

Healing the Wounds:

Feminism, Ecology and Nature/Culture Dualism

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No part of living nature can ignore the extreme threat to life on earth. We are faced with worldwide deforestation, the disappearance of hundreds of species of life and the increasing pollution of the gene pool by poisons and low level radiation. We are also faced with biological atrocities unique to modern life --- the existence of the AIDS virus and the possibility of even more dreadful and pernicious diseases caused by genetic mutation, as well as the unforeseen ecological consequences of disasters such as the industrial accident in India and nuclear meltdown in the Soviet Union. Worldwide food shortages, including episodes of mass starvation, continue to mount as prime agricultural land is used to grow cash crops to pay national debts instead of food to feed people¹. Animals are mistreated and mutilated in horrible ways to test cosmetics, drugs and surgical procedures.² The stockpiling of ever greater weapons of annihilation and the horrible imagining of new ones continues. The piece of the pie that women have only begun to sample as a result of the feminist movement is rotten and carcinogenic, and surely our feminist theory and politics must take account of this however much we yearn for the opportunities within this society that have been denied to us. What is the point of partaking equally in a system that is killing us all?³

The contemporary ecological crisis alone creates an imperative that feminists take ecology seriously, but there are other reasons ecology is central to feminist philosophy and politics. The ecological crisis is related to the systems of hatred of all that is natural and female by the white, male western formulators of philosophy, technology and death inventions. It is my contention that the systematic denigration of working class people and people of color, women and animals are all connected to the basic dualism that lies at the root of western civilization. But this mindset of hierarchy originates within human society. It has its material roots in the domination of human by human, particularly women by men. While I cannot speak for the liberation struggles of people of color, I believe that the goals of feminism, ecology and movements against racism and for the survival of indigenous peoples are internally related, and must be understood and pursued together in a world-wide, genuinely pro-life⁴, movement.

There is at the root of western society a deep ambivalence about life itself, about our own fertility and that of non-human nature, and a terrible confusion about our place in nature. But as the work of social ecologist Murray Bookchin demonstrates⁵, nature did not declare war on humanity, patriarchal humanity declared war on women and on living nature. Nowhere is this transition more hauntingly portrayed than by the Chorus in Sophocles' Antigone:

Many the wonders but nothing more wondrous than man.

This thing crosses the sea in the winter's storm,
making his path through the roaring waves.
And she, the greatest of gods, the Earth---
deathless she is, and unwearies--he wears her away
as the ploughs go up and down from year to year
and his mules turn up the soil.

The tribes of the lighthearted birds he ensnares, and the races
of all the wild beasts and the salty brook of the sea,
with the twined mesh of his nets, he leads captive, this clever man.
He controls with craft the beasts of the open air,
who roam the hills. The horse with his shaggy mane
he holds and harnesses, yoked about the neck,
and the strong bull of the mountain.

Speech and thought like the wind
and the feelings that make the town,
he has taught himself, and shelter agains the cold,
refuge from rain. Ever resourceful is he.
He faces no future helpless. Only against death
shall he call for aid of vain. But from baffling maladies
has he contrived escape.

Clever beyond all dreams
the inventive craft that he has
which may drive him one time or another to well or ill.
When he honors the laws of the land and the gods' sworn right

high indeed is his city; but stateless the man
who dares to do what is shameful.

[Lines 335-370]

So far have we gone from our roots in living nature, that it is the living, and not the dead that perplexes. The pannaturalism of ancient and ancestral culture has given way to panmechanism, the norm of the lifeless.

But for a long time after the first echoes of this transition, the inroads human beings made on living nature were superficial, and unable to fundamentally upset the balance and fecundity of the non-human natural world. And so appropriately, ethics, and ideas about how people should live which took their instrumental form in politics, had to do with the relationships of human beings to one another, especially in cities. But with the arrival of modern technologies the task of ethics and the domain of politics changes drastically. The consideration of the place of human beings in nature, formerly the terrain of religion, becomes a crucial concern for all human beings. And with modern technologies, the particular responsibilities of human beings for nature must move to the center of politics.

Biological ethicist Hans Jonas says of this condition:

"A kind of metaphysical responsibility beyond self-interest has devolved in us with the magnitude of our powers relative to this tenuous film of life, that is, since man has become dangerous not only to himself but to the whole biosphere."⁶

Yet around the world, capitalism, the pre-eminent culture and economics of self-interest, is homogenizing cultures and simplifying life on earth by disrupting naturally complex balanced within the ecosystem. Capitalism is dependent upon expanding markets, therefore ever greater areas of life must be mediated by sold products. From a capitalist standpoint, the more things that can be bought and sold, the better. So capitalism requires a rationalized worldview, which asserts that human science and technology are inherently progressive, which systematically denigrates ancestral cultures, and asserts that human beings are entitled to dominion over non-human nature.

Non-human nature is being rapidly simplified, undoing the work of organic evolution. Hundreds of species of life disappear forever each year, and the figure is accelerating. Diverse, complex, eco-systems are more stable than simple ones. They have had longer periods of evolution, and are necessary to support human beings and many other species. Yet in the name of

civilization, nature has been desecrated in a process of rationalization sociologist Max Weber called "the disenchantment of the world".

The diversity of human life on the planet is also being undermined. This worldwide process of simplification impoverishes all of humanity. The cultural diversity of human societies around the world developed over thousands of years, and is part of the general evolution of life on the planet. The homogenizing of culture turns the world into a giant factory, and facilitates top-down authoritarian, government. In the name of helping people, the industrial countries export models of development which assume that the American way of life is the best way of life for everyone. In this country, MacDonal'd's and shopping malls cater to a uniform clientele, which is becoming more uniform all the time. To "go malling" has become a verb in American English - shopping has become our national passtime, as prosperous American consumers seek to scratch an itch that can never be satisfied by commodities.⁷

A critical analysis of and opposition to the uniformity of technological, industrial culture - capitalist and socialist - is crucial to feminism, ecology and the struggles of indigenous peoples. At this point in history, there is no way to unravel the matrix of oppressions within human society without at the same time liberating nature and reconciling that part of nature which is human with that part which is not. Socialists do not have the answer to these problems - they share the anti-naturalism and

basic dualism of capitalism. Although it was developed by capitalism, the technological means of production utilized by capitalist and socialist states is largely the same. All hitherto existing philosophies of liberation, with the possible exception of some forms of ~~social~~ anarchism, accept the anthropocentric notion that humanity should dominate nature, and that the increasing domination of non-human nature is a precondition for true human freedom.⁸ No socialist revolution has ever fundamentally challenged the basic prototype for nature/culture dualism - the domination of men over women.

This old socialism has apparently ended by deconstructing itself in the academy, as the white male principals of academic Marxism proclaim the end of the subject. In this sense, socialism may be in its death throes, but, I will argue, the old socialist spirit of history, a valuable legacy, is not dead. It has passed onto new subjects -- feminists, greens, and other bearers of identity politics, including movements against racism and for national liberation and the survival of indigenous peoples. And in this sense, these most anti-modern of movements are modern, not "post-modern". In response to the modern crisis, they argue for more heart, not less heart, taking the side of Pascal against Descartes, "The heart hath its reasons which the reason knows not."

