

# Class, Race, and Gender Discourse in the Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate

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While both ecofeminism and deep ecology share a commitment to overcoming the conventional division between humanity and nature, a major difference between the two is that deep ecology brings little social analysis to its environmental ethic. I argue that there are ideological reasons for this difference. Applying a sociology of knowledge and discourse analysis to deep ecological texts to uncover these reasons, I conclude that deep ecology is constrained by political attitudes meaningful to white-male, middle-class professionals whose thought is not grounded in the labor of daily maintenance and survival. At a micro-political level, this masculinist orientation is revealed by an armory of defensive discursive strategies and techniques used in deep ecological responses to ecofeminist criticism.

## I. LIBERAL PATRIARACHALISM AND THE SERVICED SOCIETY

The separation of humanity and nature is the lynch pin of patriarchal ideology, and both deep ecology and ecofeminism share a desire to dislodge that pin. For deep ecologists, overcoming the division between humanity and nature promises a release from alienation. For ecofeminists, it promises release from a complex set of exploitations based on patriarchal identification of femaleness with the order of nature. Perhaps because most deep ecologists happen to have been men, and middle class, their environmental ethic has had difficulty in moving beyond psychological and metaphysical concerns to a political analysis of the “materiality” of women’s oppression. Building on earlier exchanges between ecofeminism and deep ecology, in particular, “The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate: A Reply to Patriarchal Reason,” I amplify the claim that deep ecology is held back from maturation as a Green philosophy by its lack of a fully rounded political critique.<sup>1</sup> To this end, I urge adherents of deep ecology to become more reflexively aware of the sociohistorical grounding of their discourse.

Although there are different emphases among women’s groupings internationally, a growing number of ecofeminists now address capitalist patriarchy as an

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<sup>1</sup> Ariel Salleh, “The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate: A Reply to Patriarchal Reason,” *Environmental Ethics* 14 (1992): 195-216.

oppressive system of global power relations.<sup>2</sup> They situate both environmentalism and women's struggle against the instrumental rationality and dehumanizing commodity culture that comes with industrial production. Accordingly, ecofeminists of a socialist persuasion are disturbed to hear the father of deep ecology, Arne Naess, claim that "total egalitarianism is impossible," that some human exploitation will always be "necessary."<sup>3</sup> Women's complex treatment as a sexual, reproductive, and labor "resource" is glossed over in the deep ecological agenda. Yet there are, and have always been, people who cultivate and prepare food, build shelter, carry loads, labor to give birth, wash and tend the young, maintain dwellings, feed workers, and mend their clothes. Whether in the First World or the Third World (which is two-thirds of the global population), women's labor "mediation of nature" serves as the infrastructure to what is identified as men's "productive economic" role. This subsumption of women's energies, most often by means of the institution of the family, is homologous to exploitative class relations under the capitalist system. The family is integrally connected with, and makes industrial production possible by "reproducing" the labor force, in the several senses of that word. However, as productivism intensifies with new technologies and the promise of ever greater profits, labor becomes increasingly removed from the satisfaction of basic needs. As a result, under the guise of "development," a new dimension is added to the women's role constellation—that of conspicuous consumer. Moreover, as the economic fetish penetrates personal culture, even sexual relations between men and women come to resemble relations between things, thereby deepening women's exploitation even further.<sup>4</sup>

Deep ecologists do not recognize that women have not been consulted about their interests in this system of social relations. Just as the environment is damaged by "development," women's lives are vitiated by men's systematic appropriation of their energies and time. Writing by Brinda Rao in India, Berit As in Norway, and Barbara Ehrenreich in the United States provides ample documentation of this appropriation.<sup>5</sup> The work of Third World peasant women is fairly obviously tied to "natural" functions and material labor. These women grow most of the world's food and care for their families with a minimum of disruption to the environment and with minimum reliance on a cash economy. They labor with independence,

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<sup>2</sup> For discussion of the international status of ecofeminism and its regional variations, see Ariel Salleh, "From Centre to Margin," *Hypatia* 6 (1991): 206-14.

<sup>3</sup> Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecology Movement," *Inquiry* 16 (1973): 95-100. A qualification of Naess' views appears in *Ecology, Community and Life Style: Outline of an Ecosophy*, trans. David Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Here, the impact of culture and personal experience on ethical intuition is acknowledged in a way that could serve as a model for other deep ecologists.

<sup>4</sup> Ariel Salleh, "Epistemology and the Metaphors of Production," *Studies in the Humanities* 15 (1988): 136.

<sup>5</sup> Brinda Rao, "Gender and Ecology in India," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 2 (1989): 65-82; Berit As, "A Five Dimensional Model for Change," *Women's Studies International Quarterly* 4 (1980); Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men* (New York: Anchor, 1983).

dignity, and grace—and those of us looking for sustainable models may soon want to take advice from such women. In contrast, in supposedly advanced industrial nations, women's maintenance work as housewives or imported guest workers is made dependent on and largely mystified by "labor-saving devices," such as dish-washing machines, blenders, and the like. Nevertheless, cultural assumptions concerning women's apparently universal role of mediating nature still hold. It is for this reason that reproductive rights remain contentious in the United States. Ecofeminists join Dave Foreman's cry to "free shackled river," but more than rivers remain shackled!

Deep ecologist Warwick Fox, who has wondered why ecofeminists have not discussed the class basis of deep ecology, has failed to note that my early ecofeminist criticism in "Deeper than Deep Ecology" refers repeatedly to women's labor as validation of their perspectives.<sup>6</sup> As the sociology of knowledge teaches us, peoples' perception is shaped by their place in the system of productive relations. Nevertheless, the gulf between manual or sustaining productive labor and mental or conceptualizing work is especially profound in industrialized societies. A whole gamut of questions surrounding labor relations is ideologically suppressed, and in the United States it is clouded by the question of race as well. In late capitalism, the middle class, including academics, are "serviced" in their daily needs by hidden workers. Not surprisingly, deep ecology reflects the idealism and individualism of such a privileged group, its preoccupation being "cultural issues" such as meaning, the psychological, and "rights." However, even more invisible as labor, and not even recognized by a wage, are the domestic services of women. Michael Zimmerman's typically middle-class and white articulation of women's lot—he sees them enjoying "the advantages" of a consumer society—illustrates this standard oversight, though the fault is not entirely his, since it largely reflects the liberal feminist attitude he relies on to make his case against ecofeminism.<sup>7</sup> It is not only women's socialization, the various belief systems which shape "the feminine role," but also the very practical nature of the labor which most women do that gives them a different orientation to the world around them and, therefore, different insights into its problems. In both North and South, this labor may include the physicality of birthing, suckling, and subsequent household chores, but is not restricted to such activities. Even in the public work force, women's employment is more often than not found in maintenance jobs—reflecting cultural attitudes to women as "carers."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," *Environmental Ethics* 11 (1989): 14. Compare Ariel Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Ecofeminist Connection," *Environmental Ethics* 6 (1984): 335-41, especially points 3 and 4.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1987): 21-44.

