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Abstract	The chapter argues that unless eco-socialism is sex-gender literate, it cannot even begin to function as a democratic politics. The essay amplifies eco-feminism using the ecological footprint indicator, and addresses sex-gender differences in energy consumption patterns, preferred solutions to climate change, and policy decision-making styles at international forums like the IPCC. Eco-feminists attend to the logic of women's reproductive labour, and how it engages a different set of values from those in the productive economic sector. An eco-socialist politics must find a way to accommodate this 'difference', if it is to be a globally just and deep green theory and movement.	
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Chapter 9 1

How the Ecological Footprint is Sex-Gendered: 2

Some Implications of Eco-feminism 3

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Abstract The chapter argues that unless eco-socialism is sex-gender literate, it cannot even begin to function as a democratic politics. The essay amplifies eco-feminism using the ecological footprint indicator, and addresses sex-gender differences in energy consumption patterns, preferred solutions to climate change, and policy decision-making styles at international forums like the IPCC. Eco-feminists attend to the logic of women's reproductive labour, and how it engages a different set of values from those in the productive economic sector. An eco-socialist politics must find a way to accommodate this 'difference', if it is to be a globally just and deep green theory and movement. 6-14

Keywords Eco-feminism • Ecological footprint • Eco-socialism • Global environmental issues • Sex-gendered 15-16

When governments and think tanks deliberate on strategies for combatting climate change, you can be sure they'll bypass one highly salient variable. Yes, you've got it! – Global warming causes, effects, and solutions are 'gendered', or strictly speaking sex-gendered. Why for example, is women's ecological footprint negligible in comparison with men's? Why are women and children the main victims of global warming? Why are women under-represented in negotiations at local, national, and international levels? And guess who carries the social cost of Kyoto policies ... 17-23

The gender differential (how boys and girls are trained into different adult behaviour models) is critical to understanding questions like resource consumption and energy security. But it will also affect how eco-socialism is theorised, as I will argue further into this paper (Salleh 1997). Social norms for 'masculinity and femininity' lead to different attitudes in energy use, and to preferred policy approaches at competitive neo-liberal forums like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 24-29

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30 This claim is based on research from the Wuppertal Institute and the German
31 government funded women's NGO – GENANET, led by Roehr (2007).

32 One way to illustrate this systematic gender difference is through the ecological
33 footprint measure (Wackernagel and Rees 1996).¹ In Africa, for instance, there was
34 a time when women farmers provided 80% of the continents' food with minimal
35 resource inputs and pollution outputs. Today, in parts of the global South where
36 communal land holdings are untouched by war, free trade deals, and technology
37 transfers, many women continue this ecologically sound and self reliant subsistence
38 economics.

39 High tech economies also reveal a distinction between men's and women's pat-
40 terns of resource use. A Swedish Government report shows that men's ecological
41 footprint in that nation is remarkably larger than women's is (Johnsson-Latham
42 2006). There are always individual variations, but on average, Swedish men as a
43 social category, are found to be big consumers of energy expensive manufactures
44 and durable assets like houses, cars, and computers, while Swedish women are
45 mainly purchasing weekly domestic consumption items – nature's perishables. But
46 women's ecological footprint is actually smaller again, if adjusted for the fact that
47 most are shopping for two or more other household members. Australia, as a
48 medium size developed nation will show a similar pattern to Sweden. I am not
49 qualified to speak about the sociology of resource consumption in China.

50 Energy use in the transport sector also reflects the way in which modern societies
51 are structured by gender as much as by class or ethnicity. Focussing on the former, a
52 2006 report commissioned by the European Parliament from a transnational consor-
53 tium of researchers, including the University of East London and the prestigious
54 Wuppertal Institute, points out that men in EU states tend to make trips by car for a
55 single purpose; and over longer distances than women do (European Parliament 2006).
56 A high sense of individualism and low awareness or concern for the environmental
57 costs of private transport is inferred. Conversely, the EU statistics show that it is mainly
58 women who travel by public transport or on foot. When women do use private cars, it
59 is for multiple short journeys meeting several purposes on the one outing.