THE PROBLEM OF NATURE FOR FEMINISM

From its inception, feminism has had to wrestle with the problem of the projection of human ideas onto the natural, where these human ideas of what is natural have then been projected back onto human society as natural law, and used to reinforce male ideas about female nature.⁹ Since ideas reinforcing the relationship between women and nature have been used to limit and oppress women in western society, feminists have looked to social constructionism. They are understandably wary of any theory which appears to reinforce the woman/nature relationship as biological determinism by another name. At the same time, ecologists have been busy reinforcing the humanity/nature relationship, and demonstrating the perilous situation of life on earth, brought about by human attempts to master nature. This has led other feminists to assert that the feminist project might should be freeing nature from men, rather than freeing women from nature.

So in taking up ecology feminism necessarily begins to try and understand what it has meant for us as women to be represented as closer to nature than men in a male-dominated culture which defines itself in opposition to nature. I will first explore current

feminist thinking about nature/culture dualism, arguing that each side of the debate capitulates to the false opposition stated above, which is itself a product of patriarchal dualism. Next I will articulate what I believe to be a way past this division appropriating from the feminist perspectives which have so far dominated the public discourse about nature/culture dualism. I will argue that the serious consideration of ecology by feminists suggests critical directions for theory, and creates an imperative for a feminist epistemology based on a non-instrumental way of knowing. This implies a reformulation, not a repudiation, of reason and science. I will also address the new forms of politics emerging from the anti-dualistic, ecofeminist imperative. This praxis is embodied and articulate - passionate and thoughtful. It connects political issues to one another, connects different cultures of women, and continually connects the fate of human beings to the fate of the rest of life on this planet.

1. Liberal Feminism, Rationalization and the Domination of Nature

Liberalism, with its assertion of "liberty, equality and fraternity" provided the conceptual tools for feminists to argue that no people are naturally meant to rule over other people, including men over women¹⁰. This rationalization of difference has worked for women and other dehumanized peoples in that the idea of any "natural" roles or destinies is called into question. In a liberal framework "difference" itself must be obliterated to achieve equality¹¹. In other words, if women were educated like men they would be like men. To argue that women are capable of mindful activity - that women reason and think was and is a liberatory argument.

Mary Wollstonecraft drew on liberal Enlightenment ideas in her germinal Vindication of the Rights of Women, the first feminist work in English. It suggested that woman could attain "the virtues of man" if she were extended "the rights of reason". In this framework, it is obviously preferable for women to be like men. Wollstonecraft says:

"Asserting the rights which women in common with men ought to contend for, I have not attempted to extenuate their faults; but to prove them to be the natural

consequences of their education and station in society. If so, it is reasonable to suppose that they will change their character, and correct their vices and follies, when they are allowed to be free in a physical, moral, and civil sense."¹²

Obviously, women are mindful human beings, capable of reason, who should be extended the vote, educational opportunities and public political power. But the problem is basing the extension of full personhood to women (and other persons) by an enforced sameness.

So the version of feminism least able to appropriately address ecology is liberal feminism with its rationalist, utilitarian bias and underlying assumption that "male is better". By and large, liberal feminism is a white middle-class movement, concerned with the extension of male power and privilege to women like themselves, not the fate of women as a whole. To the extent that they address ecological concerns, liberal feminists will be "environmentalists" rather than "ecologists". The difference between environmentalists and ecologists is revealed in the terminology itself - environmentalists refer to non-human nature as "the environment", meaning the environment of human beings, or "natural resources", meaning resources for human use. "Environmental management" seeks to make sure that these resources are not depleted to a degree that slows human productivity. Environmentalists accept the

anthropocentric view that nature exists solely to serve human ends and purposes. In this instrumentalist view, it is to the good that everything be rationalized and quantified so that we might manage it better for human ends. It is an instrumentalist perspective, concerned more with efficacy than with ends.

One could argue from the perspective of liberal feminism that women contribute to the military and industrial ravage of nature and receive proportionately few of the supposed benefits - profits and jobs. Men are drafted and may be injured or even die in combat, but they also get jobs and have the opportunity to take part in one of the great personmaking dramas of our civilization, war. For this reason contemporary liberal feminists have supported the draft, just as suffragists supported their governments in World War I to prove that they were loyal citizens, contributing to the war effort and deserving of a full franchise. Many of these feminists had an internationalist, anti-militarist perspective, just as many feminists who opposed the Vietnam War now support the drafting of women so we will stand alongside men in identical relationship to the state.

Liberal feminists since Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill¹³ have emphasized the similarities of women to men as the basis for the emancipation of women. But trying to maintain this stance in a contemporary context leads liberal feminists into absurdly unsisterly positions. The limitations of liberalism as a basis for feminism are especially obvious as we approach the so-called

new reproductive technologies. I was recently at a meeting of feminist writers called to draft a response to the Mary Beth Whitehead surrogacy case. There were feminists there who disagreed about surrogacy, but all of whom agreed that this particular woman had been wronged and should get her baby back. The only woman who refused to publicly side with Whitehead was a solid liberal feminist who also supports the draft. She thought that injustice had definitely been done, but she refused to take a public stance for two reasons. Her primary concern was maintaining women's contract credibility. It did not matter to her that Whitehead had not understood the contract she signed, and had entered into this contract because she needed \$10,000 desperately and had no other way to get it.

Her other reason for opposing Whitehead is more insidious from an ecofeminist standpoint, and represents the fundamental biases of liberalism toward a denatured sameness as a condition for equality, or subjectivity. She opposed any policy which recognized that men and women stand in different relationship to a baby at the moment of its birth, thereby giving a women a greater initial claim to the child of her flesh. Such claims may appear to reinforce the idea that women are more creatures of nature than men, or that "biology is destiny". But women do bear children, and in virtually all cultures, take major responsibility for caring for them and acculturating them. To a greater degree than men, women are the repository of human fertility and the possibility of future generations. And so far, that fact does not stop with the biological

bearing of children determined by sex, but extends into the social division of human activity, the realm of gender.

Feminists who have argued against any special relationship between mothers and their children, believing that the emphasis on this biological bond is the ideological basis for the oppression of women, have had their arguments used in court to take children away from their mothers.¹⁴ In a sense they have given away what little social power women as a group have had without receiving an equal share of male power and privilege, however it might be defined. Obviously, this is not an argument that abusive mothers should be given custody of their children over loving fathers. Rather it is an argument that women should seek to hold onto reproductive and procreative powers as a political strategy and a recognition of the biological fact that women bear children out of our own bodies, and therefore have a particular claim to control how this process is carried out.¹⁵

2. Radical Feminism's Patriarchal Root:

To Embrace or Repudiate Nature?

Radical feminists, or feminists who believe that the biologically based domination of women by men is the root cause of oppression, have considered ecology from a feminist perspective more often than liberal or socialist-feminists because nature is their central category of analysis. Radical feminists believe that the subordination of women in society is the root form of human oppression, closely related to the association of women with nature, hence the word "radical".

