uses one-third of the world's non-renewable resources and one-fourth of the planet's commodities; the average US citizen uses 300 times the energy that a Third World citizen does.[7] As a result of this overconsumption, there is a corresponding overproduction of waste. Based on 1991 statistics, it appears that the average US resident produces more than one-half a ton of solid waste each year. At that rate, by the year 2009, 80 percent of all remaining landfills will be full.[8]

Pollution is affecting our water globally—approximately 1.2 billion people lack safe drinking water.[9] In developing countries, diarrhea and associated diseases kill four million children under the age of five each year.[10] Though it doesn't compare with water degradation in the South, water quality in the United States is also declining. According to 1991 estimates, one in six people drink water with excessive amounts of lead, a known cause of impaired IQ in children. Additionally, US water may contain PCBs, DDT, mercury, asbestos, and other toxic chemicals and pesticides which are dumped directly into waterways or that leak into the groundwater supplies from agricultural spraying and improperly disposed of industrial waste.[11]

In addition to losing fresh water supplies globally, we are also losing our forests. The United States has lost all but 10 percent of its ancient forests. Canada has lost 60 percent of its old-growth forests to logging, and less than 20 percent of what remains lies in protected areas. At current logging rates, all unprotected old-growth forests in Washington and Oregon will be gone by the year 2023.[12] Globally, forests are vanishing at a rate of some 17 million hectares per year.[13]

Certainly a forest does not consist merely of trees. Forests are dynamic ecosystems, home to insects and animals alike, producers of fresh air and water when left unharmed by human pollution. For example, a single Douglas fir keeps an estimated 400 tons of carbon out of the atmosphere over the course of its lifetime, which can be as long as 400 to 1,000 years. During that time, it provides food or shelter to at least 45 vertebrate species.[14] When we lose forests, we lose the animals they shelter as well; current estimates are that a minimum of 140 plant and animal species become extinct

each day.[15] Forests are intricately connected with human survival, as they supply a majority of the world's people with food and fuel.

World hunger and food security continue to be global problems. According to the institute for Food and Development Policy, 40 thousand children starve to death on this planet every day.[16] Ruth Engo-Tjega, a founding member of Advocates for African Food Security, reminds us that every minute 15 children in the world die of hunger.[17] Many of those concerned with the environment consider the problem of starvation to be a problem of overpopulation. They tell us that world population is growing by 92 million people annually, of which 88 million are being added in the developing world.[18]

These are facts that people live with daily. Because an acute awareness of such facts would probably make it difficult to go about our day-to-day business, many people choose to deny the severity or the probability of such facts.[19] Collectively, we act like ostriches, believing what we can't see or don't look at doesn't exist. Yet denying these critical facts virtually ensures their inevitability.

Standing at the crossroads of environmentalism and feminism, ecofeminist theory is uniquely positioned to undertake a holistic analysis of these problems in both their human and natural contexts. Ecofeminism's central claim is that these problems stem from the mutually reinforcing oppression of humans and of the natural world. It is no longer possible to discuss environmental change without addressing social change; moreover, it is not possible to address women's oppression without addressing environmental degradation. That these two worlds, the human and the natural, are inextricably interconnected, may seem so obvious that it's hard to imagine that they are usually addressed separately.

How did these problems arise?

Ecofeminists have offered or drawn upon a number of approaches for understanding the present functioning of global oppression.[20] Here, we will survey the most predominant explanations for the separation of the human from the natural world.

Some ecofeminists, such as Carolyn Merchant, see the separation of culture from nature as a product of the scientific revolution.[21] Where nature was previously seen as alive, with the scientific revolution, and most notably the works of Francis Bacon and René Descartes, nature was increasingly viewed as a machine which could be analyzed, experimented with, and understood through reason. This theory located animals in nature and authorized unlimited animal experimentation without anesthesia. Animals, thought to be particularly well-fashioned machines, could be tortured at will because the animals' cries of pain were not real but rather like the striking of a well-timed clock. According to this mind-set, nature was dead, inert, and mechanistic.

Thus, the domination or oppression of nature was not considered to be unethical, but rather a judicious use of resources.

Other ecofeminists cite patriarchal religion as the origin of this separation. They date the origin of the oppression of nature back to 4500 b.c., well before the scientific revolution, when the shift from goddess-worshipping cultures to male deities began.[22] In the goddess religions, both the earth and women's fertility were seen as sacred. There was no gender hierarchy, and divinity was seen as immanent. With the advent of patriarchal religions, people worshipped a sky god, and nature was seen as his creation. The role of the male in reproduction was elevated above the role of the female; women were compared to fields which would gestate and bear the male seed. Certainly this shift from goddess-centered cultures to male deities didn't happen overnight, and many men and women resisted, but by the time of the Jews and the Greeks, the change had been largely effected. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, a great chain of being was established with god at the top, appointing Adam to be in charge of his entire creation. Woman was created from Adam's rib and placed below him, and below the divinely appointed heterosexuals were the animals and the rest of nature, all to serve man. The patriarchal domination of both nature and women was divinely commanded.

Others have suggested that patriarchal domination is the result of human evolutionary development.[23] According to one very popular anthropological story, an evolutionary shift occurred as the result of the emergence of hunting behavior in male hominids. The hunter's destructive, competitive, and violent activity directed toward his prey is what originally distinguished man from nature. According to this theory of human social evolution, woman's body, which is smaller, weaker, and reproductive, prevents her from full participation in the hunt and thus relegates her to the realm of non-culture. Her reproductive capacity and life-bearing activities stood in sharp contrast to the death-oriented activities that underlie culture. Thus, women, animals, and nature are considered inferior to the cultural activities of men and can be thought of as separate from them.

Still other ecofeminists use metaphorical or ideological explanations of the separation of culture from nature and look at the way that patriarchal culture describes the world in terms of self and other dualisms. These value dualisms give rise to value hierarchies, where all things associated with self are valued, and all things described as other are of lesser value.[24] These dualisms of self/other are manifested as culture/nature, man/woman, white/non-white, human/non-human animal, civilized/wild, heterosexual/homosexual, reason/emotion, wealthy/poor, etc.[25] Domination is built in to such dualisms because the other is negated in the process of defining a powerful self. Because the privileged self in such dualisms is always male, and the devalued other is always female, all valued components of such dualisms are also associated with the male, and all devalued components with the female. Ecofeminists who use this approach see the self/other separation as an effective means for

explaining the twin dominations of women and nature, since both are always configured as 'other'.

Those ecofeminists particularly concerned with the place of animals within ecofeminism emphasize the woman–animal connection as both are seen as Other. They observe that the feminization, naturalization, or animalization of an Other is often requisite to its ensuing subordination.[26] They point to the metaphors of language which reveal its ideological underpinnings: phrases such as 'the rape of nature', 'mother nature', and 'virgin forests' all feminize nature and, thus, in a culture where women are seen as subordinate, authorize the subordination of nature. In turn, colloquialisms for women, such as 'pussy', 'bitch', 'old hen', 'sow', and the like, serve to animalize women and thereby reinforce women's inferior status by appealing to women's animal (and thus non-human) nature.