60 The reason for this complex activity pattern among women is that even among
61 those in the waged workforce, most undertake reproductive or domestic labour for
62 husbands, children, or elderly parents. The double shift, as feminists call it. Meike
63 Spitzner, an author of the European Parliament report observes, that women's days
64 are characterised by multi-tasking and their transport needs are characterised by
65 'spatio-temporal scatter'. Moreover, the time spent by women moving between one
66 labour activity and another – say from office to kindergarten to supermarket – adds
67 to their existing economic exploitation as unpaid household care providers.

68 Of course, it is important not to overgeneralise. All around the world, the number
69 of childfree career women is increasing, but this in turn, means that environmentally

¹This is not to suggest that advocates of the footprint indicator themselves are concerned with gender difference. I wrote to Rethinking Progress about this in 2004 and the reply was – good idea, but not on our research agenda.

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speaking, their transport footprint will be more like that of men in the waged productive sector. Even so, these emancipated women remain a statistical minority. Generally the pattern in industrial economies is that men have determinate job hours and simpler schedules than working women. For this reason, men could more easily make good use of public transport options; but they don't – or at least in Europe they don't. Again, this choice is a gendered one, having to do with structural differences in earning capacity.

Internationally, workplace gender bias is so entrenched that women are concentrated in lower salaried jobs and even when they perform the same tasks as men, their wages are lower by one fifth. Thus, it is mainly men as a social category who have money available for purchasing big status cars, as well as time available for leisure pursuits. Here they favour high energy consumption recreation involving speedboats, golf courses, motorbikes, and computerised entertainments. Under capitalism, speed and technology are associated with the psychology of masculine prowess.

By contrast, due to the time consuming double shift of work and home, women's leisure footprint is all but non-existent. Today, globalised economic scarcity and environmental stress extracts more time from women's lives. But under pressure, women are found to meet their reproductive tasks with fewer resources, by using good organisation and time management. This internalised response to environmental pressures contrasts with the accepted public practice of externalising or displacing problems on to less powerful sections of the community.² To amplify this from the EU evidence: men interviewed about solutions to social and environmental problems, prefer technological solutions and end-of-pipe remedies. Ethically (and thermodynamically), this is essentially a form of 'deferred or displaced responsibility'.

GENANET notes that while women readily adjust their own energy consumption habits, far too many men accept humanly risky responses to climate change like nuclear power, or ecologically untested solutions like ocean sequestration. This high tech tunnel vision is encouraged by the fact that the impacts of industrial growth are often uncounted social externalities left for women to pick up. In the case of nuclear spills, for instance, it is women who cope with the biological and economic costs of nursing deformed babies or relatives with radiation induced leukaemias. Such experiences explain why women resist risky technologies, and why they have been quick to recognise the urgency of global warming. As feminists say: 'the personal is political!'

These observations on the asymmetry of learned gender norms and responsibilities and the different gender skills that result from them, apply just as much in the so called developing South as in the North. So it is not surprising that an international cohort of women is now insisting that policy planners start thinking about gender justice and environmental sustainability together. At the 2004 Conference

²I am thinking here of how governments locate waste disposal sites in poor ethnic neighbourhoods or on indigenous land; or how excessive water use by factories is state subsidised while householders are taxed for it.

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110 of the Parties (COP) in Milan, a Gender and Climate Change Network was formed
111 to bring the UN Climate Change Convention and Kyoto Protocol into line with
112 international agreements on women's rights.

113 An analysis of decisions adopted at IPCC meetings reveals this policy arena to
114 be very androcentric indeed. Women are under-represented in all relevant political
115 and economic decision-making bodies – local, national, and international. In fifteen
116 years of climate negotiations, only one resolution has dealt with gender. And this
117 was about committee participation procedure – not the nitty-gritty socio-economics
118 of agency – that is, how accepted 'masculine and feminine' behaviour trends are
119 differently implicated in global warming.

120 Beyond gender blindness, the androcentric orientation of IPCC decision making is
121 compounded by Eurocentrism. Thus, the Kyoto regime and Clean Development
122 Mechanism (CDM) uses countries on the postcolonial periphery to mop up waste
123 emissions from key industrialised nations. Deferred responsibility again. Under Kyoto,
124 ecosystems are accorded economic value for their photosynthetic capacity to absorb
125 CO₂ and convert it back to O₂. So, a Third World nation can be readily induced to
126 resolve foreign debt by trading on the ecological cleansing service of its forests.