Radical feminists root the oppression of women in biological difference itself. They see "patriarchy" (by which they mean the systematic dominance of men in society) as preceding and laying the foundation for other forms of human oppression and exploitation. Men identify women with nature and seek to enlist both in the service of male "projects" designed to make men safe from feared nature and mortality. The ideology of women as closer to nature is essential to such a project. So if patriarchy is the archetypal form of human oppression, then it follows that if we get rid of that other forms of oppression will likewise crumble. But the basic difference between the two schools of radical feminists is over whether the woman/nature connection is potentially emancipatory, or provides a rationale for the continued subordination of women.¹⁶

So how do women who call themselves radical feminists come to opposite conclusions?¹⁷ If it is the first, then that implies a separate feminist culture and philosophy from the vantage point of identification with nature, and a celebration of the woman/nature connection - this is the position of radical cultural feminists, which I will address later.

Radical rationalist feminists, take the second position, repudiating the woman/nature connection. For these feminists, freedom is being liberated from the primordial realm of women and nature, which they regard as an imprisoning female ghetto. They believe that the key to the emancipation of women lies in the dissociation of women from nature and the end of what they believe to be a "female ghetto", an inherently unfree realm of necessity. In this sense, liberal feminism is similar to radical rationalist feminism.

Radical rationalist feminists deplore the appropriation of ecology as a feminist issue, and see it as a regression which is bound to reinforce sex role stereotyping. Anything which reinforces gender differences, or makes any kind of special claim for women is problematic. Rationalist feminists think that feminists shouldn't do anything that would restimulate traditional ideas about women. They celebrate the fact that we have finally begun to gain access to male bastions by using the political tools of liberalism and the rationalization of human life, mythically severing the woman-nature connection as the humanity-nature connection has been severed.

The mother of modern feminism, Simone de Beauvoir, represents this position. Recently she came out against what she calls "the new femininity":¹⁸

"an enhanced status for traditional feminine values, such as woman and her rapport with nature, woman and her maternal instinct, woman and her physical being . . . etc. This renewed attempt to pin women down to their traditional role, together with a small effort to meet some of the demands made by women -- that's the formula used to try and keep women quiet. Even women who call themselves feminists don't always see through it. Once again, women are being defined in terms of 'the other', once again they are being made into the 'second sex'."

She goes on to say of women and peace, and feminism and ecology:

"Why should women be more in favour of peace than men? I should think it a matter of equal concern for both! . . . being a mother means being for peace. Equating

ecology with feminism is something that irritates me. They are not automatically one and the same thing at all."

She reiterates the position she took almost forty years ago in The Second Sex - that it is a sexist ploy to define women as beings who are closer to nature than men. She claims that such associations divert women from their struggle for emancipation, and channel their energies "into subsidiary concerns", such as ecology and peace.

The best known contemporary explication of this position is Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex,¹⁹ which concludes with a chapter advocating test tube reproduction, and the removal of biological reproduction from women's bodies as a condition for women's liberation.

Following deBeauvoir, rationalist radical feminism is the version of radical feminism most socialist-feminists are attempting to integrate with Marxist historical materialism²⁰, asserts that the woman/nature identification is a male ideology and a tool of oppression which must itself be overcome.²¹ Therefore, if women are to be allowed full participation in the male world we should not do anything in the name of feminism which reinforces the woman/nature connection. Socialist-feminists seek to maintain liberal feminism's commitment to equality, combining it with a socialist analysis of class.

The other form of radical feminism which seeks to address the root of women's oppression with the opposite theory and strategy is radical cultural feminism, usually called cultural feminism. Cultural feminists resolve the problem not by obliterating the difference between men and women, but by taking women's side, which as they see it, is also the side of non-human nature.

Cultural feminism grows out of radical feminism, emphasizing the differences, rather than the similarities between men and women. And not surprisingly, they have taken the slogan "the personal is political" in the opposite direction, personalizing the political. They celebrate the life experience of the "female ghetto", which they see as a source of female freedom, rather than subordination. Cultural feminists argue, following Virginia Wolf, that they don't want to enter the male world with its "procession of professions".²² Cultural feminists have attempted to articulate and even create a separate women's culture, and have been major proponents of the identification of women with nature and feminism with ecology. The major strength of cultural feminism is that it is a deeply woman-identified movement. They celebrate what is distinct about women, and have challenged male culture, rather than strategizing to become part of it. They have celebrated the identification of women with nature in music, art, literature, poetry, covens and communes. Although there are feminists of every stripe who are lesbians and cultural feminists who are not

lesbians, lesbian cultural feminists have developed a highly political, energetic visible culture which allows women to live every aspect of their lives among women. Much of this culture intentionally identifies with women and nature against (male) culture.

For example, cultural feminists have often been in the forefront of feminist anti-militarist activism. They blame men for war, and point out the masculine preoccupation with death-defying deeds as constitutive of man(person)hood. Men who are socialized in this way have little respect for women, or for life, including their own. Since Vietnam, even in the popular culture, the glorification of the military and the idea that soldiering is great preparation for a successful manly life has been tarnished. At the same time, the Rambo industry (films, dolls, toys, games, etc.) is immensely successful, and efforts to "reconstruct" the history of the Vietnam War as the emasculation of America proceed. And it is not only cultural feminists who have criticized male and military culture. The masculine construction of personhood, with its idealization of war is being challenged from the male side as well. The most popular adventure show on television is *Magnum P.I.*, where four friends (three Vietnam Vets and a long-time British Army officer) live in Hawaii, trying to recover from and make sense of their personally devastating military experiences. Films like *Platoon* portray the dehumanization of soldiering, rather than romanticizing the battlefield and furthering the idea of hero/soldier as human ideal. In this way, anti-military art and culture share the cultural

feminist project, suggesting that the imperatives of manhood are destructive to men as well as women and nature.

In her book Gyn/ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, a major work of cultural feminist theory, Mary Daly calls herself an ecofeminist and implores women to identify with nature against men, and live our lives separately from men. For Daly the oppression of women under patriarchy and the pillage of the natural world are the same phenomenon, and consequently she does not theoretically differentiate the issues.²³ In the political realm, Sonia Johnson recently waged a Presidential campaign as a candidate for the Citizens Party translating a perspective very much like Mary Daly's into conventional political terms.²⁴ My ecofeminism differs from that of Daly in that I think Gynecology stands as a powerful phenomenology of the victimization of women, but it is ultimately dualistic. Hers is a work of metaphysical naturalism, or naturalistic metaphysics -- either way dualistic. She has turned the old misogynist Thomas Aquinas on his head. While she's more correct than he, she has reified the female over the male. She doesn't take us past dualism, which I believe to be the ecofeminist agenda.