Ecofeminists who look to psychology or the internalization of gender roles base their insights on the feminist psychoanalytic work of Carol Gilligan and Nancy Chodorow.[27] Chodorow's work on object-relations theory as it pertains to the patriarchal family suggests that masculine identification stresses differentiation from others, a denial of connection, and an increasing propensity toward abstraction. In contrast, feminine identities are relational, connected, and embodied. Gilligan's studies on moral development show that a rights-based ethic is more characteristic of men and a responsibilities-based on a person's sense of self in relationship to others and to society. These theorists suggest that men's self-identify is established through separation from the mother, whereas women's sense of self is founded on a sense of continuity and self-in-relationship. In making ethical decisions, men often look at the people involved or affected by such a decision as separate individuals having competing interests; men are more likely to base ethical decisions on an appeal to abstract rules. In contrast, women tend to consider the net effect of ethical decisions on all people involved and make choices which may be considered ethical only within the specific context of that decision. Gilligan emphasizes that while both ethical outlooks are available to men and women, it is the 'focus' phenomenon, that is, which voice we listen to, that is gendered. Drawing on these insights, ecofeminists observe that the separation of culture from nature parallels the separation of self from other, a separation fundamental to the social construction of masculinity.

Those ecofeminists who explain the separation from an economic perspective look to the Marxist insights about feudalism and the rise of capitalism, as well as colonialist practices. In Europe, the enclosure of the commons and the creation of private property caused a hierarchy between land-owning lords and landless peasants. According to Engels, the development of private property also led to "the world historical defeat of the female sex."[28] Spreading throughout Europe and eventually to Asia and Africa, this system enslaved indigenous people and captured the land for the

use and profit of a few.[29] Thus began what Vandana Shiva appropriately terms "systematic underdevelopment." The Europeans described the living conditions of the Asian and African people as total poverty, and told themselves they would take on the 'white man's burden' by bringing Western civilization and industrialization to these countries. In fact, what the Europeans described as poverty was subsistence living, and the 'improvements' brought about through colonialism and development created real material poverty.

The indigenous people were a cheap labor supply. Based on the division of labor by gender roles, the men were employed for cash by the colonizers while the women fulfilled all the household duties, providing food for the whole family. The colonizers, under the guise of benevolence, loaned the indigenous people money to establish industries modeled after those in Europe. The industry loaned from the Europeans then took the natural resources—the trees, the animals, and the crops—and employed the indigenous people, at very low wages, to participate in their own exploitation. The colonizers replaced the native food crops with cash crops for export, arguing that such exchange would bring about a cash flow for the people. In fact, such development over a period of time created severe material hardships for the indigenous people. Without the native tree cover, the land did not absorb the rains as well, and massive erosion began, depleting the fields of precious topsoil. The intensive logging practices of the colonizers meant that women had to walk farther each day to gather wood for fuel, since this was considered a woman's task. Finally, the monoculture crops depleted the soil. Where there used to be just food enough, now there was famine, environmental degradation, and an enormous debt to the colonial lenders. This is the system of 'development' ecofeminists see as causing the oppression of women, indigenous people, and the natural world today.

It's easy to see that these are not competing explanations of the present global situation. Rather, each perspective maps out a particular explanation of oppression. Taken together, these analyses describe a global shift in orientation, from reverence and respect for women and nature, and a view of all life as interconnected, to a world-view which is based on separation, and which conceptualizes women, nature, animals, and non-dominant people as inferior and subordinate objects to be dominated.

Why should global environmental problems concern feminists?

The current system of global inequity, interpersonal and international violence, and environmental degradation may seem beyond the scope of feminist analysis at first glance. However, if we can establish that a proposed activity or practice contributes to the subordination of women, then by necessity it becomes a feminist concern. Certainly toxic waste, air pollution,

contaminated groundwater, increased militarization, and the like are not exclusively women's issues; they are human issues which affect everybody. But, ecofeminists claim that environmental issues are feminist issues because it is women and children who are the first to suffer the consequences of injustice and environmental destruction.

To some, it may seem particularly absurd to have to convince 'first world' feminists that nature is a feminist concern. For those who live outside the wealth of the world's industrialized economy, environmental degradation has immediate, tangible results—hunger, thirst, and fuel scarcity, to mention only a few—and under these conditions environmental activism is a form of self-defense.[30] That the privileged minority of the industrialized world does not feel the full and immediate consequences of this pollution does not mitigate its effect on the majority of the world's less privileged. And it is only a matter of time, if the present course runs unchecked, that even the most privileged will be forced to pull their heads out of the sand.

To demonstrate the connections between environmentalism and feminism, ecofeminists point to a number of ways in which environmental degradation causes a decrease in the quality of life for women, children, and people of color. Specifically, ecofeminists have noted the connections between women's oppression and the oppression of nature by examining global economics. Third World debt, underdevelopment, food production and distribution, reproductive rights, militarism, and environmental racism. We will address each of these in turn.

On the international market, the United Nations System of National Accounts (UNSNA) has no method of accounting for nature's own production or destruction until the products of nature enter the cash economy, nor does it account for the majority of the work done by women. For example, Marilyn Waring has observed that the water rural women carry from the wells to their homes has no cash value, but the water carried through pipes has value.[31] Moreover, a clean lake which offers women fresh water supplies has no value in these accounting systems; once it is polluted, however, and companies must pay to clean it up, then the clean-up activity itself is performed by men and recorded as generating income. Similarly, living forests which supply women with food, fuel, and fodder have no recorded value in the UNSNA until they are logged and their products can be manufactured into commodities for sale—then all related industry and manufacture, usually seen as men's work, is recorded as income generating. Yet carrying water, collecting firewood, weeding and hoeing, bearing children, preparing food, all usually seen as women's work because these tasks take place in the 'private' sector or home, are not factored into a nation's Gross National Product (GNP). In this way, both nature and women do not 'count' in the international market economy.

Yet it is women and nature who are called upon to pay the Third World debt. As we have already observed, the colonial heritage of the European

invasion in Asia and Africa replaced subsistence farming with cash crops for export. The gender division of labor requires men to be in charge of the cash crops while the women manage the food crops; however, since hoeing and weeding are also seen as women's work, women are called upon to maintain the men's fields as well as their own. Presently, African women perform 60 percent of the agricultural work and 60 to 80 percent of the food production work.[32] Thus, to create cash crops which will generate income to pay the national debt, women work harder than men and receive no compensation. Only men are allowed to manage cash or to obtain credit in most developing countries; the assumption is that the money will 'trickle down', but it seldom does.

Moreover, the cash crops are draining these developing countries of their natural resources. In India, for example, the mixed tropical forests were replaced with the non-native cash crops of eucalyptus tree and sugarcane, both of which require enormous amounts of water for such a semi-arid region. The resulting deforestation and water loss has meant longer and longer walks each day for rural women to gather fuel wood and to haul water.[33] According to one estimate, women in New Delhi walk an average of 10 kilometers every three out of four days for an average of seven hours at a time, just to obtain firewood.[34] Again, women bear a disproportionate burden within systems of underdevelopment.