<sup>8</sup> For an early ecofeminist ethic based on "caring," see Marti Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature: A Circular Affair," *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985): 135-49. The analysis of caring has since become

Radical feminist analyses of the psychodynamic underlying patriarchal social relations, again and again, return to the symbolic killing of mother/nature/woman as the root cause of the “masculine” will to objectify and control other forms of being. Zimmerman’s writing is fairly symptomatic in this respect. Although ten or more pages of his “Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics” are generously given to exposition of the feminist literature, and a concluding paragraph endorses its findings, his article is still querulous. The same observation applies to Fox’s response to ecofeminist criticisms of deep ecology. While both Zimmerman and Fox cast doubt on the reality of patriarchal power, Zimmerman’s ambivalent article also contains information about how ideology works to protect men from seeing the actual nature of social relations under patriarchy. He quotes the following remark of Naomi Scheman: “Men have been free to imagine themselves as self-defining only because women held the intimate social world together by their caring labors.”<sup>9</sup> Similarly, we know that the capitalist entrepreneur sees himself as a man of high achievement, blind to the fact that the wage laborer is responsible for the generation of his surplus. In the patriarchal perspective, self appears to be independent; yet, to quote Jim Cheney, “The atomistically defined self acts as a sponge, absorbing the gift of the other, turning it into capital.” Cheney goes on: “This is one way of understanding the frequent feminist claim that males in patriarchy feed on female energy.”<sup>10</sup> Capital can be psychological and sexual as much as economic. On the positive side, the actuality of caring for the concrete needs of others gives rise to a morality of relatedness among ordinary women, and this sense of kinship seems to extend to the natural world as well. Consider the reasoning of an Indian peasant woman whose drinking water has been spoiled by village men moving across to a pumped supply for status reasons, or the sensibility of a woman who watches a tree grow over the grave of a child she has suckled. These understandings engraved in suffering make sharp contrast to the abstract philosophical formulations of deep ecology. For ecofeminism, the body is indeed an instrument of our knowledge of the world.<sup>11</sup>

#### PROFESSIONAL VERSUS GRASSROOTS BASE

As I put it in an earlier critique, “. . . what is the organic basis of [the deep ecological] paradigm shift? . . . Is deep ecology a sociologically coherent

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a veritable growth area for professional philosophers, thus, neutralizing the radical feminist impulse which originally politicized it.

<sup>9</sup> Zimmerman, “Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics,” p. 31. The reference is to Naomi Scheman, “Individualism and the Objects of Psychology” in S. Harding and M. Hintikka, eds., *Discovering Reality* (Boston: Reidel, 1983), p. 234.

<sup>10</sup> Jim Cheney, “Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology,” *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1987): 124.

<sup>11</sup> Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive* (London: Zed, 1989) conveys the voice of Indian women farmers to a Western educated readership. Alternatively, an academic feminist argument connecting pain

position?"<sup>12</sup> One of the most distressing things about the field of environmental ethics is the extent to which it has been taken over by paid professional specialists. What gives authenticity, validity, and "depth" to ecofeminism, in contrast, is that it is implicitly tied to a praxis rooted in life needs and the survival of habitat. Deep ecology is primarily concerned with identification, or rather, re-identification of the so-called "human" ego with nature. For deep ecologists, however, the recommended route for recovering this connected sensuous self is meditation or leisure activities, such as backpacking. How does such activity compare as an integrating biocentric experience with the hands-on involvement of the African subsistence farmer who tends her field with an astonishing knowledge of seeds, water habits, and insect catalysts—and whose land is the continuing staff of the children she has born out of her body? There is surely a large portion of illusion and self-indulgence in the North's comfortable middle-class pursuit of the cosmic "transpersonal Self." Despite Naess' careful reformulations, in an age of "me now," the deep ecologists' striving for "Self-realization" demands close scrutiny.

Many deep ecological difficulties in coming to terms with ecofeminism can be traced to the sociopolitical grounding of the deep ecology movement in bourgeois liberalism. Hence, it is probably no surprise that even as deep ecologists put forward their key concept of "ecocentrism" as "the way out" of our environmental holocaust, an implicit endorsement of the Enlightenment rationalist notion of ever upward progress threatens to collide with the principle. For instance, some deep ecologists believe that "anthropocentric" political critiques, such as socialism and feminism, can, in principle, be taken care of by the wider framework of ecocentrism. Fox writes, "Supporters of deep ecology hold that their concerns well and truly *subsume* the concerns of those movements that have restricted their focus to a more egalitarian human society."<sup>13</sup> Not only is Fox's ambitious totalizing program spoiled by the serious gaps in deep ecology's theorization, it is also out of sync with his pluralist claim to respect the unfolding of "other voices" in the universe: the words of women, among others. Fox's attraction to "transpersonal psychology" hangs on the self-actualizing logic of middle-class individualism. Similarly, his assertion that self-interest is fused with that of Gaia as a whole, strikingly resembles the guiding hand behind Adam Smith's libertarian political economy, or Rawls' theory of justice. Despite a will to transcendence, there is an implicit positivism or naive realism in these formulations.<sup>14</sup> Deep ecology has no

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with political insight is made in Ariel Salleh, "On the Dialectics of Signifying Practice," *Thesis Eleven* 5/6 (1982): 72-84.

<sup>12</sup> Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology," p. 339.