Susan Griffin's book Women and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her, is another cultural feminist classic. A long prose poem, it is not intended to spell out a precise political philosophy and program, but to let us know and feel how the woman/nature connection has played out historically in the dominant western culture. It suggests

a powerful potentiality for a feminist movement which links feminism and ecology, with an immanent, or mystical, relationship to nature. Griffin does not mean to trade history for mystery, although her work has been interpreted that way. Griffin's work, located ambiguously between theory and poetry, has been read much too literally and at times invoked wrongly to collapse the domination of women and the domination of nature into a single, timeless phenomenon.²⁵ Griffin collapses the rigid boundaries of the subject and the object, suggesting a recovery of mysticism as a way of knowing nature immanently.

But one problem that white cultural feminists, like other feminists, have not adequately faced is that in celebrating the commonalities of women and emphasizing the ways in which women are universal victims of male oppression, they have inadequately addressed the real diversity of women's lives and histories across race, class and national boundaries. For women of color, opposing racism and genocide and encouraging ethnic pride are agendas they often share with men in a white dominated society, even while they struggle against sexism in their own communities. These complex, multi-dimensional loyalties and historically divergent life situations require a politics that recognizes those complexities. This connecting of women and nature has lent itself to a romanticization of women as good, and apart from all the dastardly deeds of men and culture. The problem is that history, power, women and nature are all a lot more complicated than that.

In the last ten years, the old cultural feminism has given birth to "the feminist spirituality movement"²⁶, an eclectic potpourri of beliefs and practices, with an immanent Goddess (as opposed to the transcendent God). I believe there has been a greater racial diversity in this movement than in any other form of feminism, and this is due in part to the fact that this is a spiritual movement, based on the ultimate unity of all living things, and a respect for diversity. There is no particular dogma in this movement, only a recognition of a woman as an embodied, earth bound living being who should celebrate her connection to the rest of life and for some, invoke this connection in her public political protest actions. These beliefs have their scientific corollaries- such as the Gaia hypothesis - the idea that the planet is to be conceived as one single living organism, and the thesis of scientist Lynn Margolis (whose research corroborates Peter Kropotkin's mutualism²⁷) that cooperation was a stronger force in evolution than competition²⁸.

Cultural feminism, and the women's spirituality movement have been subjected to the same critique feminists of color have made of the ethnocentricity of much white feminism²⁹, as women of color have become a powerful presence in its circles. This critique comes from women of color who draw on indigenous spiritual traditions such as Native American and African women who argue that these white western feminists are inventing and originating an earth centered pro-woman spirituality, while they

are defending their indigenous spirituality against the imperialism of western rationalism.³⁰ For example, Louisah Teish, the first Voodoo Priestess to attempt to explain her tradition to the public, advocates a practice which integrates the political and spiritual and which brings together a disciplined understanding of the African spiritual tradition with contemporary feminist and Black power politics. Members of her group in Oakland are planning urban gardening projects to help the poor feed themselves, and to grow the herbs needed for the holistic healing remedies of her tradition while they engage in community organizing to stop gentrification. Women in the Hopi and Navaho traditions are also attempting to explain their traditions to a wider public while they organize politically to keep their lands from being taken over by developers or poisoned by industry.

The collision of modern industrial society with indigenous cultures has decimated these ancestral forms, but may have brought white westerners into contact with forms of knowledge which are useful to us as we try to imagine our way beyond dualism, to understand what it means to be embodied beings on this planet. These traditions are often used as examples of ways of life which are non-dualistic, at least which overcome nature/culture dualism.³¹ But human beings can't simply jump off, or jump out of history. These indigenous, embodied, earth centered spiritual traditions are planting seeds in the imaginations of people who are the products of dualistic cultures, but as has been pointed out by their original practitioners, they are not ways of being or systems of

thought which can be adopted whole cloth by white westerners who want to avoid the responsibility of their own history.

The movement has changed in recent years, becoming more sophisticated and diverse as women of color articulate a powerful survival-based feminism emerging from their experience at the crucible of multiple oppressions. From both the feminism of women of color (sometimes called "womanist" as opposed to "feminist" in order to convey the different priorities of women of color from white women) and ecofeminism has come the urging of a more holistic feminism, which links all issues of personal and planetary survival.³² The critique of cultural feminism advanced by women of color --that it is often ahistorical in that white women in particular need to take responsibility for being oppressors as well as oppressed, and for having been powerful as white people or as people with class or national privileges--is crucial. In other words, women have a complexity of historical identities and therefore, a complexity of loyalties. Instead of constantly attempting to make our identities less complex by emphasizing what we have in common as women, as has been the tendency of women who are feminists first and foremost, we should attend to the differences between us.

3. Socialist Feminism, Rationalization and the Domination of Nature

Socialist-feminism is an odd hybrid--an attempt at a synthesis of the rationalist feminism (radical and liberal) and the historical materialism of the Marxist tradition. Socialist-feminism is not a mass movement, just as socialism is not a mass movement. However the existence of a women's movement has assured that the feminists are the liveliest presence at otherwise tepid socialist gatherings.³³ It is the version of feminism which has dominated the academy, while radical feminism, cultural feminism and more recently, ecofeminism are popular movements with a political base. Both Marxism and rationalist feminism subscribe to the domination of nature, so ecology has not been on the socialist-feminist agenda. Some socialist-feminists argued that socialist feminism should be differentiated from Marxist-feminism. That may be a valid distinction, but so far socialist-feminism has shared many of the blind spots of Marxism.

In taking "labor" as its central category, Marxists have reduced the human being to homo laborans, and the history of capitalism cries out with the resistance of human beings not only to being exploited, but to being conceived of as essentially "workers". In Marxism, revolutionary discourse has been reduced to a "language of productivity"³⁴ where a critique of the mode of production does not necessarily challenge the principle of production, shared by

political economy and Marxism. This functionalist, rationalist idea of persons has been a central theoretical and political weakness of the post-Marxist socialist tradition, including socialist-feminism.

The socialist-feminist theory of the body as socially constructed (re)producer has informed a public discourse of "reproductive freedom" (the freedom to (re)produce or not (re)produce with your own body), and it is in this area that socialist-feminists have been a political force. But socialist-feminists have an inadequate theory with which to confront the new reproductive technologies. Arguing that women have a right to "control our own bodies" does not prepare one to confront the issue of whether our reproductive, like our productive capacities, should be bought and sold in the marketplace, as one more form of wage labor³⁵.

Socialist-feminists have criticized liberal feminists (just as socialists have criticized liberalism) for not going far enough in a critique of the political economy, and class differences. They are right to the extent that liberal feminists cannot take account of systematic inequalities in our liberal democracy which discriminate against women and the poor, and prevent everyone from having equal opportunity. They have rightfully pointed out that as long as we earn on the average fifty-nine cents to the dollar earned by men, women would are not equal. This would still be the case even if the Equal Rights Amendment had passed.

But socialist-feminists have shared the rationalist bias of liberal feminism, depicting the world primarily in exchange terms -- whether production or reproduction -- and have agreed with the liberal feminism analysis that we must strive in all possible ways to demonstrate that we are more like men than different. Some socialist-feminists have even argued that liberal feminism has a radical potential.³⁶ For such feminists, the dualistic, overly rationalized premises of liberal feminism are not a problem. For them too, severing the woman/nature connection is a feminist project.

