



# ECOFEMINISM: THE 21ST CENTURY FEMINIST MANIFESTO FOR REAL LIFE

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<b>Received:</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 <b>Accepted:</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 <b>Published:</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	For a long time, androcentrism tied to gender was the greatest threat to women's liberation. Man exploited nature just as much as his female counterpart. Feminist goals are part of a more extensive ecological system that includes political, social, and cultural institutions, as suggested by the progress of science, technology, and the philosophy of rational civilization. In the twenty-first century, ecofeminism describes the entire movement

## Keywords:

## INTRODUCTION

Feminism is the movement for gender equality, which seeks to ensure that women everywhere enjoy the same legal protections, economic opportunities, and social standing as men. After the French Revolution in 1789, people no longer believed they deserved to be treated equally because of their innate inferiority. Similar ideas gained traction in the United States of America when the country was unified in 1848. After 1878, England, which pioneered many democratic ideals, could even begin to explore the problem. The gender issue was first raised in Russia in 1848 and China in 1911.

Feminism (Hartsock, 1983) can be traced back to the first centuries after Christ, when women in Athens, Greece, gained access to higher education. Emilia gives Desdemona a feminist lecture in Shakespeare's Othello. (Act III, Scene 4 of Othello...)

However, the guys are to fault for this situation. We have galls, and though we have some grace, we have some payback if spouses do fall:

- Say that they slack their duties and pour our fortunes into foreign laps.
- Else burst out in peevish jealousies, Throwing restraint upon us.
- Else say that they strike us.
- Skimp our former having in spite.

All of these options are available to us. Wives, similar to their men, have the senses of sight and smell and the capacity to tell the difference between sweet and sour flavors on their tongues. Can you explain what they do when they replace us with fresh individuals? I'm curious if the word "sport" has been mentioned. And does love encourage one to act in such a way? Isn't a lack of strength to blame for a mistake of this nature? As another example, because men and women are susceptible to emotional fragility, physical weakness, and athletic aspirations, we should be put to good use (unless males manage to learn from our errors). The pragmatic posture of feminism in the 21st century is called ecofeminism.

Humanist and theological arguments that all "living" creatures are God's creation and should be treated with equal dignity formed the basis of the original "Universal" feminism. In Europe, liberal feminism developed out of the romantic period in the middle of the 19th century, when ideas like individualism, patriotism, the beauty of nature, and spiritual love were cherished. Marxist feminism holds that class structure in society is to blame for discrimination against women. Socialist feminism supported women's economic and social empowerment but disagreed with its political agenda. The post-war era saw the rise of radical feminism, which glorified man-hatred in its quest to liberate women. The core idea of radical feminism is that women should solve all biological issues by themselves. Cultural feminism was advocated more as a necessity than an Endeavor because scientific progress occurred independently of social, political, and religious events. The woman who gives birth to a man is accorded the same value as any other human being because of the inherent goodness of her human nature, which includes the capacity to help to feel pity, sympathy, and love. Modern advances in science and technology have highlighted the importance of man and woman as friends and co-travelers in advancing civilization.

According to John Stuart Mill, "scientific" and "rational" thought was more widespread in Western countries and the United States, whereas in the East, superstition, and tradition hampered man's ability to live a comfortable life.

Reformers in India, such as Rajaram Mohan Roy, fought against the barbaric practice known as "Sati" during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In this practice, the woman was coerced into sacrificing herself on her husband's pyre. Around the turn of the twentieth century, there was a widespread practice of selling brides, also known as young girls. The tradition of the bride's family providing a dowry for her future husband is still practiced today. Both bigamy and polygamy were socially acceptable in India until the middle of the twentieth century when the country gained independence. Even today, it is not uncommon for women to be the victims of sexual assault, rape, and other forms of harassment. However, "the oppression of women is not unique but diverse, dissented, and at times derogatory" (Wittingstein), as the issues of women among black, Hispanic, radical, lesbian, Jewish, third-world, and slave women are not unique, and give rise to a variety of kinds of ecofeminism. This is because "the oppression of women is not unique but diverse, dissented, and at times derogatory."