Wealthy nations of the North need to acknowledge their role in creating this system of underdevelopment and the debt repayments from which they benefit. The affluence of the North is founded on the natural resources and labor of the South; the recent popularity of the 'debt-for-nature' swaps, whereby Third World nations can exchange a portion of their natural resources to pay a percentage of their national debt, is yet another injustice in this repressive system. One debtor nation, the Philippines, is among 70 countries which annually remit over $50 billion in interest alone to First World creditors.[35] At this rate, the Third World will be perpetually indentured servants of the industrialized nations, an outcome well suited to the goals of capitalism. Because classism and economic imperialism (or neocolonialism) are feminist concerns, and because this system of international accounting extracts the most severe payments from women and nature, the oppression inherent in the international market can best be understood from an ecofeminist perspective.

Globally, women produce approximately 80 percent of the world's food supplies, and for this reason women are most severely affected by food and fuel shortages and the pollution of water sources. Though women produce the food, most of the agricultural development training has been directed towards men; in addition, the men and boys are served first and provided with the most nutritious foods.[36] The phenomenon of world hunger is surely a product of underdevelopment and the international market, which demands that Third World countries export more food and resources in

order to pay off their national debts.[37] In fact, on the average, governments in developing nations devote less than 10 percent of their budgets to agriculture which will feed their own people.[38] In addition to inequities in trade and food production, a major factor in world hunger is the widespread growth of meat production and consumption.

International development agencies have encouraged livestock production in developing countries and have funded a number of livestock projects.[39] Where domesticated animals used to play an integral role in household economies, providing a buffer against the changes in the market and the weather, and creating precious fertilizer and fuel for rural families, the mass production of livestock for export has become a major factor in desertification, water pollution and scarcity, ozone destruction, and hunger. Instead of producing crops for food, large areas of the world's cropland are devoted to feeding livestock: roughly 38 percent of the world's grain globally and 70 percent in the United States alone.[40] It is estimated that if the land devoted to livestock production in the United States were converted to producing grain for human consumption, it would free up more than 130 million tons of food, enough for 400 million people.[41] Of course, the availability of this food will not ensure that 400 million people will be fed; feeding the world also requires a just political policy for distribution. Nonetheless, eating high on the food chain must be seen as catering to the tastes of the affluent industrialized nations at the cost of between 40 and 60 million people—mostly children—who die each year of hunger or malnutrition.

Livestock production is a major cause of desertification, as more and more forests are cleared to provide rangeland for cattle. In Central America, more than 25 percent of the forests have been cleared to provide rangeland since 1960, and in Mexico alone, 37 million acres of forests have been converted since 1987.[42] It takes 55 square feet of cleared tropical forest to produce enough beef to make a quarter pound hamburger.[43] The combination of persistent overgrazing along with the dense soil compaction caused by the cattle's heavy hooves makes the ground impermeable to rainwater, which then runs off the surface and carries away topsoil. And cattle production requires an enormous amount of water: more than 3,000 litres of water are used to produce a kilogram of beef.[44] In a context where women may walk up to seven hours a day to provide water for their families, livestock production and its toll on the environment become ecofeminist concerns.

Intensive cattle production is also a major source of pollution. In belches, flatulence, and solid waste, cattle emit methane, the second most destructive greenhouse gas. Currently, livestock produce between 15 and 20 percent of methane emissions globally.[45] The nitrogen from their manure escapes into the air as gaseous ammonia, which causes acid rain. Animal agriculture produces 2 billion tons of waste each year.[46] Not all of this pollution is 'natural' either. Intensively reared animals are pumped full of antibiotics and

growth hormones, chemicals that remain in their flesh and are transferred to humans when we consume the contaminated meat.

The use of these chemicals is thought to increase production, which in turn increases profit. However, such biotechnological intervention is not without its costs. Both humans and animals suffer from the introduction of scientific manipulation into production and reproduction. Dairy cows, for example, who are already over-milked are now forced to produce even more through the introduction of the Bovine Growth Hormones (BGH).[47] The hormonal manipulation of dairy cows affects not just the animals who are turned into "fast-food factories,"[48] but also small farmers who can no longer compete with the mega-industries. As these farmers have pointed out, such technological intervention benefits multinational pharmaceutical companies at their expense.[49] The US market is already saturated with dairy products, which has caused a dramatic drop in dairy prices. With the advent of BGH and the production of even more dairy products, the price reduction will force approximately 50 percent of US dairy farmers into bankruptcy.[50]

The increase in biological manipulation in agriculture and the widespread growth of biotechnological industry are of concern to ecofeminists. These endeavors involve the objectification and domination of both women's bodies and animals' bodies as well as the further economic exploitation of working class and Third World peoples. While technological intervention is often seen as a panacea—a means to progress and development, a way of increasing production and thus quality of life—it is becoming increasingly obvious that these technologies are creating more serious problems than those they were meant to solve. As Vandana Shiva has suggested, the so-called advances of the 'Green Revolution' turned the seed into a commodity, which was owned and controlled by a few wealthy Western corporations who stripped the farmers and their products of integrity and power: "The social and political planning that went into the Green Revolution aimed at engineering not just seeds but social relations as well."[51] Biotechnological intervention in agriculture served to perpetuate the dependence relation between poorer nations and their inhabitants and the wealthy 'innovators' of the super-seed.

A parallel dependence can be observed between women and those who control knowledge about women's bodies. The dangers of scientific intervention into the bodies and lives of women is particularly acute in the area of new reproductive technologies. Gena Corea has documented just how women may suffer from reproductive experimentation: hormonal treatment to create superovulation can damage ovaries, and long-term effects of such treatment have not been studied; surgical manipulation may damage ovaries and the uterus; and the danger of anesthetic and risk of infection are often downplayed.[52] In addition, the ideology of motherhood, which forces women to believe that they are failures if they cannot conceive and produce children, is so strong that those women who can afford it 'consent' to the

medical manipulation of their bodies. Science, which has been developed and practiced primarily by white, middle-class Western men, has systematically exploited women, animals, and the environment. Such practices are justified based on the prevailing conception of women and nature as different and inferior and their manipulation as legitimate in the name of 'progress'.

Feminists recognize the negative implications of the scientific control of women's bodies and reproduction. Nowhere are these implications more apparent than in the debate about global population. It's important to distinguish population control from reproductive choice, both in terminology and in terms of the underlying assumptions of each. As Betsy Hartmann observes, population control policy assumes that overpopulation is the primary cause of all the problems in the Third World, from hunger to deforestation and economic and political malaise.[53] Based on this assumption, population control ideology argues that people must be persuaded or forced to have fewer children and that this can be effected by delivering birth control to Third World women in a top-down fashion. While population is certainly a cause for concern—UN estimations project world population to be at 10.5 billion by the year 2110—to place environmental degradation and economic distress on the population of the Third World is just another form of racism, sexism, and victim-blaming.