In a sense the strength and weakness of socialist-feminism lie in the same premise -- the centrality of economics in their theory and practice. Socialist-feminists have articulated a strong economic and class analysis, but they have not sufficiently addressed the domination of nature³⁷. The socialist-feminist agenda would be complete if we could overcome systematic inequalities of social and economic power. They have addressed one of the three forms of domination of nature -- domination between persons, but they have not seriously attended to the domination of non-human nature, or to the domination of inner nature.

Socialist-feminism draws on but goes beyond socialism, demonstrating the independent dynamic of patriarchy and fundamentally challenging the totalizing claims of Marxist economic approach. In socialist-feminism, women seek to enter the political world as articulate, historical subjects, capable of

understanding and making history. And some socialist-feminists have drawn on historical materialism in very creative ways, such as the standpoint theories of Alison Jaggar and Nancy Hartsock³⁸, which attempt to articulate a position from which women can make special historical claims without being biologically determinist. But even Hartsock, Jaggar and other socialist-feminists who are attempting a multi-factored historical analysis of the oppression of women do not treat the domination of nature as a significant category for feminism, though they notice it in passing.

In general, socialist-feminists are very unsympathetic to "cultural feminism".³⁹ They accuse it of being ahistorical, essentialist (which they define as believing in male and female essences - male=bad, female=good), and anti-intellectual. This debate partakes of the ontology v. epistemology debate in western philosophy, where "being" is opposed to "knowing", and implicitly, women are relegated to the realm of "being", or the ontological slums. From an ecological (i.e., anti-dualistic) standpoint, essentialism and ontology are not the same as biological determinism. In other words, we are not talking heads, nor are we unselfconsciousness nature.

While certain aspects of this critique may be correct they are avoiding the important truths being recognized by cultural feminism, among them the female political imagination manifesting itself in the political practice of a feminism of difference. They also forget that no revolution in human history has succeeded without a

strong cultural foundation and a utopian vision, emerging from the life experience of the revolutionary subjects. In part, I believe the myopia of socialist feminism with respect to cultural feminism is rooted in the old Marxist debate about the primacy of the base (economics/production) over the superstructure (culture/reproduction). This dualism too also needs to be overcome, as a condition for a dialectical, or genuinely ecological, feminism.

The socialist-feminist fidelity to a theory of history where women seek to understand the past in order to make the future is crucial to feminism. Also the project of a feminist reconstitution of reason has been largely undertaken by socialist-feminists who do not wish to throw the baby out with the bath water in critiquing instrumental reason. But belief in a direct relationship between the rationalization and domination of nature, and the project of human liberation remains a central tenet of socialism.

The question for socialist-feminists is whether they can accommodate their version of feminism within the socialist movement, or whether they will have to move in a "greener" direction with a more radical critique of all forms of the domination of nature. That would involve a consideration of the recessive form of socialism -- social anarchism -- which finds its contemporary manifestation in green politics, and among feminists, in ecofeminism⁴⁰.

ECOFEMINISM: ON THE NECESSITY OF HISTORY AND MYSTERY

Women have been culture's sacrifice to nature. The practice of human sacrifice to outsmart or appease a feared nature is ancient. And it is in resistance to this sacrificial mentality--on the part of both the sacrificer and sacrificee--that some feminists have argued against the association of women with nature, emphasizing the social dimension to traditional women's lives. Women's activities have been represented as non-social, as natural. Part of the work of feminism has been asserting that the activities of women, believed to be more natural, are in fact absolutely social. This process of looking at women's activities has led to a greater valuing of women's social contribution, and is part of the anti-sacrificial current of feminism. Giving birth is natural, (although how it is done is very social) but mothering is an absolutely social activity.⁴¹ In bringing up their children, mothers face ethical and moral choices as complex as those considered by professional politicians and ethicists. In the wake of feminism, women will continue to do these things, but the problem of connecting humanity to nature will have to be acknowledged and solved in a different way. In our mythology of complementarity, men and women have led vicarious lives, where women had feelings and led instinctual

lives, and men engaged in the projects illuminated by reason. Feminism has exposed the extent to which it was all a lie--that's why it has been so important to feminism to establish the mindful, social nature of mothering.

But just as women are refusing to be sacrificed, non-human nature is requiring even more attention--it is revolting against human domination--the ecological crisis. Part of the resistance to contemporary feminism is that it embodies the return of the repressed, those things men put away to create a dualistic culture founded on the domination of nature. Now, nature moves to the center of the social and political choices facing humanity.

It is as if women were entrusted with, and kept the dirty little secret that humanity emerges from non-human nature into society in the life of the species, and the person. The process of nurturing an unsocialized, undifferentiated human infant into an adult person--the socialization of the organic--is the bridge between nature and culture. The western male bourgeoisie subject then extracts himself from the realm of the organic to be come a public citizen, as if born from the head of Zeus. He puts away childish things. Then he disempowers and sentimentalizes his mother, sacrificing her to nature. The coming of age of the male subject repeats the drama of the emergence of the polis, which is made possible by the banishing of the mother--and with her the organic world. But the key to the historic agency of women with respect to nature/culture dualism lies in the fact that the mediating

traditional conversion activities of women -- mothering , cooking, healing, farming, foraging-- are as social as they are natural.

The task of an ecological feminism is the organic forging of a genuinely anti-dualistic, or dialectical, theory and praxis. No previous feminism can address this problem adequately from within the framework of their theory and politics, hence the necessity of ecofeminism. Rather than succumb to nihilism, pessimism and an end to reason and history, we seek to enter into history, to habilitate a genuinely ethical thinking -- where one uses mind and history to reason from the "is" to the "ought," and to reconcile humanity with nature, within and without. This is the starting point for ecofeminism.

Each major contemporary feminist theory, liberal, social and cultural, has taken up the issue of the relationship between women and nature. Each in its own way has capitulated to dualistic thinking, theoretically conflating a reconciliation with nature by surrendering to some form of natural determinism. As I have demonstrated, we have seen the same positions appear again and again in extending the natural into the social (cultural feminism), or in severing the social from the natural (socialist feminism). Each of these directions are two sides of the same dualism, and from an ecofeminist perspective both are wrong in that they have made a choice between culture and nature. It is my contention that this is a false choice, leading to bad politics and bad theory on each side, and that we need a new, dialectical way of thinking about our

relationship to nature to realize the full meaning and potential of feminism, a social ecological feminism.

Absolute social constructionism on which socialist-feminism relies, is disembodied. The logical conclusion is a rationalized, denatured, totally deconstructed person. But socialist feminism is the anti-sacrificial current of feminism, with its insistence that women are social beings, whose traditional work is as social as it is natural. The fidelity to the social aspects of women's lives found in socialist feminism makes a crucial contribution to ecofeminism.

interpret It is for ecofeminism to interpret the historical significance of the fact that women have been positioned at the biological dividing line where the organic emerges into the social. It is for ecofeminism to interpret this fact historically, and to make the most of this mediated subjectivity to heal a divided world. The domination of nature originates in society and therefore must be resolved in society. Therefore it is the embodied woman as social historical agent, rather than a product of natural law, who is the subject of ecofeminism.