<sup>13</sup> Fox, "Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 9 (emphasis added). Since writing this piece, I have discovered that Jim Cheney explicates the totalizing implications of Fox's stand powerfully and eloquently in "The Neo-Stoicism of Radical Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 11 (1989): 293-325.

<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, Robyn Eckersley's recent book *Environmentalism and Political Theory*:

sense of itself as spoken by a particular group lodged in history. Oblivious to its own cultural context, the deep ecological voice rings out as a disembodied absolute.

#### ABSTRACT ESSENCES VERSUS REFLEXIVITY

According to Rosemary Ruether, women throughout history have not been particularly concerned to create transcendent, overarching, all-powerful entities, or like classical Greek Platonism and its leisured misogynist mood, with projecting a pristine world of abstract essences.<sup>15</sup> Women's spirituality has focused on the immanent and intricate ties among nature, body, and personal intuition. The revival of the goddess, for example, is a celebration of these material bonds. Ecofeminist pleas that men, formed under patriarchal relations, look inside themselves first before constructing new cosmologies have been dismissed, for example, by Fox, in "The Deep Ecology: Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," as a recipe for inward-looking possessive parochialism and, hence, ultimately war!<sup>16</sup> But that would surely only be the case if deep ecologists failed to shrug off their conditioning as white-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant-professional property holders, which they assure us, they are very keen to do. Interestingly, the universalizing, cosmopolitan stance of this particular protest by Fox is somewhat at loggerheads with the deep ecologists' own professed commitment to bioregionalism.

In the name of "theoretical adequacy," Fox's article disregards history. Consequently, his prose blurs who has done what to whom, over the centuries and on into the present. To quote:

[Certain] classes of social actors have . . . habitually assumed themselves to be *more fully human* than others, such as women ("the weaker vessel"), the "lower" classes, blacks, and non-Westerners ("savages," "primitives," "heathens"). . . .

That anthropocentrism has served as the most fundamental kind of legitimation employed by *whatever* powerful class of social actors one wishes to focus on can also be seen by considering the fundamental kind of legitimation that has habitually been employed with regard to large-scale or high-cost social enterprises such as war, scientific and technological development, or environmental exploitation. Such enterprises have habitually been undertaken not simply in the name of men, capitalists, whites or Westerners, for example, but in the name of God (and thus our essential humanity . . .). . . . (This applies, notwithstanding the often sexist expression of these sentiments in terms of "man," "mankind," and so on, and not withstanding the fact that certain classes of social actors benefit disproportionately from these enterprises.)<sup>17</sup>

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*Toward an Ecocentric Approach* (New York University at Stonybrook Press: 1992) perpetuates Fox's naive realism.

<sup>15</sup> Rosemary Ruether, *New Woman, New Earth* (New York: Seabury, 1975).

<sup>16</sup> Fox, "Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

This passage is a sample of liberal-pluralist mystification in its most blatant form. Its author next goes on to mention Bacon and the rise of science, but without touching on the corresponding elimination of one class of social actors, namely, the six million women who perished as witches for their scientific wisdom. Fox believes that all modern liberation movements have had recourse to the same legitimating device—"humanity." Apparently, a belief that this label is available for the use of everyone is the reason why deep ecologists still use the term *man* so persistently.

Zimmerman, in turn, entirely misses the point of ecofeminism by portraying it as an argument about women being "better than men."<sup>18</sup> Ecofeminism does not set up a static ontological prioritization of "woman." Instead, it is a strategy for social action. Equally, men in the Green and the eco-socialists movements, by examining the parallel exploitation of nature and women, are entering into a process of praxis, the results of which will unfold over time. Fox, in his own way, shelves the question of our political responsibility as historical agents by insisting that all people need to understand is that "evolutionary outcomes" simply represent "the way things happen to have turned out," nothing more. For someone concerned with "simplistic" and "facile" political theorization, his familiar charge against ecofeminism beats the lot. Notwithstanding earlier posturing about the "errors of essentialism" in ecofeminist thought, Fox soon emerges as a kind of Spencerian sociobiologist. In fact, the deep ecologists, for all their anxieties about "genetic doctrines" in feminism, seem to be strongly inclined this way. George Sessions too speaks favorably about "the recent studies in ethology and genetics which posit a basic human and primate nature."<sup>19</sup> Is this the old double standard again?

#### TECHNOLOGY—PRODUCTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE RELATIONS

When it comes to the question of technology, Zimmerman's text becomes as rudderless as the modern industrial apparatus itself. He notes that some feminists—"essentialists" he calls them, though they remain unnamed—are critical of science and technology, while other feminists, also unspecified, argue that it is not "intrinsically evil."<sup>20</sup> There are, indeed, differences among feminists on technology. Liberal feminists, like their brothers, the reform environmentalists, imagine that solutions to social and ecological problems can be found within "the advanced industrial technostructure." Liberal feminism should not be grouped with ecofeminism, however, any more than resource environmentalism should be grouped with deep ecology. Ecofeminists go further than both liberal feminists,

<sup>18</sup> Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 34.

<sup>19</sup> Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered* (Salt Lake City: Peregrene Smith, 1985), p. 225. On *essentialism* as red herring, see Salleh, "The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate," and "Essentialism and Ecofeminism," *Arena* 94 (1991): 167-73.

<sup>20</sup> Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 40.

who see technology as emancipatory, and Marxist feminists who argue that technology is neutral and that it is all a matter of who controls it. Ecofeminists observe that the instrumental-rational mode of production inevitably trickles over into the sphere of consciousness and social relations. As a Heideggerian, Zimmerman should know that there are ample reasons for dismantling the techno-monster, given its far-reaching impact into human phenomenology. Yet, he still seems to hold a neutralist thesis, claiming that "Modern science and technology are potentially liberating. . . ." Further, he asks: "While benefiting from the material well-being and technological progress made possible by masculinist science and industry, do women rid themselves of responsibility . . . ?"<sup>21</sup> It is hard to believe that this "growth"-oriented statement should be made in defense of deep ecology. Perhaps Zimmerman genuinely does believe that societies accrue benefit from "advanced" technologies. Perhaps they do for the middle-class men who designed and sold them; nevertheless, the young Korean micro-chip worker steadily going blind at her bench and the California aerospace worker coming down with immune deficiencies have not experienced such well-being. The problem is, and this is a point well made in Don Davis' article, that deep ecology as a movement has no systematic analysis of multinational-corporate industrial society and its effects.<sup>22</sup>