The issue of world population cannot be ignored, but from an ecofeminist perspective, 'population' does not describe the problem in a way that it can be solved. It is the North's overconsumption, coupled with the globally unjust distribution of wealth, resources, and power, which is causing world hunger and environmental degradation. Population control obscures the very real issues of women's lives and holds women responsible for overpopulating the world. From an ecofeminist perspective, the problem of population may more adequately be addressed by looking at the intersection of several factors: reproductive control, socioeconomics, and particularly the social status of women.

Reproductive control includes access to free, safe methods of contraception, including elective abortion; it means freedom from compulsory sterilization as well as compulsory motherhood, and the freedom to control the number and spacing of one's children. Yet the contraceptive methods currently available often endanger women's lives. For example, poor women who come to health officials are routinely given a choice between such unsafe methods as an IUD (intra-uterine device), the implant of a hormone-releasing device such as Norplant, injectable contraception such as Depo-Provera, or sterilization. While the first three methods are known causes of irregular bleeding, infection, illness and possibly death, in many countries the option of sterilization may also ensure a woman's starvation or death. A sterilized woman may be seen as an unfit wife, unable to bear the desired sons, and since her survival will depend on her role as a part of a family's

production unit, she may be forced into begging or prostitution to support herself or her children.

But birth control programs alone have been shown to account for only 15 to 20 percent of overall fertility decline; the remaining percentage is attributed to socioeconomic factors such as economic security, increased literacy rates, better education, better health care, and better job opportunities for women. In rural agricultural communities, a family's well-being may depend on having more workers to grow the food, haul the water, and gather firewood. The vast majority of families in the Third World don't have pension plans or social security, and thus children are their only form of security for their old age. Moreover, not all those children born to Third World families will survive to adulthood. The average infant mortality rate in the Third World generally is 90 deaths per 1,000 live births—150 deaths per 1,000 births in 16 African countries—as compared to 20 in the industrialized nations. In addition, women's reproductive systems and children's vulnerable immune systems and their rapid rates of growth make them particularly susceptible to environmentally-induced illness. But as the economy changes, even the poorest don't need to have as many children. When women have access to education and employment, they tend to want fewer children. As Hartmann's research shows, "no country has ever achieved low birth rates as long as it has had a high infant mortality rate."[54] Until women are valued in ways other than reproduction, and men's virility proven in ways other than producing many male offspring, there will be little hope of reducing birth rates.

With this kind of gross imbalance in population and the distribution of food and resources, it makes sense that the wealthy few in power would feel the need to protect their grossly unjust share of the earth's resources from the majority. Thus we have witnessed in this century alone the tremendous growth of militarism, predicated upon an enormous sense of fear and its resulting need to control. Feminist peace activists have analyzed the root cause of militarism as lying in the social construction of masculinity: based on a sense of self as separate, the masculine self is so isolated that the only way to break these rigid ego boundaries is through a conflict which could result in death.[55] Given the problems of masculine embodiment, heroism has been seen as the answer, for masculinity must be continually proved. Heroism, according to Nancy Hartsock, requires several steps: first, the exclusion of women; second, a zero-sum competition, in which one man's gain is another man's loss; third, a heroic action, which can only take place in separation from daily life and daily needs; and fourth, a sense of abstraction of the self and the moment from the larger whole.[56] Heroic actions cannot occur unless the situation is so dangerous that it threatens a man's continued existence. Ecofeminists have suggested it is the heroic mentality itself which has brought the world to a state of ecological devastation, but unfortunately, it is not until the crisis is of sufficiently epidemic proportions that heroes will respond.[57]

In fact, zero sum competition is taking place right now, where the military's gain is a loss that is suffered disproportionately by women and children. In 1987, the US military budget was $293 billion, accounting for 27.8 percent of all federal spending.[58] In 1990, global military spending was at $980 billion, or $185 per individual on the planet; in contrast, global spending on family planning totaled $4.5 billion.[59] Our international priorities are clearly set on killing people rather than on creating or preserving quality of life. To the millions of poor households suffering from malnutrition, hunger, poor to nonexistent health care, polluted water, and all the related problems of poverty, the continued increase in military spending is a kind of warfare in itself.

The military is a primary cause of global homelessness, a problem which women and children suffer the most. Globally, there are now more than 15 million refugees of war, with women and children comprising from 75 to 95 percent of these homeless.[60] One example, from the Palestinian–Israeli war, are the 600,000 refugees living on the Gaza strip, at a density of 5,440 people per square mile.[61] More than 50 percent of their population are children under the age of 14. In India, 150,000 refugees from the desertified rural areas created by colonial economic policies of underdevelopment now live on the sidewalks of Bombay.[62] Around the world, poor city dwellers suffer a disproportionate share of urban hazards, ranging from toxic waste dumps and polluted water sources to high-speed traffic, simply because they lack the economic and political resources to prevent these conditions.

Moreover, the armed forces are the number one polluters globally: the production and testing of their weapons; their toxic, chemical, and nuclear wastes; and their acts of violence have caused needless damage to women, to children, to the earth and the animals, human and nonhuman, that live on it.[63] For example, 80 percent of Kuwait's camel population was destroyed during the Gulf War. That is 8,000 camels in addition to the estimated 15–30,000 birds who died in oil slicks. In the civil wars in various African countries, rhinos, elephants, hippos, and most recently the mountain gorillas have been slaughtered at an alarming rate. The effects of war on wilderness and wildlife are nowhere more devastating than in Vietnam. The conflict in Vietnam was by far the most ecologically damaging, with 5.43 million acres of tropical rainforests literally reduced to ashes. Eleven animal species that only live in the Southeast Asian war zone are seriously endangered. If the few remaining wild forest ox and pileated gibbon die, these species will be gone forever.[64]

Ecofeminists are especially concerned with environmental racism, defined as "the dumping, siting or placement of environmentally hazardous substances or facilities in the communities of color in North America and around the world, primarily because of the race and powerlessness of people in those communities."[65] In the United States, for example, race is a major factor in the location of hazardous waste: three out of every five Blacks and

Hispanics live in areas with uncontrolled toxic waste sites; 75 percent of the residents in the rural Southwest, the majority of whom are Hispanic, drink pesticide-contaminated water; over 700,000 inner-city children suffer from lead poisoning, which results in learning disorders; and over two million tons of uranium tailings have been dumped on Indian reservations, resulting in reproductive organ cancer in Navajo teenagers at 17 times the national average.[66]