As demonstrated by the research of Annette Kolodny (1975) and others, the myth of masculine heroism in ancient and medieval times is the underlying cause of male egocentrism. This is the Case regardless of the period. They skillfully kept women "away" from heroism, wildness, character excursions, and adventures, even though women are physically and psychologically closer to nature than males, who are the explorers of nature. Women are not allowed to study geology or geography or authorized to go on hikes or excursions in the Himalayas or the wilderness. When women's participation in the market economy and technical production became essential, post-colonial nations accepted them as "necessary" intruders into the wild. This occurred when the importance of these factors increased. In the 20th century, women writers in the naturalism genre started delving into topics relating to the wilderness that had been virtually entirely covered by male authors up until that point. Attesting to this point are Rachel Carson's and Annie Dillard's, and Isabella Bird's nonfiction books, which, respectively, focus on creeks, mountains, and the ocean. These four women called "heroines of nature" (Vera L. and Norwood), shed light on essential differences between traditionally masculine and traditionally feminine perspectives on nature and the ethics of resource extraction. In her book "Silent Spring," Rachael Carson says, "It was pleasant to believe that much of nature was forever beyond the tampering of man...man is only one drop in the stream of God." [Case in point:] "It was pleasant to believe that much of nature was forever beyond man's tampering." In light of this discovery, the famous assertion made by Havelock Ellis in his previous work, *The Dance of Life* (1923), that "Sun, moon, and stars would have disappeared long ago...had they happened to be within reach of predatory human hands," comes to mind. Because "women" were barred from acting for such a significant amount of time, "men" in "human" can be considered as the primarily responsible actor. Roderich Nash believes that increasing the number of women working in nature's writing threatens the male psyche. When Carson intrinsically defined nature, with a classic nature of immersion of the self into nature, Nash remarked, "The four heroines...begin a new chapter in feminism." The story is not filled with the male's intention of dominance but rather with humility of how the character acts on them with surety.

"I love nature partly because she is not man...but a retreat from him," the famous American naturalist Henry David Thoreau once said. As a result of Thoreau's comment, we can deduce the following: a) Nature is equated with "woman." b) Humans are reviled because they disrupt the natural order of things. The two ideas had come a long way from their initial observations, which planted the seeds of "eco-feminism."

### ECOLOGY AND WOMEN

Writing about an issue is finding a solution rather than raising awareness. Art, including literature, can't fix anything; all it can do is point the way forward for those stuck.

In the latter part of the 20th century, environmental degradation, ecosystem breakdown, extinction of species, and loss of biodiversity threatened nature's delicate ecological balance. The fate of all biospheres on Earth was at risk.

Many writers felt driven to ponder and react to the end of the world as we know it in their works. As Cheryl Burgess Glotfeltry (1989) emphasized in her paper "Towards an ecological literary criticism," it is the duty of critics and educators to address environmental concerns raised by literary works. Writers who focus on the natural world are hailed as "a literature of hope" by ecocritics. However, more than an idealized perspective of pastoral poetry and a focus solely on nature writing as experiential evidence is required. Ecologists concluded that we must challenge our "anthropocentric" view of the natural world.

In 1985, a group of environmental radicals led by the Association in Western America (Glotfelty and Fromm...) launched a movement called ecocriticism.

- i. Canonical literature must be examined for its stereotypical, skewed, and incomplete depictions of nature.
- ii. The theoretical components of eco critique include deep ecology, socio-political ramifications, the relationship between women and the natural world (ecofeminism), and the constraints of literary texts.
- iii. Third, ecocriticism tries to broaden the conversation by using metaphors (Annette Kolodny, "Lay of the Land") that portray the Earth as a "female body" and the male explorer as a "rapist," "molester," or "aggressive lover" in a sexual act.
- iv. Humanity has other, more critical, interests, including the accountability of its culture to the natural world (point IV). A perception of the environment as a process rather than a constant needs to be cultivated to address the concerns of the "feminine" gender regarding the natural world.
- v. Authors like Lousie Westling, in her work "The great breast of the new world," examine men's attitude toward