Equally innocent of the force of contemporary instrumentalism, Wittbecker writes that "human populations are plastic and could probably be decreased without fascism, by economic, religious, or cultural means." Deep ecologist Bill Devall's tone is similarly managerial, preoccupied as he is with population control.<sup>23</sup> The phenomenon of "overpopulation" does need to be seriously examined. However, given the ethical issues of eugenics-genocide and of a woman's right over her own body, the targeting of "population control" by white male environmentalists in the North has both racist and sexist dimensions. Observe how many Americans opposed to abortion in the United States endorse population control programs in Asia and South America. Even as a matter of social equity, where children provide supplementary farm labor for overworked mothers in the South, it is inappropriate for gray-suited international policy advisers to demand population control. Such programs originated in a post-World War II middle-class urban desire to protect the quality of life—that is, high levels of consumerism. These days the argument for population control is formulated more prudently in terms of protecting the Earth's "scarce" resources. Even this injunction, however, as it is applied to the Third World exclusively, is patently hypocritical. Each infant born into the so-called advanced societies uses about fifteen times more global resources during his or her lifetime than a person born

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 40, 41-42.

<sup>22</sup> Don Davis, "The Seduction of Sophia," *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1986): 151-62.

<sup>23</sup> Alan Wittbecker, "Deep Anthropology, Ecology and Human Order," *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1986): 269; and Bill Devall, *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends* (Salt Lake City: Peregrene Smith, 1988).



in the Third World. Population restraint may well be called for in the North, hopefully complemented by a scaling back of high technology excess. On the other hand, subsistence dwellers in the South are producers as much as consumers: as “prosumers” they are practical examples of human autonomy in a nonexploitative relation to the land. What much of this talk about population control may express is a projection and displacement of guilt experienced by those who continue to live comfortably off the invisible backs of working women in the Third World. Even deeper, the constant focus on population control may reflect some profound psychosexual fear of that “different” voice.<sup>24</sup>

With regard to biotechnology, Fox agrees with the ecofeminist position that deep ecologists should oppose it; nevertheless, given deep ecology’s lack of attention to industrialism and technological rationality, it is not consistently opposed by most deep ecologists. Sessions has said that he believes there “might be a point one day down the road when we can handle genetic engineering.” Naess has also defended its use. For example, he has proposed that a genetically engineered microorganism be released in order to counter a mite infecting the eyes of African children.<sup>25</sup> This proposal is a very anthropocentric focus for an ecocentric theory, and it matches oddly with earlier claims by Naess and Sessions that it is better not to approach the nonhuman world reductionistically in terms of its usefulness to humans. Devall’s fine tenet that “there is wisdom in the stability of natural processes” is violated here, as is Devall’s and Sessions’ “refusal to acknowledge that some life forms have greater or better intrinsic value than others.” Concern about the unintended consequences of human “hubris” is one level of argument. Feminist critiques of patriarchal science are another. It might be also added, following the logic of Frances Moore Lappé, that if the standard of living—the “vital needs”—of African villages were not decimated by pressures from a predatory white-male dominated international economic order, such children might not succumb to malnutrition and disease in the first place. Given this line of reasoning, genetic engineering can scarcely be justified as a “vital need.” In fact, there can be no emergence from this exploitative system as long as humans pursue expensive technological-fix panaceas, such as genetic engineering. Even so, according to Devall and Sessions, “cultural diversity today requires advanced technology, that is, techniques that advance the goals of each culture.”<sup>26</sup> Is this why John Seed from the Council of All Beings can be seen traveling with a lap-top computer? What some deep ecologists seem to forget when it comes to the question of technology is that there is no such thing as a free lunch. While

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<sup>24</sup> This paragraph is adapted from Ariel Salleh, “Living with Nature: Reciprocity or Control,” in R. and J. Engel, eds., *Ethics of Environment and Development* (London: Pinter/University of Arizona Press, 1990), p. 251.

<sup>25</sup> George Sessions, personal communication: Los Angeles, March 1987; Arne Naess, personal communication, Oslo, August 1987.

<sup>26</sup> See Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, pp. 71-73.

Devall condemns "false consciousness" in New Age advocates of genetic engineering and computer technology, one looks in vain for a clear deep ecological praxis on these matters. His discussion of genetic engineering remains descriptive and agnostic in tone, eventually sliding off into renewed denunciation of human overpopulation as the most important "agent of extinction." In other words, women workers in the South can pick up the tab for ecological crisis.

## II. PATRIARCHAL POSTURES AND DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES

Another metalevel of the debate between ecofeminism and deep ecology is the psychosexual dynamic that runs through it. As with the class and ethnic grounding of deep ecology, gender politics also shapes the context in which philosophical judgments are made. Without an awareness of this fact, the Green, deep ecological, and socialist movements lose reflexivity and run the risk of being partial, single issue, and reformist in focus. Sadly, the deep ecologists' reception of ecofeminist views has been marked by resistance. Perhaps this resistance should be no surprise, since their spokespeople have been men, and the psychological literature suggests that masculine identity is defined by separation rather than closeness. There is certainly nothing uniquely deep ecological in their responses; the strategies used to shore up their standpoints are quite familiar to the experience of women working in male-dominated institutions. As Karen Warren reminds us, "Ecofeminists take as their central project the unpacking of connections between the twin oppressions of women and nature. Central to this project is a critique of the sort of thinking which sanctions that oppression."<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Dodson Gray and many others have exposed the pervasiveness of the androcentric conceptual frame. Yet, it is not only the epistemology itself that women must attend to, but an armory of discursive techniques that back up and protect the bastion of masculine meaning. Among these, the index to Dale Spender's bibliographic history of feminism names the following common patriarchal procedures for dealing with intellectual and political challenges by women: ageism, appropriation, burial (of contribution), contempt (sexual), character assassination, the double bind, the double standard, harassment, isolation, charges of man hating, masculine mind, misrepresentation, namelessness, scapegoating, and witch hunting.<sup>28</sup> Note that while these postures have no substantive value, they are readily insinuated into the context of evaluation. As late twentieth-century politics moves toward a holistic agenda, it becomes crucial for activist men to be able to identify when they are falling back on these time honored discursive practices.