The needs and the cultures of indigenous people are rarely considered in the siting of development projects. In Papua New Guinea, the Panguna copper mine on Bougainville displaced local residents with a token compensation for their homes and land, creating a mine which was enormously profitable for the government: before 1989, when the displaced residents finally succeeded in closing it down, the mine was yielding 17 percent of the country's operating revenue and 40 percent of its export income.[67] Presently, in the Amazon, the indigenous Yanomami are being displaced by mining operations in the northern Brazilian states of Roraima and Amazonas. These mines are polluting local rivers with sediment and mercury, and are causing the deaths of at least 15 percent of the Yanomami.[68] In Hawaii, geothermal drilling is underway on the slopes of the active Mauna Loa volcano at Kilauea. Such drilling is an act of environmental racism in that it violates the religious and cultural beliefs of the native Hawaiians, for whom the Mauna Loa volcano is a manifestation of the Goddess Pele. This geothermal drilling releases a toxic corrosive gas, hydrogen sulfide, which is sickening at low levels and at high levels can kill. Drilling on an active volcano means that a single eruption could destroy wells and pipelines, releasing a toxic cloud over thousands of homes. The energy generated from such drilling will be used for increased industrialization on Oahu and Maui. One projected development, a metals smelting plant, will convert metal-bearing ocean crust into manganese, cobalt, and nickel, producing a huge toxic waste problem, with the poisons to be dumped into ocean trenches—the current source of the richest fishing grounds for indigenous people.[69]

From this plethora of examples, it's easy to see why planetary health and global ecological destruction are feminist issues. A commitment to women's health—reproductive health (freedom from compulsory motherhood, freedom to choose motherhood and to regulate it), labor health (safe conditions and fair compensation), and general health (in terms of unpolluted and sufficient sources of food, fuel, water, and shelter)—requires a commitment to planetary health. Yet around the world, more economic and natural resources are channeled into the destruction of life and away from the support of life. More than 1.5 million children under the age of five die in the Third World each year from measles; more than three quarters of a million children die annually from neonatal tetanus.[70] Inexpensive and effective health care could save 14 million lives of those under five years of age for a cost of $2.5 billion per year—which amounts to the cost of the entire world's

military spending for one day.[71] Industrialization, militarism, and over-consumption are requiring the majority of the earth's resources and polluting the air, water, and soil of the planet, while women, children, people of color, and the earth itself pay for this with their health and their lives. Ecofeminism is a feminist movement for global health, but health cannot happen in the context of injustice. Ecofeminists believe the costs of ignoring women's needs are many: uncontrolled population growth, high infant and child mortality, a diminished economy, ineffective agriculture, a deteriorating environment, a divided society, and a poorer life for all.[72] If we truly want to make a change, the oppressions of women and the earth can no longer be addressed in isolation.

Developing an ecofeminist framework

Much like US socialist feminists who, in the 1970s, began analyzing the oppression of women in terms not just of patriarchy or capitalism, but both, ecofeminists are developing a 'multi-systems' approach to understanding the interconnected forces that operate to oppress women and the natural world. Drawing heavily on the initial insights of socialist feminist theories[73] as well as the experiences of activists in the peace, anti-nuclear, anti-racist, anti-colonialist, environmental, and animal liberation movements, ecofeminist theory provides a historical, contextualized, inclusive approach for solving the problems discussed above. Ecofeminists believe that the current global crises are the result of the mutually reinforcing ideologies of racism, sexism, classism, imperialism, naturism, and speciesism. These ideologies, while conceptually isolatable, are best understood, according to ecofeminists, as force fields that intersect one another (to greater or lesser extents, depending on the actual context) to create complex systems of oppression.

To illustrate how an ecofeminist analysis differs from, yet draws on, other theories, we will examine one particular issue—intensive animal agriculture, a system of keeping animals indoors, in large sheds, where every aspect of their existence can be regulated to produce maximum output at minimum cost—through the theoretical lens of a number of distinct approaches. These analyses are necessarily brief and are meant simply to indicate how different theorists, using different arguments and points of reference, come to sometimes different, although not incompatible, conclusions about the same issue.

Feminists might respond to the practice of intensive animal agriculture in a variety of ways. From a liberal feminist perspective, for example, the use of animals for food, however the animals are raised, may be unproblematic. For liberal feminists, moral considerability is grounded on the ability to reason, an ability that presumably animals lack. The traditional liberal split between culture and nature is preserved with this view.[74] Their primary concerns are that women be recognized as fully rational creatures and thus allowed the full privilege of participation in human culture. Animals, like the

natural world, are outside of the realm of culture; they can be used to further human ends. In addition, the liberal feminist would focus on the autonomy of individual humans to choose what they eat. According to liberal theory, individuals can do whatever they find pleasurable or fulfilling, as long as no humans are harmed by such action. Since animals are excluded from consideration, the concern a liberal feminist would have with intensive animal agriculture would be one that focuses on the inequitable distribution of animal protein and the effect such a distribution would have on women's lives, rather than on the effects factory farming has on animal lives.[75]

Socialist feminists also traditionally have focused exclusively on humans. Yet their analysis of intensive animal agriculture would have a different emphasis than that of the liberal feminists. The socialist feminist criticism of animal rearing practices and the consumption of factory farmed animal protein would focus on the patriarchal capitalist nature of animal production. They might point out, for example, that in the United States, eight corporations, responsible for the deaths of 5.3 million birds annually, control over 50 percent of the chicken market.[76] They might also point out that 95 percent of all poultry workers are black women who are required to scrape the insides out of 5000 chickens per hour and as a result suffer various disorders caused by repetitive motion and stress.[77] Those who profit from industrialized animal production do so by exploiting traditionally underprivileged groups, namely working-class white women and people of color. The socialist feminist analysis might also include an examination of the commodification of animal bodies and the marketing of these bodies to women who are represented culturally as those responsible for the reproduction of raw flesh into dinner for husbands and children. In addition, these feminists would undoubtedly examine the social status that is associated with those who, in this country for example, can afford to consume filet mignon as opposed to ground beef and brisket and the implications such consumption patterns have for broader socioeconomic relationships between classes.

Environmental theorists view human consumption of animals as an integral part of the ecological food chain: "the natural world as actually constituted is one in which one being lives at the expense of others."[78] Environmental theorists concentrate on holistic, biocentric analyses and thus reject vegetarianism as a choice that removes human beings from the workings of nature.[79] That is not to say, however, that all environmental theorists would approve of intensive animal agriculture. Quite the contrary. However, their analysis of such practices focuses on "the transmogrification of organic to mechanical processes."[80]

What is objectionable about industrialized animal agriculture is the process whereby organic creatures are domesticated, manipulated through breeding and biotechnological intervention, and ultimately reduced to food-producing units. In addition, the very process of industrialized food production, which requires massive amounts of energy, water, and grazing

land and produces large quantities of waste, is environmentally destructive in itself.

A Third World analysis of industrial animal production would focus on this institution as one of the many that contribute to overconsumption in the North.[81] As we indicated earlier, this type of analysis would examine the ways in which intensive animal production wastes vast amounts of protein that could otherwise be used to feed the millions of people around the globe who go to sleep hungry. Only about 17 percent of the grain and food energy that is fed to dairy cows is recovered in milk, while only about 6 percent is recovered from beef.[82] In addition, a Third World analysis might link the rise of industrialized animal agriculture to other problematic economic developments that occurred after the second World War when multinational agribusiness corporations began exploiting the Third World by instituting certain agricultural policies such as cash cropping, monoculture, and consolidation. These policies led to a state of affairs in which small independent food producers lost their autonomy and could no longer afford to produce. This situation parallels that which is presently going on in first world intensive agriculture, where small 'mom and pop' farms are going out of business because they simply cannot compete. In addition, agribusiness conglomerates go into Third World countries, cut down their forests, displace their people, and disrupt their economic system, in order to usurp land for intensive animal production.

