

4.A.3
WS 377 Ecofeminist Theories and Practices
The College of St. Scholastica

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Office Hours: 10:30-11:30 MWF, 1:00 following on M,W

Fall 1994
Meets 2:00-3:40 T, Th
Tower 3111
4 credits

Course Description and Goals

This course will familiarize you with the varieties of thought within ecofeminism: cultural ecofeminism, social ecofeminism, and socialist ecofeminism. We will look at the ways ecofeminists have approached issues such as the woman-animal connection, the woman-nature connection, the root analysis of the current social and ecological crises, environmental racism and sexism, biotechnology, reproduction and population, theory and activism.

Through close reading and discussion of several key texts within ecofeminism, the course goal will be to introduce you to the branches of ecofeminist theory. Once this foundation has been established, the course goal will be to develop critical thinking skills, in which you apply the theory of ecofeminism to various contexts. Aside from the reading on this syllabus, no outside reading is expected of you.

It should be stated here that as the Instructor, I am not an unbiased presenter: I will be teaching this course as a committed ecofeminist activist and scholar. If my teaching is successful, our theories may diverge by the end of the term, but it is my hope that you will complete this course with a renewed sense of respect and passion for life on earth, and a desire to take direct action toward preserving this precious planet and the life it sustains.

I am looking forward to learning with you.

Texts:

Andree Collard with Joyce Contrucci. Rape of the Wild: Man's Violence Against Animals and the Earth. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds. Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990. ("D&O")

Greta Gaard, ed. Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993. ("GG")

Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva. Ecofeminism. London: Zed Books, 1993.

2 journal articles you'll need to xerox, noted with an () in the readings schedule.

Grading-

You will be graded on the basis of your participation, attendance, and oral presentations (25%). You will also write two papers: one will be a synthesis of ecofeminist theory (10-15 pp., worth 50%), and another will be an analysis of a specific situation, event, or political theory using an ecofeminist perspective (5-8 pp., 25%).

Paper# 1 is due October 25

Paper #2 is due November 10

Journals which have carried essays on ecofeminism:

-*The Ecologist* (England) -*Environmental Ethics* -*Women and Environments* (Canada)
-*Ms. Magazine* -*Hypatia* -*Woman of Power* -*The Trumpeter* (Canada)
-*Studies in the Humanities* -*New Catalyst* (Canada)

Course Schedule

Topic: The Woman-Animal Connection

Th 9/8- Feminists for Animal Rights slide show, "Animal Liberation through an

Ecofeminist Lens"

T 9/13 & Th 9/15- Collard/Contrucci (Intro, Ch. 1, 2, 3)

T 9/20- Collard/Contrucci (Chs. 4, 5, Epilogue)

Video Available: "Diet For A New America"

Topic: The Cultural Roots of the Environmental and Social Problem

Th 9/22 - D&O: Spretnak, King, Merchant

T 9/27 - Deep Ecology and Ecofeminism: D&O - Kheel, Zimmerman

*David Johns, Environmental Ethics 12(Fall 1990):233-252.

Th 9/29 - Ecofeminist Spirituality: D&O - Eisler, Keller, Starhawk

Video Available: "Goddess Remembered"

Topic: Implications of Ecofeminism

T 10/4 - Environmental Sexism & Racism: D&O - Quinby, Nelson, Shiva, Hamilton

Th 10/6 - Key Questions for Ecofeminists: D&O - Abbott, Keller, Garb

Topic: Ecofeminist Theories

T 10/11: Theory and Practice: GG - Birkeland, O'Loughlin

Ecofeminist Philosophy: *Karen Warren, Environmental Ethics 12(Summer 1990):125-146.

Th 10/13: Animals: GG - Gruen, Donovan, Adams (student-led discussion)

VIDEO EVENING: 7:30 at DeWitt-Seitz Marketplace, Saturday 10/15

"THINKING GREEN: Ecofeminists and the Greens"

Discussion and Activist Presentations to follow. Bring friends!

T 10/1 8: History: GG - Lahar, Vance

Topic: Further Applications of Ecofeminism

T 10/20: the Heroic: GG - Heller, Kheel

Th 10/25: Cultural Limitations: GG - Li, Gaard

Challenges: *Chris Cuomo, Environmental Ethics 14(Winter 1992):351-369.

PAPER ONE DUE

DATE TO BE DECIDED BY CONSENSUS: Oral Presentation on Paper Two

Pick a problem from the world around you, and discuss it from various feminist perspectives and from an ecofeminist perspective to illustrate the differences. Sample problems: cattle ranching, factory farming, outdoor adventure schools (NOLS, OB), someone's dinner, book production, garbage, designated wilderness, home building, multinational corporations, militarism.

Topic: International Ecofeminism

Th 10/27: Mies/Shiva, Part 2, "Subsistence vs. Development"

T I 1/1: Mies/Shiva, Part 3, "The Search for Roots"

Th 11/3: Mies/Shiva, Part 4, "Ecofeminism and Biotechnology"

T 11/8: Mies/Shiva, Part 5, "Freedom for Trade or Freedom for Survival"

Th I 1/10: Mies/Shiva, Parts 6 & 7, "The Subsistence Perspective"

PAPER TWO DUE

These dates are subject to revision based on the needs of the class. You will be responsible for completing these readings and being prepared to discuss them on the dates listed. You may want to bring friends to class; please ask the class at least one session prior to your friend's visit with us.