- a landscape with a peculiar blend of ecocriticism and misogyny.
- vi. Wila Cather lauded the female Amazonian farmers and American Indian women who worked the soil in her work "Oh, pioneers." These women identified strongly with the land (like lesbians) but did not commit any acts of aggression against the environment.
  - vii. Slave women in Afro-America were raped and equated with animals by Paul Outka in his book "Race and Nature." This was done so that men could have food and entertainment.
  - viii. Infuriated, feminists pointed out that nature had always been around and always would be. Thus, they declared that culture was unnecessary. Male explorers torment the traditionally feminine terrain by turning it into cities, mines, industries, and urban colonies with roads, canals, trains, farms, and villages.
  - ix. It was said by Kolodny in Chapter IX that "we have to regress from the cares of adult life and return to the primal warmth of womb or breast in a feminine landscape on the bedrock of cultural structures."
  - x. Conveniently, the gendering of land as feminine began in Indo-European languages as early as the 16th century. One of the first examples of this is seen in Hindu mythology, where the goddess Parvathi and the god Shiva represent nature and man, respectively.
  - xi. The images suggest that we have been no more successful in our response to the feminine qualities of nature than we have been to the feminine humans, as noted by American authors like Herbert Marcuse (*Eros and civilization*, 1955, Random House, Vintage Books, New York).
  - xii. Women rebelled against the lone aggressor, man, because of the harm done to her and her representation in nature.

The "Emerson-Thoreau" school of thought originated in American literature around the middle of the 19th century. This school of thought revealed nature's preeminence and brought the material conditions of nature and the cultural adaptation of people to non-human nature to the forefront of geographical descriptions. Many countries' early national texts and colonial histories provided specific details of explorations to new territories, painstaking mapping efforts, and national celebrations. Romantic naturism was full of pastoral and wilderness imagery of an unstable condition with cultural nationalism at its core after the industrial revolution gave rise to modern "democratic" views. The United States had a renaissance of ethnic and feminine identities just before the outbreak of World War II. Men's literature is rich with sexism and various discrimination against women, the euthanization of slavery, and the manipulation of traditionally masculine love settings. [citation needed] Men's literature is rife with all these things. In their writings, patriarchal systems are "free" of the feminized entanglements in civic society.

Because non-human nature was excluded from the critical framework while developing a technological society with an anthropocentric perspective, the resulting androgynous activity was inevitable. Mother Earth, and the "feminine" community that identifies with it, are marginalized and silenced, and they need advocates. (Sherry Ortner, 1974; *Is female to male as nature is to culture..?*) *Women, Culture, and Society*, edited by Rosaldo and Lamphere, Stanford University Press, pages 67–68. The young female activists, writers, and environmentalists were so upset that they chose to speak for everyone else. The goal of enlisting ecofeminism supporters has been met.

To identify the perpetrator, feminists examined the Bible and holy texts like Psalm 148 from the New Testament. According to feminist ecotheologian Carol Christ (1990), the world needs a complete reorganization in light of biblical mandates.

The advancement of medicine, surgery, gynecology, and women's education in so-called "third world" countries helped push the global population above the 6-billion mark by the century's end. In addition to the historical taint that has dogged male-female relations, issues like ecological imbalance, environmental degradation, reduced biodiversity, and the ozone hole in the stratosphere have emerged due to population expansion. The text's moral compass is informed, in part, by the emerging philosophical view that "human interest in nature is not considered to be the only legitimate interest" (Walt Whitman, "Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,," by P.B. Shelly; John Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale"). Women reacted more strongly than males because they tend to identify more with the victim role than the aggressive one. They saw that the nature-women identity was not a romantic ideal but an absolute requirement in fighting against androcentric violence. For the first time, women saw that the systems that perpetuate patriarchal structures, such as gender inequity and biocentric injustice, are not exclusive to one gender or one culture. The global expansion of technology and industry following World War II was expected to affect the environment and women negatively.