The animal liberation perspective is one that would suggest that factory farming is immoral in itself. Animal proponents argue that nonhuman animals are beings whose lives can go better or worse, who can feel pain and experience pleasure, and who have interests in living free from confinement. Conditions on factory farms ignore the animals' most basic needs and interests, and because of this humans should refrain from consuming factory farmed food products and become vegetarians.[83] While philosophically there are differences in the arguments that are advanced on behalf of animals,[84] there is a rough consensus that because animals are enough like humans in morally relevant ways, their interests should not be excluded from ethical deliberations. To fail to morally consider the fate that animals suffer on factory farms would be 'speciesist', a position that maintains that nonhuman animals are inherently less worthy of consideration simply because they are not human.[85]

These analyses of animal agriculture are not mutually exclusive. A socialist feminist, for example, may also be inspired by an environmental perspective and/or a Third World analysis. Animal liberationists are informed by the environmental perspective insofar as factory farming affects not just domestic animals but wild animals whose habitats are destroyed by it. The point we are trying to highlight is that each of these different approaches focuses on one or two elements of oppression as primary in its analysis. An ecofeminist framework will view *all* of the various forms of

oppression as central to an understanding of particular institutions. So, for example, an ecofeminist analysis of factory farming is one which would examine the way in which the logic of domination[86] supports this institution not only as it affects animals' lives, but also as it affects workers, women, and nature.

By examining the connections between these various oppressions, ecofeminists provide a distinct critique of institutionalized animal agriculture. It is interesting to note that as far back as 1964 the beginnings of just such an analysis appeared in Ruth Harrison's *Animal Machines*, which offered the first major exposé of factory farming. Her book was heralded by ecofeminist forerunner Rachel Carson, who wrote in the foreword, "wherever [*Animal Machines*] is read it will certainly provoke feelings of dismay, revulsion, and outrage."[87] More recently, ecofeminists have argued for a contextual moral vegetarianism, one that is capable of accounting for the injustices associated with factory farming while at the same time allowing for the moral justifiability of traditional food practices of indigenous people.[88]

Focusing on context and diversity is one of the strengths of ecofeminist theorizing. However, during the past decade or so, the polyphony of perspectives known as ecofeminism has created interesting theoretical tensions. For example, not all ecofeminists agree about the importance of taking the suffering of animals seriously.[89] Another area of some controversy involves the place of spirituality in ecofeminist theory. Some consider spirituality to be historically significant and personally empowering,[90] while others have maintained that spirituality is not a necessary condition of ecofeminist theory.[91] The use of feminized and sexualized metaphors for nature, such as 'mother nature' and 'the rape of the wild', has also been a topic of constructive debate.[92] Clearly, ecofeminist theory is theory in process. What is thought to be important at this particular historical and cultural moment may not be important to ecofeminists in another place at another time. Although the vision of a just and sustainable future for all is shared by ecofeminists, what this future looks like and how it is to be arrived at varies according to the diverse voices and experiences of those people engaged in developing ecofeminist theories.

Indeed, ecofeminist theory is theory built on community-based knowing and valuing, and the strength of this knowledge is dependent on the inclusivity, flexibility, and reflexivity of the community in which it is generated. Ecofeminist theory grows out of dialogue and focuses on reaching consensus. One method for accomplishing this is to focus on commonality while at the same time respecting difference, building coalitions with any number of individuals or groups struggling against oppression—such as deep ecologists, social ecologists, bioregionalists, Native American traditionalists, anti-imperialists, ecosocialists, greens, and others. In solidarity, these efforts to encourage dialogue across difference must emphasize a principled unity-in-diversity. Nothing less than the future of the earth and all

of its inhabitants may well depend on how effectively we all can work together to achieve global justice and planetary health.

Notes

1 Francoise d'Eaubonne's *Le feminisme ou la mort* (1974) is often credited for the first usage of the word 'eco-feminism', but as Ariel Salleh has pointed out in *Hypatia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 206–14, esp. p. 206, the text was not translated into English until 15 years later, so it would have had little effect on those articles and texts published before 1989. The spontaneous appearance of the word or the concept of 'eco-feminism' across several continents would indicate it arose out of a real, internationally observable phenomenon rather than the influence of a single writer.
2 *See* the list of conferences at the end of this article.
3 *See* the reading list at the end of the article as well as the sources listed in the footnotes.
4 Lester R. Brown et al., *State of the World: 1992* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1992), p. 4.
5 Our use of 'Third World', following Gita Sen and Caren Grown, is meant to convey respect for those women who self-identify as 'Third World Women' based on their "struggles against the multiple oppression of nation, gender, class, and ethnicity," *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (New York: New Feminist Library, 1987), p. 9.
6 Official Report from the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet, 8–12 Nov. 1991, Miami, Florida (New York: Women's Environment & Development Organization, 1992), p. 6.
7 Official Report from the World Women's Congress, p. 21.
8 World Resources Institute, *The 1992 "Information Please" Environmental Almanac* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992), pp. 107–11.
9 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 4.
10 Lloyd Timberlake and Laura Thomas, *When the Bough Breaks ... Our Children, Our Environment* (London: Earthscan Publications, 1990), p. 128.
11 "Is Your Water Safe?" *U.S. News and World Report* (29 July 1991), pp. 48–55; Lewis Regenstein, *How to Survive in America the Poisoned* (Washington, DC: Acropolis Books, 1986), pp. 168–88.
12 *1992 Environmental Almanac*, pp. 143–45.
13 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 3.
14 *1992 Environmental Almanac*, p. 146. *See* also G. Jon Roush, "The Disintegrating Web: The Causes and Consequences of Extinction," *The Nature Conservancy Magazine* (Nov./Dec. 1989), pp. 4–15.
15 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 3.
16 John Robbins, *Diet for a New America* (Walpole, NH: Stillpoint Publishing, 1987), p. 352.
17 As reported at the "World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet."
18 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 3.
19 In Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, the Worldwatch Institute writers use the metaphor of addiction to describe this denial, arguing that what is needed is a massive intervention. We find the paradigm of addiction to be inadequate for developing ecofeminist theory for a variety of reasons. Aside from the fact that the metaphor of addiction medicalizes and thereby potentially depoliticizes the problem of overconsumption and related injustices, there is the more practical

problem of choosing a treatment center large enough to accommodate patriarchy.

20 For a philosophical taxonomy of these approaches, *see* Karen Warren, "Feminism and the Environment: An Overview of the Issues," *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (Fall 1991), pp. 108–16.

21 *See* Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

22 *See* Marija Gimbutas, *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe—6500–3500 B.C.* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982); Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987); Merlin Stone, *When God Was a Woman* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976); Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* (New York: Harper Collins, 1987).