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<sup>27</sup> Karen Warren, "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections," *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1987): 6.

<sup>28</sup> Dale Spender, *Women of Ideas and what Men have done to Them* (London: Routledge, 1982). See also Margo Adair and Sharon Howell, *The Subjective Side of Politics* (San Francisco: Tools for Change, 1988).

## DENIAL AND OMISSION

Spender's catalogue is not exhaustive, as we shall see. Fox, a deep ecologist who wants to dissolve "ontological divisions," adds to Spender's list by creating a disposable hierarchy of ecofeminisms. What makes for a "better" ecofeminism? Apparently, it is the work of women building on the theoretical foundations of Buddhism, Taoism, Spinoza, Heidegger, and systems theory!<sup>29</sup> Fox's androcentrism is so strong that he remains unembarrassed by the implications of this legitimation device. Because the entire history of patriarchy is an exercise in suppressing the wisdom of women's experiences, deep ecologists would do well to bear this ancient agenda in mind. A related example occurs in the book by Devall and Sessions, whose text echoes snippets of my ecofeminist "Deeper than Deep Ecology" critique, while denying its existence by omitting documentation. Published two years after that unacknowledged essay, the authors respond to the prod with a three-page acknowledgment of women's contributions to ecology. Yet, there is no sign of any effort to integrate ecofeminism within the book's conceptualization as a whole. Chapter one, which reviews environmentalist scenarios—reformist, New Age, libertarian—fails to mention the ecofeminist approach. Chapter two, which reviews "the minority tradition," including nameless native Americans and "primal peoples," gives eight lines to the "Women's Movement." These remarks mislead because of their brevity, moreover, and risk confusing not only sex and gender stereotypes, but also paradigmatic differences within feminism itself. There is also a short "appendix" on ecology and domestic organization by Carolyn Merchant, whose other published work on patriarchal reason would have resounding epistemological implications for deep ecologists, if they absorbed it.<sup>30</sup> Concerning Devall's later book, Greta Gaard has observed that it "gives the section on Eros, Gender and Ecological Self less than five pages. . . he devotes an entire paragraph [to] citing a series of feminist analyses, but does not even paraphrase or address their objections to deep ecology. . . ."<sup>31</sup>

In addition to the documentation of ecofeminist literature being flimsy, the deep ecologists' preparation for debate and grasp of feminist thought is also lacking in respect. Devall and Sessions cite Dorothy Dinnerstein, Susan Griffin, and Jessie Bernard purportedly on how "our culture inhibits the development of psychological maturity in women." In fact, each of these feminist authors discusses the inhibition of "masculine" psychic maturity under patriarchy. Only Griffin is referenced, however, and Bernard's name is given the masculine spelling "Jesse." This lack of respect strongly suggests that the material has been consulted very

<sup>29</sup> Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 13, n. 20.

<sup>30</sup> Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology*; compare Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980).

<sup>31</sup> Greta Gaard, "Feminists, Animals, and the Environment," paper presented at the annual convention of the National Women's Studies Association, Baltimore, 1989, p. 10.

indifferently, if at all by the deep ecologists.<sup>32</sup> Failing to recognize that women's perspectives are materially grounded in their working lives as carers, Fox and Zimmerman lean heavily on arguments about *essentialism*. No one who responded to "Deeper than Deep Ecology" follows up footnote citations offering a dialectical refutation of the essentialism question. Again, although Fox cites Janet Biehl's critique of deep ecology, he never grapples with it.<sup>33</sup> Given that they are happy enough to set up a normative taxonomy of women's writing, it is remarkable that defenders of deep ecology have read so little ecofeminist literature. Their discussions focus on the writings of a handful of North American authors and myself. No European or Third World material is acknowledged, let alone examined. Perhaps the most damaging instance of denial used by deep ecologists is their disregard of my original ecofeminist endorsement of their ideals. To repeat, "*The appropriateness of attitudes expressed in Naess and Devall's seminal papers is indisputable.*"<sup>34</sup> This lapse has deflected the focus of subsequent exchanges between ecofeminism and deep ecology away from constructive mutuality.

#### PROJECTION AND PERSONALIZATION

Bolstered by adjectives like "simplistic" and "facile"—three or four times on one page in connection with social ecology and what are to him the less acceptable species of ecofeminism—Fox says that the ecofeminism's simplistic analyses are overinclusive and that they target all men, capitalists, whites, indiscriminately as "scapegoats" for what is wrong with the world.<sup>35</sup> His personalization here mirrors the form of those arguments that produce the example of Margaret Thatcher as proof that feminism is wrong. Individual women can be powerful, wealthy, or racist, but their circumstances have no bearing on the structural oppression of the female sex. Conversely, while a class of men may be preserved by entrenched structural privilege, specific individuals may still commit themselves against their class interest. In my discussion of Australian politics in "A Green Party: Can the Boys Do without One?" I talk, for example, about men working together with women in dismantling patriarchy, and about the potential of conservative churchgoers and corporate wives as catalysts in social change.<sup>36</sup> Fox's tactic of personalization is one to guard against, for it is invariably resorted to by those whose class has a vested interest in ignoring what a structural analysis tells them.

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<sup>32</sup> Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, p. 180; p. 221, n. 2. The missing references are Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976) and Jessie Bernard, *The Future of Marriage* (New York: World Publications, 1972).

<sup>33</sup> Janet Biehl's article "It's Deep but is It Broad?" appeared in *Kick It Over*, Winter 1987, pp. 2A-4A, at a time when she identified herself with social ecofeminism.

<sup>34</sup> Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology," p. 339 (emphasis added).

<sup>35</sup> Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Ariel Salleh, "A Green Party: Can the Boys Do without One?" in Drew Hutton, ed., *Green Politics in Australia* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1987), p. 88.