The development of technology bolstered male-hedonistic regimes and forced millions of women into servitude. Variables like masculine sexuality and egotism restrict white women, while women of color and women in developing countries are disproportionately impacted by poverty, discrimination, and superstition. Multiple forms of discrimination, injury, slavery in the workplace, low social standing, illiteracy, and marginalization were experienced by black women in industrialized nations (Alice Walker). The genders were not similarly affected by scientific factors such as deep ecology and environmental sustenance. There is a distinction between male and female nature heroes. Women tend to view nature as a precious gift from God, whereas men view it as something to be developed, exploited, and enjoyed. The negative impacts of exploitation are felt by people of both sexes, regardless of whether they are exploiters or used. At this juncture, when all environmental injustices are male-produced and the "feminine" nature is characterized by its purity, maturity, openness to experience, and susceptibility to being violated, a sense of

female fury has arisen. Since the other sex has also progressed intellectually (Chrystas...1991), sexism and religious spiritualism seem powerless against male superiority, the great Satan. The problem of gender discrimination is global, transcending borders. Women's access to socio-physical justice is tied to environmental justice. They have agreed with Simon de Beauvoir's observation that "woman is not born... she is made." Feminists and ecofeminist literary critics banded together to fight against oppressive forces using a unified front and a shared mission as they worked toward women's freedom everywhere.

### Conclusion

"Woman is not born...she is made," the new feminist mantra of the late 20th century went. Gender is a social construction; sex is a biological category, and vice versa. The male-dominated worldview on women tends to lump all issues into the "genetic female" category and, by extension, culturally dictated behaviors. This philosophical stance of the male upper class is half an academic exercise and half an arrogant display of macho superiority. The intellectual "content" of feminism made this realization when it became clear that women were being treated as second-class citizens across the board, not just because of their "weaker" sex but because of the larger drama of social order with its many repressive stereotypes. Since ecofeminism identifies the woman with the natural world, its canonical works focus on male exploitation of the environment and "finer" sex without remorse or shame and an intense moral outrage. Therefore, ecofeminism adopted a strategy with multiple components, a holistic assault from a practical stance. "that all aspects of human history are implicated in natural history, and the environment is not merely a framing device," Dickens and E.M. Forster (Hill of Devi - Passage to India) wrote.

Writers such as Karen J. Warren (1993) picked up the major project of "establishing the nature of the "women-nature connections, which are potentially liberating for both women and non-human nature." The results of this project make up the elements of ecofeminist philosophy. After the case was dismissed in favor of women as nature friendly, ecofeminist writers picked up the major project of "establishing the nature of the "women-nature connections."

Karen (1997) incorporates the following topics into her ecofeminist perspective of environmental difficulties. These topics are based on her research and include trees and forests; water; food; military service; conflicts; racism; classism; ageism; language. By the early hours of the 21st century, the "ingredients of ecofeminism" had been decided upon. Anti-colonialism, racial equality, indigenous technical and cultural knowledge, women in positions of political power, American Indian women, the family unit, the workplace, the rights of children, sexual violence during wartime, gender inequality, scientific ecology, androcentrism, anthropomorphism, cross-cultural and experiential evidence for unitive dimensions of being, and the use of technology are some of the topics that fall under this category.

Gretchen T. Legler, an author, and English professor, put out the idea that ecofeminist literary theory, which encompasses poetry, novels, essays, and nonfiction works, is an essential instrument for the following purposes: 1. To reinterpret the ideals inherent in nature-literature.

2. Evaluate anew how people interact with the natural world.

3. Raise awareness by telling alternate stories about landscapes, which have been neglected as nature literature up to this point.

4. Reexamine the male-authored interpretations of natural phenomena that are taken as unquestionable facts.

Gretal Ehrlich, Annie Dillard, Linda Hassles, Sue Herbbel, Alice Walker, Josephine Johnson, Lucille Clifton, Leslie Silk, Joy Harjo, Mary Oliver, Ursula Leguin, and Diane Ackerman are some of the notable ecofeminist literary critics that are included on the list that Leglar produced. We are socialized to view disagreement as something to be avoided at all costs. We can reproduce, which puts us closer to nature, but men cannot. Therefore, they tend to be more focused on culture. They see themselves as aggressive people who place a strong emphasis on competition and technological growth. (Assigned to Patrick Murphy)

Patrick Murphy envisions a liberatory tactic to be implemented in ecofeminist writing in which "French Feminist efforts to rewrite phallic portrayal of female desire and sexuality will assist in establishing a theory of dynamic objectivity, away from patriarchal philosophy."

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