23 For extensive anthropological discussions, *see* Elizabeth Fisher, *Woman's Creation* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979); Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (New York: Routledge, 1989); and Andrée Collard with Joyce Contrucci, *Rape of the Wild: Man's Violence Against Animals and the Earth* (London: The Women's Press, 1988).

24 *See* Karen Warren, "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections," *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 9 (Spring 1987), pp. 3–20, and "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Summer 1990), pp. 125–46.

25 *See* Elizabeth Dodson Gray, *Green Paradise Lost* (Wellesley, MA: Roundtable Press, 1981); and Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978).

26 *See* Carol Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist–Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York: Continuum, 1990); Andrée Collard with Joyce Contrucci, *Rape of the Wild*; Lori Gruen, "Dismantling Oppression: An Analysis of the Connection Between Women and Animals," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Greta Gaard, ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), and "Exclusion and Difference: Reflections on 'On Women, Animals and Nature'," *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* (Spring 1992); Marti Kheel, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology: Reflections on Identify and Difference," pp. 128–37, in *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds. (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books).

27 *See* Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Carol Gilligan, Janie Victoria Ward, Jill McLean, and Betty Bardige, eds., *Mapping the Moral Domain: A Contribution of Women's Thinking to Psychological Theory and Education* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988). Gilligan's work has been critiqued in a number of feminist analyses for its racial and class biases. *See*, for example, Joan C. Tronto, "Beyond Gender Difference to a Theory of Care," *Signs*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Summer 1987), pp. 644–63.

28 According to Fredrick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (New York: International Publishers, reprinted 1990), p. 120, with the advent of private property, men were, for the first time, able to accumulate wealth, which they wished to pass on to their offspring. These conditions led to what Engels called the overthrow of mother right, which was the beginning of the decline in the social status of women.

29 For a Marxist account of this spread in Africa, *see* Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1981). For

an ecofeminist analysis of British colonialism in India, *see* Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development* (London: Zed Books. 1988) For an account of US colonialism in Hawaii, *see* Haunani–Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1993).

30 For an overview of environmental activism as survival strategy, *see* Alan B. Durning, "Environmentalism South," *The Amicus Journal* (Summer 1990), pp. 12–18. For a sampling on the impacts of environmental degradation on women in particular, *see* Maggie Black, "Mothers of the Earth," *Earthwatch*, Vol. 32 (1988), pp. 5–7; Gita Sen and Caren Grown, *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987); The Manushi Collective, "Drought: God-sent or Man-made Disaster?" *Heresies*, Vol. 13 (1981), pp. 56–58; Vandana Shiva, "Where Has All the Water Gone?—Women and the Water Crisis," *Ecoforum*, Vol. 10, No.3 (Apr. 1985), p. 16; and Sally Sontheimer, ed., *Women and the Environment: Crisis and Development in the Third World* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1991).

31 *See* Marilyn Waring, *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988); and Susan Meeker-Lowry, *Economics As If the Earth Really Mattered* (Philadelphia: New Society, 1988).

32 Anne V. Akeroyd, "Gender, Food Production and Property Rights: Constraints on Women Farmers in Southern Africa," pp. 139–17, in *Women, Development and Survival in the Third World* (London: Longman Group, 1991).

33 *See* Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*, and "Where Has All the Water Gone?"

34 Waring, *If Women Counted*, p. 263.

35 Leonor Briones, Philippines, speaking at the World Women's Congress in Miami, Florida, 8–12 Nov. 1991.

36 Brown, *State of the World:* 1992, p. 87.

37 In addition to *World Hunger* (1986), a number of studies have proven that world hunger is a product of underdevelopment and colonialism. For example, *see* Tom Barry, *Roots of Rebellion: Land and Hunger in Central America* (Boston: South End Press, 1987); Susan George, *How the Other Half Dies: The Real Reasons for Hunger* (Penguin, 1976), and *Ill Fares the Land: Essays on Food, Hunger, and Power* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Policy Studies, 1984); Betsy Hartmann and James Boyce, *Needless Hunger: Voices from a Bangladesh Village* (San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1979); Frances Moore Lappe, Joseph Collins, and David Kinley, *Aid as Obstacle: Twenty Questions About Our Foreign Aid and the Hungry* (San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1980).

38 These facts are corroborated in Akeroyd, "Gender, Food Production and Property Rights," pp. 153–54; Ruth Engo Tjega, Cameroon *Official Report from the World Women's Congress*, pp. 9–10.

39 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, pp. 66–82.

40 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 69.

41 *See* Jeremy Rifkin, "Beyond Beef," *The Utne Reader*, Vol. 50 (March/Apr. 1992), pp. 96–109. Rifkin now has a book, *Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture* (New York: Penguin/Pume, 1992). According to John Robbins, "The livestock population of the U.S. today consumes enough grain and soybeans to feed over five times the entire human population of the country...." (Robbins, *Diet for a New America*, pp. 350–51).

42 Rifkin, "Beyond Beef," pp. 98–99.

43 *Environmental Almanac 1992*, p. 39.

44 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 71.

45 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 74.
46 Jim Mason and Peter Singer, *Animal Factories* (New York: Crown, 1980), p. 84.
47 *See* Gruen, in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed.
48 Pat Hynes, *The Recurring Silent Spring* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), p. 185.
49 As reported in Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Avon, 1990), p. 138.
50 Hynes, *The Recurring Silent Spring*, p. 185.
51 Vandana Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1991), p. 16.
52 Gena Corea, *The Mother Machine* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985).
53 *See* Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control and Reproductive Choice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987).
54 *See* Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, p. 9.
55 *See* Nancy C. M. Hartsock, "Masculinity, Heroism, and the Making of War," pp. 133–52, in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, eds. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).
56 Hartsock, "Masculinity, Heroism," p. 141.
57 *See* Chaia Helper, "For the Love of Nature: Ecology and the Cult of the Romantic"; and Marti Kheel, "From Heroic to Holistic Ethics: The Ecofeminist Challenge," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Greta Gaard, ed.
58 Lourdes Beneria and Rebecca Blank, "Women and the Economics of Military Spending." pp. 191–203, in *Rocking the Ship of State*, Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, eds.
59 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 5.
60 Official Report from the World Women's Congress, p. 10.
61 Najwa M. Sa'd, "In a Stateless Environment," *Women and Environments*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Spring 1988). pp. 11–12.
62 Prema Gopalan, "Bombay Pavement Dwellers Struggle for Permanent Shelter," *Women and Environments*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Spring 1988), pp. 13–15.
63 *See* Rosalie Bertell, "Charting a New Environmental Course," *Women and Environments*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Winter/Spring 1991), pp. 6–9.
64 National Wildlife Federation information.
65 Official Statement of the World Women's Congress, p. 32.
66 *See* Cynthia Hamilton, "Women, Home, and Community: The Struggle in an Urban Environment," *Woman of Power*, Vol. 20 (Spring 1991), pp. 42–45; Offical Statement of the World Women's Congress, p. 35; Margo Nikitas, "The 'Silent Bomb': Racism, War and Toxic Wastes," *The WREE View of Women: Newsmagazine of Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE)*, Vol. 16, Nos. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 1991), p. 15; "The Military's Toxic Legacy," *Newsweek* (6 Aug. 1990), p. 21.
67 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 115.
68 Brown, *State of the World: 1992*, p. 115.
69 The Pele Defense Fund, "The Violation of the Goddess Pele: Geothermal Development on Mauna Loa Volcano," *Woman of Power*, Vol. 20 (Spring 1991), pp. 40–41. *See* also, Trask, *From a Native Daughter.*
70 Timberlake and Thomas, *When the Bough Breaks*, p. 161.
71 Timberlake and Thomas, *When the Bough Breaks*, p. 168.
72 Janet Henshall Momsen, *Women and Development in the Third World* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
73 It is certainly true that many insights of the early radical feminists were important in the development of ecofeminism; however, contrary to what Val Plumwood suggests in "Beyond the Dualistic Assumptions of Women, Men and Nature," in The Ecologist, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Jan./Feb.1992) (reprinted in this issue of Society and