127 The case of Costa Rica is telling – and should serve as an alarm bell to eco-
128 socialists. With encouragement from a solidly masculine partnership of Canadian
129 government agencies, international environmental NGOs, mining and logging
130 industries, the Costa Rica Ministry of Environment and Energy has enclosed 25%
131 of the nation's territory as 'conservation zones'. This land includes national parks,
132 wetlands, biological reserves, and wildlife refuges. But in the process, hundreds of
133 indigenous and peasant families have been evicted from forested areas, losing their
134 livelihood. Peruvian ecological feminist researcher Ana Isla has followed these
135 displaced communities as they migrate to San Jose tourist areas hoping to survive
136 by the cash economy. Isla finds that now women and girls are forced to become
137 breadwinners, supporting their families by prostitution (Isla 2009).

138 Yes, offering up conservation areas as CO₂ sinks results in debt cancellation and
139 can be a national boon for foreign exchange through ecotourism. But ecotourism
140 slides into sex tourism and sex tourism means that Costa Rica has become a desti-
141 nation for paedophiles. The Kyoto CDM is simply another 'solution by displace-
142 ment' on to the lives of others. Out of sight, out of mind. Will this happen in our
143 Asia-Pacific region? Could Australian or Chinese governments become a party to
144 such mindless global environmental policy?

145 The Gender and Climate Network has called on the international community to
146 revisit the historic 1995 Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women held
147 in Beijing. This Platform of Action invited governments and agencies to get their
148 heads around the many structural links between gender and environments; to analyse
149 all measures and programs for gender content; to make gender informed budgets; to
150 include women in all decision-making and empower women through equal access to
151 resources (UN 1995). In order to achieve gender literate policy on climate change,
152 women in Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and America will need research funds to
153 document gendered opinions and behaviours, and travel funds to lobby at climate
154 change meetings. Most critical of all, governments will need to provide gender dis-
155 aggregated national statistics for the energy consumption sector.

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Today, Women for Climate Justice, a worldwide NGO established at the Bali COP in 2008 drives this gender analysis forward to the Copenhagen COP in 2009 (GenderCC 2008). But the absence of gender literacy among policy analysts, academic researchers, and even climate change activists, indicates that urgent 'capacity building' is wanted, North and South. For without a grasp of basic sociological notions like sex-gender difference, it will be impossible to identify accurate long term global warming strategies or even to implement workable short term ones.

And how about eco-socialist theory – is it developing in a gender literate way? Are there lessons for theorists to draw from the gendered ecological footprint? The analysis certainly reminds us not to theorise in an essentialist manner, that is, assuming that all humanity acts in the same way. Women and men are not implicated in the global environmental crisis to the same extent and women and men approach this crisis with different solutions.

In climate change circles, the phrase 'common but differentiated responsibilities' is used to emphasise the historical role of North-Atlantic industrial states and their satellites in causing unsustainable greenhouse emissions (UN 1994). As nations of the economic South point out, not all countries bear the same degree of responsibility for this international disaster. However, the phrase 'common but differentiated responsibilities' can also have a gendered meaning. For it is quite apparent that worldwide, and even in the twenty-first century, styles of development, decisions about energy consumption, and policy recommendations, are being driven overwhelmingly by men.

On the other hand, the European research cited above suggests that women, experienced in socially reproductive labour, find ways to manage threatened resources with more care. Can eco-socialist policy and politics integrate the logic of this gender differentiation and take inspiration from it?

This question invites us to look at women's labour more closely. Most socialists will be aware of the massive structural consequences of the gendered division of labour in industrialised societies. For example, ILO statistics consistently show that women receive less than 10% of all wages paid globally and only 1% of women in the world own property (Shah 2007). After 3 decades of post War modernisation, the majority of women around the world still expend their time and energies in tasks that are economically invisible. In fact, the expectation is that women's work should mediate natural processes as a prior condition for the economic transaction that takes place between capitalist employers and working men. UK sociologist Mary Mellor describes this household servicing as putting in 'biological time' (Mellor 1992).