On the same page, Fox claims that “simplistic” ecofeminist analyses are “inauthentic” because they lead to “a complete denial of responsibility” on the part of those who theorize. Because the ecofeminist literature presents an interdisciplinary synthesis of epistemological, political, economic, cultural, psychological and ecological insights, it can scarcely wear the label “oversimplified.” The term *essentialism* is also plainly misapplied for the same reason. As for avoiding responsibility, most ecofeminist writers, North and South, have practical experience of movement activism, and that is what stimulates their insights. Women in the thousands have taken up campaigns over toxics, wilderness, and peace, not only in autonomous separatist groupings, but in mainstream environment organizations where they make up two-thirds of the labor force. Women are certainly embracing ecological responsibility, so much so that it has even been remarked that it looks like they are being used all over again in their traditional housekeeping role as unpaid keepers of *oikos* at large.<sup>37</sup> Since women actually receive less than ten percent of the world’s wage, why should they want to maintain this destructive global economy? As women around the world make the connection between sustainability and equality, they are doing just what Fox’s either/or logic claims they cannot do. They are becoming “a class in themselves.”

When will men lay down their arms? Zimmerman takes up the offensive on behalf of deep ecology with a proposition that perhaps women really accrue benefit from patriarchy:

... feminists try to temper [their] portrayal by saying that *individual* men are not to blame, since they have been socialized. . . . What traits, then, are women projecting on to men? And what benefits accrue to women through projecting such traits? Do women split off from themselves and project onto men violence, aggressiveness, selfishness, greed, anger, hostility, death hating, nature fearing, individuality, and responsibility? And as a result of bearing the projected traits, do men behave much more violently, selfishly, etc., than they would if these traits were withdrawn by women?<sup>38</sup>

I have commented in relation to Fox’s work that personalization is invariably used by those who have difficulty thinking about people in groups or classes. Here it is Zimmerman who loses grasp of the structural level of analysis. If women do simply “project characteristics” onto men, that is, if they are ideas only in women’s heads, then why do patriarchal statistics corroborate that ninety percent of violent crimes are committed by men? Indeed, are men “responsible” at all for their behavior? What of the wholesale abandonment of 150,000 women and children in the United States each year? What about responsibility in the nuclear industry? What has gone wrong with women’s self-fulfilling projection there?

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<sup>37</sup> See the special women’s issue of *Environmental Review* 8 (1984); and Ariel Salleh, “The Growth of Ecofeminism,” *Chain Reaction* 36 (1984): 26-28.

<sup>38</sup> Zimmerman, “Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics,” p. 41.

According to Zimmerman's "critique of feminism," feminists must realize that men, too, are victims of patriarchy. Of course, I made this point myself in "Deeper than Deep Ecology" with the allusion to masculine self-estrangement. Hilikka Pietila also picks up on it when she writes: "A long process of male liberation is needed . . . in order to meet feminine culture without prejudice. . . . Salleh *still anticipates* a new ally within the personality of men, and it is . . . the feminine aspects of men's own constitution. . . ." <sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, women have all but given up trying to get their brothers into self-discovery through mutually supportive consciousness-raising groups as pioneered by radical feminism in the 1970s. Zimmerman, in contrast, is confident that it is feminism itself which must engage in searching self-criticism. Surely, the emergence of five or six feminist paradigms in the space of two decades already demonstrates the women's movements' vitality and openness to renewal. Where is the men's movement and its political, as opposed to psychological, analysis?

Women were early to point out how the personal and political intermesh, and hence how nineteenth-century moralizers like "blame" and "accuse" are not apt in a postmodern reflexive culture where people strive to understand their own class implications in repressive social structures. Instead, Zimmerman ponders whether patricentric attitudes become more or less entrenched with "education." As we can see from the present exchange, education as such, is no panacea. Unless people learn how to recognize the social/personal infrastructure of labor that sustains them daily, a paradigm shift is not likely. Zimmerman is almost there when he remarks that "we are making use of norms and following cultural practices that threaten the future of life on Earth." But who is this "we"? Women's and men's "roles" and values are not everywhere the same. He knows this. After all, he takes hope from the "global awakening of the quest for the feminine voice that can temper the one-sidedness of the masculine voice."<sup>40</sup> Although ecofeminists share this hope, they also want it known that as far as any "quest" goes, a majority of the world's population, North and South, are already "speaking the feminine." The problem is: do they have standing? What is called for now is a move beyond tokenism, an admission of all women into the ranks of humanity.<sup>41</sup>

#### CARICATURE AND TRIVIALIZATION

The quest for the "feminine voice" is a recurrent theme in late twentieth-century philosophy, as recent French poststructuralist writing reveals. Alice Jardine's

<sup>39</sup> Hilikka Pietila, "Daughters of Mother Earth," in Engel and Engel, *Ethics of Environment and Development*, p. 243 (emphasis added).

<sup>40</sup> Zimmerman, "Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 41.

<sup>41</sup> The participation of women from all continents in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is a case in point. Even so, at one point, Third World government negotiators were prepared to "trade off" women's rights, if the United States would concede its high level of resource depletion by leaving references to "overconsumption" in Agenda 21 texts!

extensive research into this trend suggests, however, that gynesis, or speaking like a woman, is somewhat suspect when it is fashionably pursued by affluent Parisian homosexual *litterateurs*.<sup>42</sup> It deteriorates into parody, and beyond that into an up-market semi-academic export commodity. A revolution in gender relations cannot go anywhere at the level of ideas, language, or ritual alone; it needs an objective “material base.” Such professional philosophers as Zimmerman, however, are far removed from this perception. His class-based idealism brings him to conclude that it is “epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics” that have “led to the present exploitation.”<sup>43</sup> From an ecofeminist perspective, change demands that relationships of production and reproduction be equably rearranged between men and women and nature—in such a way that freedom and necessity are identically experienced. Equality and sustainability are closely interlinked.