But the weakness of socialist feminism's theory of the person is serious from an ecofeminist standpoint. An ecological feminism calls for a dynamic, developmental theory of the person--male and female--who emerges out of non-human nature, where difference is neither reified or ignored, and the dialectical relationship between human and non-human nature is understood.

Cultural feminism's greatest weakness is its tendency to make the personal into the political, with its emphasis on personal transformation and empowerment. This is most obvious in their attempt to overcome the apparent opposition between spirituality and politics. For cultural feminists spirituality is the heart in a heartless world (whereas for socialist-feminists it is the opiate of the people). Cultural feminists have formed the "beloved community" of feminism -- with all the power, potential and problems of a religion. For several years spiritual feminism has been the fastest growing part of the women's movement, with spirituality circles often replacing consciousness raising groups as the place that women meet for personal empowerment.

As an appropriate response to the need for mystery and attention to personal alienation in an overly rationalized world it is vital and important movement. But by itself it does not provide the basis for a genuinely dialectical ecofeminist theory and praxis, which addresses history as well as mystery. For this reason, cultural/spiritual feminism (sometimes even called "nature feminism") is not synonymous with ecofeminism in that creating a gynocentric culture and politics is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for ecofeminism.

Healing the split between the political and the spiritual cannot be done at the expense of the repudiation of the rational, or the development of a historically informed, dynamic political program.

Socialist-feminists have often mistakenly ridiculed spiritual feminist for having "false consciousness" or being "idealist". Socialism's impoverished idea of personhood, which denies the qualitative dimensions of subjectivity, is a major reason socialism--including socialist-feminism--has no political base.⁴² But many practitioners of feminist spirituality have eschewed thinking about politics and power, arguing that personal empowerment is in and of itself a sufficient agent of social transformation.

Both feminism and ecology embody the revolt of nature against human domination. They demand that we rethink the relationship between humanity and the rest of nature, including our natural, embodied selves. In ecofeminism, nature is the central category of analysis. An analysis of the interrelated dominations of nature -- psyche and sexuality, human oppression, and non-human nature -- and the historic position of women in relation to those forms of domination is the starting point of ecofeminist theory. We share with cultural feminism the necessity of a politics with heart and a beloved community, recognizing our connection with each other, and non-human nature. Socialist feminism has given us a powerful critical perspective with which to understand, and transform, history. Separately, they perpetuate the dualism of "mind" and "nature". Together they make possible a new ecological relationship between nature and culture, in which mind and nature, heart and reason, join forces to transform the systems of domination, internal and external, that threaten the existence of life on earth.

Practice does not wait for theory--it comes out of the imperatives of history. Women are the revolutionary bearers of this anti-dualistic potential in the world today. In addition to the enormous impact of feminism on western civilization, women have been at the forefront of every historical, political movement to reclaim the earth. A principle of reconciliation, with an organic praxis of non-oppositional opposition, provides the basis for an ecofeminist politics. The laboratory of non-oppositional opposition is the actions taken by women around the world, women who do not necessarily call themselves feminists.

For example, for many years in India poor women who come out of the Gandhian movement have waged a non-violent campaign for land reform and to save the forest, called the Chipko Andolan (the Hugging Movement), wrapping their bodies around trees as bulldozers arrive. Each of the women has a tree of her own she is to protect - to steward.⁴³ When loggers were sent in, one of their leaders said, "Let them know they will not fell a single tree without the felling of us first. When the men raise their axes, we will embrace the trees to protect them."⁴⁴ These women have waged a remarkably successful non-violent struggle, and their tactics have spread to other parts of India. Men have joined this campaign, though it was originated and continues to be led by women. Yet this is not a sentimental movement - lives depend on the survival of the forest. For most of the women of the world,

interest in the preservation of the land, water, air and energy is no abstraction, but a clear part of the effort to simply survive.

The increasing militarization of the world has intensified this struggle. Women and children make up 80% of war refugees. Land they are left with is often burned and scarred in such a way as to prevent cultivation for many years after battle, so that starvation and hardship follow long after the fighting has stopped.⁴⁵ And here too women - often mothers and farmers - respond to necessity. They become the guardians of the earth in an effort to eek out a small living on the land to feed themselves and their families.

There are other areas of feminist activism which illuminate an enlightened ecofeminist perspective.⁴⁶ Potentially, one of the best examples of an appropriately mediated, dialectical relationship to nature is the feminist health movement. The medicalization of childbirth in the first part of this century, and currently, the redesign and appropriation of reproduction both create new profit-making technologies for capitalism, and make heretofore natural processes mediated by women into arenas controlled by men. Here women offered themselves up to the ministrations of experts,⁴⁷ internalizing the notion they don't know enough and surrendering their power. They also accepted the idea the maximum intervention in and the domination of nature is an inherent good.

But since the onset of feminism in the 1960's, women in the U.S. have gone quite a way in reappropriating and demedicalizing

childbirth. As a result of this movement, many more women want to be told what all their options are, and to choose invasive medical technologies only under unusual and informed circumstances. They do not necessarily reject these technologies as useful in some cases, but they have pointed a finger at motivations of profit and control in their widespread application. Likewise, my argument here is not that feminism should repudiate all aspects of western science and medicine. It is to assert that we should develop the sophistication to decide for ourselves when intervention serves our best interest.

Another central area of concern in which women may employ ecofeminism to overcome misogynist dualism is that of body consciousness.⁴⁸ Recognizing our own bodies just as they are, knowing how they look, feel and smell, and learning to work with them to become healthier is a basis for cultural and political liberation. In many patriarchal cultures, women are complicit in the domination of our natural bodies, seeking to please men at any cost. Chinese footbinding, performed by women, is a widely cited example of misogynist domination of women's bodies. But even as western feminists condemn these practices, most of us will do anything to our bodies (yes, even feminists) to appear closer to norms of physical beauty which come naturally to about .2% of the female population. The rest of us struggle to be skinny, hairless and lately, muscular. We lie in the sun to get tan even when we know we are courting melanoma, especially as the accelerating depletion of the ozone layer makes "sunbathing" a dangerous sport. We submit ourselves to extremely dangerous surgical procedures. We

primp, prune, douche, deodorize and diet as if our natural bodies were our mortal enemies. Some of us living the most privileged lives in the world starve ourselves close to death for beauty, literally.

To the extent that we make of our own flesh an enemy, or docilly submit ourselves to medical experts, we are participating in the domination of nature.⁴⁹ To the extent that we learn to work with the restorative powers of our bodies, using medical technologies and drugs sparingly, we are developing an appropriately mediated relationship to our own natures. But even the women's health movement has not realized a full ecofeminist perspective.⁵⁰ It has yet to fully grasp health as an ecological and social rather than individual problem, in which the systematic poisoning of environments where women live and work is addressed as a primary political issue. Here the community based movements against toxic waste, largely initiated and led by women, and the feminist health movement may meet.