Nature), most contemporary ecofeminist theorists reject the essentialist basis that cultural feminism maintains. Socialist Feminist theory, which recognizes the reinforcing oppressions of gender, race, and class and argues that liberation cannot occur when the exploitation of any group by another is occurring, is much closer in principle to recent work in ecofeminist theory. For examples of socialist feminist writing, see Karen V. Hansen and Ilene J. Philipson, eds. Women, Class, and the Feminist Imagination (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); and Ann Ferguson, Blood at the Root (London: Pandora Press, 1989); and Sexual Democracy: Women, Oppression, and Revolution (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).

74 *See* Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), Ch. 3.

75 For example, Kathryn George might be read as adopting a liberal feminist approach to factory farming and vegetarianism more generally. In her article "So Human an Animal..., or the Moral Relevance of Being an Omnivore," *The Journal of Agricultural Ethics*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1990), she suggests that people who are not as nutritionally privileged as most white, middle-class men should be morally permitted to eat factory farmed animals though not "to eat as much meat or animal products as they wish." She argues that moral vegetarianism precludes women from full participation in moral activities and is thus problematic.

76 *Broiler Industry* (Dec. 1987), p. 22, as cited in Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p. 98.

77 Carol Adams, "Ecofeminism and the Eating of Animals," *Hypatia*, Vol.6, No. 1 (1991), p. 130.

78 J. Baird Callicott, *In Defense of the Land Ethic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 33.

79 As Ned Hettinger writes in "Bambi Lovers Versus Tree Huggers: A Critique of Rolston's Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* (forthcoming): "Rolston thinks there are positive values in the lives of (some) hunters and (all?) meat eaters that are lacking in the lives of vegetarians and nonhunters. 'Meat eaters', he says, 'know their ecology and natural history in a way that vegetarians do not... I'm not sure a vegetarian even understands the way the world is built'." Rolston argues that vegetarians, in their refusal to eat meat, even factory farmed meat, are repudiating nature and their natural origins.

80 J. Baird Callicott, *In Defense of the Land Ethic,"* p. 35.

81 Of course, we recognize that, as with the environmental theorists previously discussed, there is no single Third World viewpoint.

82 Mason and Singer, "Animal Factories," p. 74.

83 *See*, for example, Peter Singer, ed., *In Defense of Animals* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), and Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

84 *See* Lori Gruen, "Animals" in Peter Singer, ed., *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), pp. 343–53.

85 There is some debate about what exactly constitutes speciesism, a term originally coined by Richard Ryder and picked up by Singer. For an interesting feminist take on the issue, *see* the Comment and Reply between Nel Noddings and Josephine Donovan in *Signs*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Winter 1991), pp. 418–25.

86 A concept discussed by Warren, "The Power and the Promise."

87 Ruth Harrison, *Animal Machines* (Vincent Stuart Ltd: London, 1964), p. viii.

88 *See*, especially, Deane Curtin, "Toward an Ecological Ethic of Care," *Hypatia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 60–74.

89 Those who do take animal suffering seriously include Carol Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist–Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York: Continuum,

1990), "The Feminist Traffic in Animals," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed., and "Ecofeminism and the Eating of Animals," *Hypatia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 125–45; Andrée Collard with Joyce Contrucci, *Rape of the Wild*; Deborah Slicer, "Your Daughter or Your Dog? A Feminist Assessment of the Animal Research Issue," *Hypatia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 108–24; Norma Benney, "All of One Flesh: The Rights of Animals," in *Reclaim the Earth: Women Speak Out for Life on Earth*, Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland, eds. (London: The Women's Press, 1983); Lori Gruen in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed. While some ecofeminists have failed to address the role of animals in their theories, none have specifically argued against considering animal suffering.

90 *See*, for example, Starhawk, "Power, Authority and Mystery: Ecofeminism and Earth-based Spirituality," pp. 73–86; Riane Eisler, "The Gaia Tradition and the Partnership Future: An Ecofeminist Manifesto," pp. 23–34; Mara Lynn Keller, "The Eleusinian Mysteries: Ancient Nature Religion of Demeter and Persephone," pp. 41–51; Carol P. Christ, "Rethinking Theology and Nature," pp. 58–68, all found in *Reweaving the World*, Diamond and Orenstein, eds. *See* also Charlene Spretnak, "Toward an Ecofeminist Spirituality," pp. 127–32; Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Toward an Ecological–Feminist Theory of Nature," pp. 145–50; Margot Adler, "The Juice and the Mystery," pp. 151–54; Dolores LaChapelle, "Sacred Land, Sacred Sex," pp. 155–67; Starhawk, "Feminist Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism," pp. 174–85, all found in *Healing the Wounds*, Judith Plant, ed.

91 *See* Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism and Native American Cultures: Pushing the Limits of Cultural Imperialism?" in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed., and Karen Warren. "Ecofeminist Spiritualities: An Ecofeminist Philosophical Perspective," in *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, Carol Adams, ed. (New York: Continuum, 1993.), pp. 119–32.

92 *See* Catherine Roach, "Loving Your Mother: On the Woman–Nature Relation," *Hypatia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 46–59; Lori Gruen, "Exclusion and Difference: Reflections on 'On Women, Nature, and Animals'," *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, Spring 1992; Yaakov Jerome Garb, "Perspective of Escape? Ecofeminist Musings on Contemporary Earth Imagery," pp. 264–78, in *Reweaving the World*, Diamond and Orenstein, eds.; Patrick D. Murphy, "Sex–Typing the Planet: Gaia Imagery and the Problem of Subverting Patriarchy," *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer 1988), pp. 155–68; Ellen Cronan Rose, "The Good Mother: From Gaia to Gilead," *Frontiers*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1991), pp. 77–97; Chaia Heller, "For the Love of Nature: Ecology and the Cult of the Romantic," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed.; Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism and Native American Cultures," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Gaard, ed.

Further reading

Overview

For an overview of ecofeminist beginnings, see:

Spretnak, Charlene. "Ecofeminism: Our Roots and Flowering." *Women of Power*, Vol. 9 (Spring 1988), pp. 6–10, reprinted in *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of*