The philosophy of “difference,” so poorly served by the deep ecologists’ cheap paraphrase of ecofeminism—“that women are better than men”—has been widely debated over the past decade among liberal, Marxist, poststructuralist, and ecofeminists. The exploration of this theme marks an important phase in women’s political consciousness. It converges both with men’s personal efforts to escape the strictures of patriarchy and with new epistemological directions in science.<sup>44</sup> It is true that some men may still “think the feminine” in an unreconstructed way. Look at Wittbecker’s attempt to dispose of my own critique in the traditional manner: “Hysterical hyperbolism is a perilous path to consciousness. . . .”<sup>45</sup> Consider, too, the uncritical use of woman/nature imagery by some early Earth First! deep ecologists, whose lurid metaphors of familial rape are meant to highlight their manly self-sacrifice in protecting “Mother Earth” and her “virgin forests.” The thought style of monkey-wrench politics has tended to reinforce the intrinsic psychosexual dynamic lying beneath the exploitation of nature, women, and less privileged peoples. Other men defensively subvert any notion of “difference” by using it to set up a double bind, affirming “what they knew all along about women.” Zimmerman himself professes concern that arguments based on gender types “run the risk of simply reaffirming traditional views that women are ‘feelers,’ while men are ‘thinkers.’”<sup>46</sup> If nothing else, the ecofeminism/deep ecology debate should put an end to this assumption.

Fox is especially given to caricature of those he wants to debate, even when he is not fully cognizant of his terms. While no doubt endorsing wolves’ rights to be wolves, he takes my rhetorical line about women being allowed to “love themselves” entirely out of its context in cultural politics. His next gambit relies on

<sup>42</sup> Alice Jardine, *Gynesis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985).

<sup>43</sup> Zimmerman, “Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics,” p. 44. The same tendency is manifest in his book *Heidegger’s Confrontation with Modernity* (Indiana University Press, 1990), even while a “feminist perspective” is incorporated into the last five pages of text.

<sup>44</sup> See Benjamin Lichtenstein, “Feminist Epistemology,” *Thesis Eleven* 21 (1988).

<sup>45</sup> Wittbecker, “Deep Anthropology and Human Order,” p. 265, n. 18.

<sup>46</sup> Zimmerman, “Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics,” p. 34.

Wittbecker's poorly reasoned charge that I treat "the sexes as if they were two species." This alleged dualism is cobbled together with the playful Irigarayan title "A Green Party: Can the Boys Do without One?" in order to illustrate an "oppositional" approach.<sup>47</sup> As Adorno would say, a totalitarian culture knows no irony. In a related vein, Fox has claimed that "The extent to which people in general are ready to equate opposition to human centeredness with opposition to humans per se can be viewed as a function of the dominance of the anthropocentric frame of reference in our society."<sup>48</sup> Fox does not see that the extent to which deep ecologists equate opposition to patriarchy with opposition to men per se can be viewed as a function of the dominance of their own androcentric frame of reference.

#### DISCREDIT AND INVALIDATION

It is easier to think through an issue if there is a clear distinction between "them and us," self and other; hence, Fox "weighs up" the "relative merits" of deep ecology and ecofeminism. Having polarized the two, he casts doubt over the value of ecofeminist "anthropocentrism" by means of a footnote reference to racism at Greenham Common in 1987.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the racism in question was felt to be displayed by socialist women from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament toward Wilmette Brown, an Afro-American legal aid adviser to ecofeminist activists and a well-known advocate in the wages-for-housework campaign. As those familiar with ideological crosscurrents within feminism know, many leftists are antagonistic to the wages-for-housework campaign, which cuts right across their ideal of socialized domestic production. The confrontation was thus an ideological one, but exacerbated in that a black activist stood at the center of it. Greenham ecofeminists, sensitive to the interconnectedness of all forms of domination—classism, racism, sexism, and speciesism—took all facets of the problem in hand and tried to work them out. Carrying this "inclusiveness" further, an April 1989 meeting of the Woman Earth Peace Institute in San Francisco pioneered an effective model for ensuring racial parity at ecofeminist gatherings.<sup>50</sup> Fox's divisive approach is a dubious one for a radical thinking man in the late twentieth century to engage in. Which brings up another question: where are the Afro-American or Third World "spokespeople" for the deep ecology movement?

Zimmerman writes that "Critics of feminism"—though, since these are not referenced, one must infer it is the author himself speaking—"regard as disin-

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<sup>47</sup> Fox, "Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 17-18. As well as being poorly informed, notes 33 and 41 of this article are classic examples of misrepresentation by trivialization.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14, n. 24.

<sup>50</sup> Jacinta McCoy, personal communication: Eugene, Oregon, June 1989.



genuous the claim that the real motive of feminism is to liberate *all* people. Such critics contend that feminists have their own power agenda.”<sup>51</sup> Obviously, feminists have a power agenda; they are involved in a political struggle designed to redress an inequitable system. Or, if Zimmerman means that individual feminist women are on a “power trip,” then there is a margin of truth in that as well, in as much as women attempting to achieve equality alongside male peers have to compete harder to arrive at the same result because of structural discrimination and harassment along the way. However, if he is implying that women only want power, then that is silly. The personal costs of being a feminist in both career and domestic terms are enormous. Nobody would bother with the struggle unless she were committed to the vision of a just society. It may be at least several generations before the community at large even begins to digest what feminists are talking about. Current statistics, for example, indicate that twenty-five percent of Australian men still believe that it is all right for a man to hit “his” wife. In the United States, a woman is battered every eighteen seconds. In the meantime, there are few benefits for feminists, or even their daughters in the foreseeable future. Ecofeminism is directed toward a long-term transvaluation of values. Women working to this end certainly glean no rewards from the system that they are trying to deconstruct. In a way, deep ecology’s “critique of feminism” itself reflects why the ecofeminist sensibility came forward in the first place. In Charlene Spretnak’s words, “Ecofeminism addresses the terror of nature and of female power, and the ways out of this mesmerizing condition. . . .”<sup>52</sup>

#### AMBIVALENCE AND APPROPRIATION

While Zimmerman and Cheney, each from their different viewpoints, have observed that convergencies between ecofeminism and deep ecology exist only “at first glance” or “on the face of it,” a fraction of the deep ecological mindset still hopes for some sort of I/thou accommodation between the movements. Fox talks about a synthesis and, astonishingly, turns to Cheney’s critique and Zimmerman’s “evenhanded” examination in defence of his own claim that there is “no real incompatibility.”<sup>53</sup> The logic of Fox’s turn is incredible, first, in light of Zimmerman’s highly ambivalent attitude toward feminism, and second, given Cheney’s skeptical thesis that deep ecology may be symptomatic of an inability to identify realistically with others, a manifestation of the patriarchal vacillation between “selfish appetite” and “oceanic fusion.”<sup>54</sup> Ecofeminists certainly resist a patronizing subsumption of women’s thoughtful labors under the deep ecological

<sup>51</sup> Zimmerman, “Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics,” p. 41.