A related critical area for a genuinely dialectical praxis is a reconstruction of science, taking into account the critique of science advanced by radical ecology and feminism.⁵¹ Feminist historians and philosophers of science are demonstrating that the will to know and the will to power need not be the same thing. They argue that there are ways of knowing the world which are not based on objectification and domination.⁵² Here again, apparently antithetical epistemologies, science and mysticism, co-exist. We

shall need all our ways of knowing to create life on this planet that is both ecological and sustainable, and free.

As feminists, we shall need to develop an ideal of freedom which is ~~which is~~ neither anti-social, or anti-natural.⁵³ We are past the point of a Rousseauian throwing off our chains to reclaim our ostensibly free nature, if such a point ever existed. Ecofeminism is not an argument for a return to pre-history. The knowledge that women were not always dominated and that society was not always heirarchical is a powerful inspiration for contemporary women, so long as such a society is not represented as a "natural order" apart from history, to which we will inevitably return by a great reversal.

From an ecofeminist perspective, we are part of nature, but neither inherently good or bad, free or unfree. There is no one natural order which represents freedom. We are potentially free in nature, but as human beings that freedom has to be intentionally created by using our understanding of the natural world of which we are a part in a non-instrumental way. For this reason we must develop a different understanding of the relationship between human and non-human nature, based on the stewardship of evolution. To do this we need a theory of history where the natural evolution of the planet and the social history of the speices are not separated. We emerged from non-human nature, as the organic emerged from the inorganic.

Here, potentially, we recover ontology as the ground for ethics. We thoughtful human beings must use the fullness of our sensibility and intelligence to push ourselves intentionally to another stage of evolution. One where we will fuse a new way of being human on this planet with a sense of the sacred, informed by all ways of knowing - intuitive and scientific, mystical and rational. It is the moment where women recognize ourselves as agents of history - yes, even unique agents - and knowingly bridge the classic dualisms between spirit and matter, art and politics, reason and intuition. This is the potentiality of a rational reenchantment. This is the project of ecofeminism.

At this point in history, the domination of nature is inextricably bound up with the domination of persons, and both must be addressed, without arguments over "the primary contradiction" in search of a single Archimedes point for revolution. There is no such thing. And there is no point in liberating people if the planet cannot sustain their liberated lives, or in saving the planet by disregarding the preciousness of human existence, not only to ourselves but to the rest of life on earth.

¹ One of the major issues at the United Nations Decade on Women Forum held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985 was the effect of the international monetary system on women, and the particular burdens women bear because of the money owed the "first world" particularly U.S. economic interests, by developing countries.

2 The "animal rights" movement is more developed in the UK than in the US. One of its major publications is a periodical called "Beast: The Magazine That Bites Back." See Peter Singer, Animal Liberation: A New Ethics For Our Treatment of Animals, (New York: Avon Books, 1975).

3 The National Organization for Women (NOW) is caught in the myopia of this position, supporting the draft of women since men are drafted rather than taking an anti-militarist position and opposing the draft for anyone. At their Denver convention held in June 1986 NOW began to evaluate its pro-draft position, but it will be awhile before this process proceeds through the state committee structures and takes on national significance. Even then, there is no guarantee that they will change their position.

4 It is one of the absurd examples of newspeak that the designation "pro-life" has been appropriated by the militarist right to support forced childbearing.

5 See the works of social anarchist/social ecologist Murray Bookchin, especially The Ecology of Freedom, (Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982). Of the various ecological theories which are not explicitly feminist, I draw here on Bookchin's work because he articulates a historical theory of hierarchy which originates in society among adult persons in the domination of women by men, making way for domination by race and class, and the domination of nature. Hence the term "social" ecology. The Ecology of Freedom presents a radical view of the emergence, and potential dissolution, of hierarchy. "Social ecology" is just as concerned with

relations of domination between persons as it is with the domination of nature. Hence, it is of greatest interest to feminists.

⁶ p. 136, Hans Jonas, The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

⁷ For a fuller discussion of this point see William Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

⁸ In The German Ideology Marx cut his teeth on the "natural order" socialism of Feuerbach, although he had tended toward a "naturalistic socialism" himself in his early "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts". See T.B. Bottomore, Karl Marx: Early Writings, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

Since Marx, scientific socialists have argued that socialism is the culmination of reason understood as the domination of nature, and have argued against utopianism. For Marxists "utopian" is a bad word -- it means unrealistic, unscientific, anti-instrumental -- by definition naive. Social anarchists have maintained a much more ambivalent relationship to the domination of nature and a fidelity to the cultural dimensions of pre-Marxist utopian socialism. While both scientific socialism and social anarchism are a part of the historical socialist tradition, in a contemporary context the term "socialism" applies to the Marxists, as distinct from the "anarchists". Lately, there is a move afoot among socialists to "recover" the pre-Marxist, utopian tradition and to utilize this forgotten history to save contemporary socialism. I think this is ahistorical in that it

begs the problem of the need to critique the history (and theory) of anti-utopian Marxist socialism. Socialists and anarchists have had crucial ideological differences with respect to the domination of nature, the base/superstructure distinction, power and the state, sexuality and the individual. The contemporary "green" movement grows out of the social anarchist, utopian socialist tradition, where the conditions for human freedom depend on ending the domination of non-human nature. It is crucial that socialists be honest about the shortcomings of their own movement, and if they make a major historic shift in a direction they have scorned for over a century, this change should be acknowledged and examined. I also don't mean to suggest here that social anarchism is a fully adequate theory, or to suggest that the proper strategy for rectifying the domination of nature is a simple reversion. But the critique of socialism advanced through this work is illuminated by (but not limited to) that of social anarchism, and is aimed at anti-utopian socialism.

⁹ For a full discussion of the relationship between feminist politics and ideas about human nature, see Alison M. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature, (Totowa, New Jersey: Roman and Allanheld, 1983).

¹⁰ See Christine DiStefano, Gender and Political Theory: Gender as Ideology, for a fuller treatment of the problem of "deep masculinity" in political thought. Her section on the problematic relationship between feminism and liberalism is especially instructive. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, 1985.

11 See Alison Jaggar "Difference and Equality" (unpublished paper) for an exposition of the difference v. equality problem in feminist theory. She concludes by arguing that feminists need be able to argue our case based on either, or both.

12 p. 286, Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, New York: W. W. Norton & Co, Inc. 1967).

13 Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill, On the Subjugation of Women.

14 If the mother is given no special preference, and both parents are presumed to be equally suited before the law, then the decision may be made on other grounds. Men generally have a larger income than women, especially women who have left the workforce to mother children, and can arguably provide greater economic and cultural advantages.

16 See Alice Echols, " ", in Ann Snitow, Sharon Thompson and Christine Stansell, The Powers of Desire.

17 See Alison M. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature, (Totowa, New Jersey: Roman and Allanheld, 1983).

18 p. 103, Alice Schwarzer, After the Second Sex: Conversations With Simone deBeauvoir, (New York: Pantheon, 1984).

19 See Shulamith Firestone, "Conclusion: The Ultimate Revolution", in The Dialectic of Sex, (New York: Bantam Books, 1971).