The domestication of the female working body has a long history. Moreover, in researching mercantilist Europe and its South American colonies, Silvia Federici finds that working class men have been complicit with capital in the economic subsumption of women, dependent as they are on women's reproductive labour for their daily needs (Federici 2004). This trans-class gender betrayal continues in our era with what Canadian activist Terisa Turner calls 'the male deal'. In oil rich states such as Nigeria, for instance, local men and government officials derive wealth and status through deal making with overseas trading interests. So traditional communal land is taken out of the hands of village women and food scarcity is the result

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202 (Turner and Brownhill 2004). On every continent, women can be found carrying the
203 cost of World Bank loan repayments, IMF structural adjustment measures, and
204 WTO mandated free trade.

205 The principle of equality must be a central plank of eco-socialist politics. But my
206 focus here is actually on the principle of difference. Thus, on the positive side of the
207 eco-socialist equation, women as community food producers in the global South and
208 as primary care givers in the economic North, are skilled practitioners in sustainable
209 agriculture and experts in precautionary judgement. Scientist Vandana Shiva has dem-
210 onstrated the complex economic and ecological rationality of foraging techniques used
211 by women forest dwellers in North India (Shiva 1989). Her German eco-feminist col-
212 leagues Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen and Maria Mies, describe women's subsistence
213 provisioning methods on a global scale, identifying them as a ready made alternative
214 to the failing global economy (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies 1999).

215 The subsistence or eco-sufficiency model of economics does not exacerbate
216 climate change or biodiversity loss, because it proceeds by internalising responsi-
217 bility for resource use. But eco-socialist theorists do not yet acknowledge this
218 unique contribution of women's labours across diverse cultures internationally, nor
219 the radical significance of the eco-feminist literature which highlights it. Women's
220 reproductive labour is not only the invisible material foundation of the existing
221 capitalist economic system. Women's skill in the management of embodied and
222 natural metabolic cycles prefigures the regenerative epistemology needed to build
223 just and sustainable futures.

224 Whether as housewives, peasants, or indigenes, women are well qualified to
225 design eco-socialist theory and well qualified for practical leadership in the alter-
226 globalisation movement. The grassroots responses to neo-liberalism flourishing at
227 the World Social Forum from Porto Alegre, Mumbai, Caracas, to Nairobi, show
228 that it is not urban industrial labour, so much as non-monetised meta-industrial
229 labour – mothers, small farmers, hunter-gatherers on the fringes of the exchange
230 economy – who know best how to achieve social justice and cultural autonomy
231 with ecological sustainability (Salleh 2004).

232 Arguing this way is not to dismiss the classic sociological thesis of the proletariat
233 and its historical role, but to adapt that invaluable paradigm to fit our own conjunc-
234 ture. Eco-socialists will have to deepen their political analysis in order to broaden
235 their political alliances. And it makes strategic sense for eco-socialists to recognise
236 who the global majority of workers is. The goal of eco-socialists is surely to draw
237 together – worker's, women's, peasant, indigenous' and ecological struggles – as a
238 single unassailable agency of change. But integrating the concerns of these groupings
239 must be done in a way that honours 'common but differentiated responsibilities'.

240 In preparation for this unity in diversity, an inclusive eco-socialist theory will
241 raise questions like:

- 242 – How are productive and 'reproductive labour' dialectically interrelated?
- 243 – What is the political-economic function of 'woman = nature' or 'native = nature'
244 ideologies?
- 245 – How is gender constitutive of class and how is 'materialism embodied'?

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- Can eco-socialism coexist with cultural diversity and with 'ecocentric' values? 246
- What 'technologies' are compatible with democracy and sustainability? 247
- Who are the key 'agents' in alter-globalisation struggles for the commons and resource sovereignty? 248
- Is a new theory of 'value' called for, to build an ecologically sustainable society? 249

The intellectual challenge here is to uncover how gendered power relations enter into the formulation of political indicators like the ecological footprint and how they undermine the coherence of visions like eco-socialism. As scholars our work is to help activists and communities understand the gender bias built into theoretical constructs like accumulation, labour, class, dialectics, and materialism, and to revitalise such tools where necessary. To this end, the journal *Capitalism Nature Socialism* hosts an ongoing dialogue between eco-socialists and eco-feminists (Salleh 2006). Perhaps some of you will join this conversation?

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Author Queries

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Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Kindly update (Gender CC) with the year of publication. If appropriate.	
AU2	Kindly update (Roehr, Ulrike GENANET) with the year of publication. If appropriate.	
AU3	Kindly site ref. selleh A (ed.) 2009 in text or delete it from list.	

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