<sup>52</sup> Charlene Spretnak: Address to the First International Ecofeminist Conference, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, March 1987.

<sup>53</sup> Fox, “Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate,” p. 9, n. 7.

<sup>54</sup> Cheney follows Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

umbrella, just as much as they find it offensive to see men raiding and colonizing feminist ideas in order to modernize male dominance. Nevertheless, ignoring our disquiet over the deep ecologists' lack of regard for the environmental consequences of technology, economics, race, and gender relations, Fox recommends that in as much as ecofeminists "extend" their concerns to the ecological, then there is no "significant difference." He calls for an alliance with Patsy Hallen, in terms of her paper, subtitled "Why Ecology Needs Feminism," and with Marti Kheel, despite the latter's uncompromising *exposé* of patriarchal thinking in environmental ethics. On the next page, and relaxing back into the authoritative white, male, academic register, he announces "major problems associated with Kheel's critique."<sup>55</sup> In one important concession, he writes, "Deep ecologists completely agree with ecofeminists that men have been far more implicated in the history of environmental destruction than women."<sup>56</sup> This assertion more or less unhinges Fox's efforts to generate a coherent stand, providing a good example of what liberal pluralism looks like in practice.<sup>57</sup>

Zimmerman also arrives at a point where he is keen "to unite" and finds "no real disagreement on basics," etc., and he adopts the ecofeminist analysis that

So long as patriarchally raised men fear and hate women, and so long as men conceive of nature as female, men will continue in their attempts to deny what they consider to be the feminine/natural within themselves and to control what they regard as the feminine/natural outside themselves.<sup>58</sup>

Does he really believe this statement? It seems doubtful, for with the next breath, he writes, "Salleh's critique is, in my opinion, only partly accurate. . . ."<sup>59</sup> This opinion, however, is never demonstrated, for he does not say which "part" he has in mind, or whether the "parts" represent a reader divided within his intellectual/emotional growth. Although intellectual capacities recognize what is true in ecofeminism, emotionally the reader is unsettled by the feminine voice. After all, Zimmerman reads the "Deeper than Deep Ecology" critique as "accusatory," rather than, say, "challenging" or "confronting."<sup>60</sup> Thus, the question is: since

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<sup>55</sup> Fox, "Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 9, n. 7; p. 10, n. 11. Patsy Hallen, "Making Peace with Nature: Why Ecology Needs Feminism," *The Trumpeter* 4, no. 3 (1987): 3-14; Marti Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature."

<sup>56</sup> Fox, "Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 14.

<sup>57</sup> In tandem with Fox, Eckersley, in *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, also tries to appropriate ecofeminism for deep ecology. In quite uncritical language, she describes ecofeminist theory as "nesting within" ecocentrism and as an "essential tributary." Moreover, focusing exclusively on the world of ideas, Eckersley sees ecocentrism as waiting to be "fleshed out in a political and economic direction." Women's ongoing political/economic resistance, North and South, remains invisible to her.

<sup>58</sup> Zimmerman, "Feminism, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," p. 24.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

ultimately he endorses ecofeminist conclusions, what is Zimmerman defending at such length?

Ambivalence also marks Devall's work. He is happy to take on board the odd ecofeminist insight—for example, Starhawk's revisioning of power, the heroic example of India's Chipko women, or Sarah Ebenreck's farm ethic. He has even come to agree with the ecofeminist premise that "the ecological crisis has complex psychosexual roots." Yet, like other deep ecologists, Devall is anxious to move quickly beyond that messy problem "to explore the ecological self." The emphasis on gender difference runs the risk of "divisiveness," he claims, and "distracts us from the real work." This "after the Revolution" line is a familiar one to feminists who took their first steps hand in hand with brother Marxists. The language is identical, in fact, for what speaks here is the voice of patriarchy. Of course, many men want to avoid doing their personal/ political homework; doing so could well upset their comfortable status quo. Nevertheless, humans cannot simply pass over their psychosexual conditioning in this way, as the present textual analysis demonstrates. In Devall's own words, "Healing requires bringing forth that which is suppressed in culture" and leveling with it, however painful and confusing this experience may be. As every deep ecologist knows, band-aid solutions do not work.<sup>61</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Richard Ohmann is not himself a deep ecologist, but a man sensitive to the terrain of gender politics that now underlies both daily routine and theoretical work. He approaches our dilemma in this way:

. . . progressive male intellectuals and professionals have arrived at feminism by an inexorable development and by a moral logic that flows from our strongest allegiances. . . . If we are "in" feminism at all, we are dragged into it kicking and screaming, and now that we're there, we should think of ourselves as on extended probation, still learning. What we do there with our experience, our competence, and our gender and class confidence, is a matter to be negotiated with caution, flexibility, improvisation, listening, and often doubtless through a strategic fade into the wallpaper. But I don't see drawing back from the knowledge that feminism is our fight, too.<sup>62</sup>

Clearly there is a long way yet to go. In terms of a Green or eco-socialist political practice, the new politics will demand of men and women more than just rational understanding of their respective positions as bearers of class, race, and gender

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<sup>61</sup> Devall, *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Ohmann, "In, With," in A. Jardine and P. Smith, eds., *Men in Feminism* (New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 187.

domination, if they are to recover their shared human complementarity. Men moreover, whose history has taken them on such a destructive path, will need to open up to a deep therapeutic acceptance of the process of mother/nature/woman killing in the making of their own identities. Although the personal and the transpersonal are intermeshed, as far as deep ecology goes, this inner movement has been lacking. Constructed by a class of men that is serviced by both patriarchal and capitalist institutions, deep ecology with its valuable move to “ecocentrism” remains out of touch with the material source of its continuing existence. Significantly, its theorization ignores the place of labor in the creation and sustenance of human life and its pivotal role in our human exchanges with nature. In short, as it is presently formulated, deep ecology reflects the disembodied conditions of its own production. This situation is, and should be, a matter for concern, if not despair, among committed environmental radicals, eco-socialists, and ecofeminists.