20 This is evident in the works of Zillah Eisenstein, The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism, (New York: Longman , 1981), and Editor, Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism (Monthly Review, New York, 1979).

21 See Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?", in Michele Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, Woman, Culture and Society, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1974).

22 See Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1938).

23 See Mary Daly, Gyn-Ecology. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979). In response to her critics, Daly's position in her later work is intentionally ambiguous on these points. See Pure Lust (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985).

24 Johnson was solicited by the Citizens Party, a political party made up of both men and women, founded primarily to advocate "environmentalism" from a socialist perspective. It is interesting that it was a mixed party with an environmental (not ecological) emphasis, not a leftist party that drafted Johnson to run. Her analysis of all the political issues was basically an analysis of male power, and Mary Daly worked very hard for her candidacy. Prior to her campaign it was difficult to imagine how radical feminism would translate into the jargon and iconography of the American political arena, but Johnson did a very good job of doing this. She was widely criticized for having a naive understanding, or being evangelical but she articulated a woman centered perspective that had not previously been heard in Presidential politics. Her message was basically simple - that women are different and therefore can

make a difference if elected to public office. And she used the device of the imaginary cabinet to suggest department heads such as Barbara Deming for Secretary of Barbara Deming was a well-known feminist pacifist whose essays are collected in a volume called We Are All Part of One Another (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers: 1983) She was alive at the time of Johnson's candidacy and also supported her.

25 It is a good example of the care the reader must take in interpreting the medium of the artist. See Susan Griffin, Women and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her, (New York: Harper & Row, 1978). Her later work on pornography, Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature, (New York: Harper & Row, 1981)., Her forthcoming work on war, "A Woman Thinks About War" (unpublished manuscript), is an explicitly theoretical, ecofeminist work.

26 Much of the iconography of the contemporary radical feminist peace movement is inspired by the feminist spirituality movement, devising political actions which use the imagery of embodied female spirituality. Actions have featured guerrilla theatre where the Furies ravage Ronald Reagan, women encircle military bases and war research centers with pictures of children, trees, brooks, and women in preparation for civil disobedience, and weaving shut the doors of the stock exchange, singing and chanting about the spiders.

27 See Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution, (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1914).

28 See the works of scientists Lynn Margolis and James Lovelock, especially J. E. Lovelock, Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

29 See "The Cumbahee River Collective Statement", in Zillah Eisenstein, Editor, Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzuldúa, This Bridge Called My Back, (New York: Kitchen Table Press, 1983), Gloria Joseph and Jill Lewis, Common Differences: Conflicts in Black and White Feminist Perspectives, (Garden City, New York, Anchor Press), and Bell Hooks, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center (Boston: South End Press, 1984).

Audre Lorde has written eloquently of the problems of attempting to "use the master's tools to disassemble the master's house" and the implicit racism of heretofore definitions of "theory". See Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider, (Trumansburg, New York: The Crossing Press 1986)

30 See Louisah Teish, Jambalaya, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986).

31 These traditions are complex, and there are critical differences among them. Each has an ancient, and total, cosmology and set of practices, and while it is possible to find commonalities, creating a willy-nilly, random patchwork is not a brilliant new synthesis. That is the problem with the incoherent mush called "new age spirituality" or its slightly more secular version "the human potential movement". Each religious tradition requires instruction (which may be in an oral or written tradition, or both), study and the discipline of practice. I also don't know that traditions and

cultures which apparently have an anti-dualistic perspective when it comes to the relationship between human and non-human nature are necessarily not sexist, xenophobic, or hierarchical in a contemporary context, even if they once were.

32 See Ynestra King, "Thinking About Seneca", Ikon, Summer 1984. In this piece I addressed the contradictions of the mostly white women's peace movement, which grew out of an ecofeminist perspective. In response to the concern that the feminist peace movement up to that point was mostly white, I explored what I believed to be underlying commonalities between the "womanist" feminism of women of color (which affirms the traditional lives and struggles of women) and a feminism which up to that point had been mostly articulated by white women who believed that feminism should associate itself with ecology and peace, adopting rather than repudiating the traditional concerns of women.

33 I am thinking here of the annual "Socialist Scholars Conference", held each spring in New York City, or the socialist caucus offerings at academic conferences.

34 See Jean Baudrillard, The Mirror of Production, St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975,

35 In raising these issues I am in no way advocating the criminalization of women who market their eggs or wombs. If there is to be criminalization, the purveyors, or pimps, should be penalized, not the women. And obviously, there are critical economic and class issues here.

36 See especially Zillah Eisenstein, The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism, (New York: Longman, 1981).

37 One exception is Carolyn Merchant, who has written a socialist feminist analysis of the scientific revolution, The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979). See also, Carolyn Merchant, "Earthcare: Women and the Environmental Movement", Environment, Vol. 23, No. 5, June 1981, page 6.

38 See Nancy Hartsock, Money, Sex and Power (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), and Alison M. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature, (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983).

39 Cultural feminism is a term invented by feminists who believe in the primacy of economic (as opposed to cultural) forces in making history, but cultural feminists are proud of their emphasis.

40 See note 8.

41 On the social, mindful nature of mothering see the work of Sara Ruddick, especially "Maternal Thinking," Feminist Studies 6, 2 (Summer 1980): 342-367; and "Preservative Love and Military Destruction: Some Reflections on Mothering and Peace," in Joyce Trebilcock, Editor, Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 231-262.

42 The most vital socialism in the world today is liberation theology, with its roots in the Catholic base communities of the poor in Latin America.

43 pps. 156-158, Catherine Caufield, In the Rainforest, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

44 Caufield, p. 157.

- 45 See Edward Hyams, Soil and Civilization, (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).
- 46 West German green Petra Kelly outlines a practical, feminist green political analysis and program, with examples of ongoing movements and activities in her work, Petra Kelly, Fighting for Hope, (Boston: South End Press, 1984).
- 47 See Barbara Ehrenreich and Dierdre English, For Her Own Good, ().
- 48 See especially the work of Susan Bordo,
- 49 Yet resistance does not always come in the form of being "more natural". The punk culture, where everything is made as synthetic and unnatural as possible, is a caricature of a technological aesthetic -- green hair jelled into spikes, taffeta evening dresses and all the left-overs of throw-away culture made into adornments. Punks are true "recyclers" -- only they recycle the anti-natural.
- 50 I am indebted to ecofeminist sociologist and environmental health activist Lin Nelson for pointing out to me why the feminist health movement is yet to become ecological.
- 51 See Elizabeth Fee, 1981. "Is Feminism a Threat to Scientific Objectivity?", International Journal of Women's Studies 4, no 4. See also Sandra Harding, 1986, The Science Question in Feminism, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986, and Evelyn Fox Keller, 19 Reflections on Gender and Science, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

52 See Evelyn Fox Keller, A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock, (San Francisco, W. H. Freeman, 1983).

53 The cross cultural interpretations of personal freedom of anthropologist Dorothy Lee are evocative of the possibility of such an ideal of freedom. See Dorothy Lee, Freedom and Culture, (New York: Prentice Hall, 1959).