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**Second Thoughts on *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics*: A Dialectical Critique**

*Ariel Salleh\**

Janet Biehl has published several critical essays on ecofeminism in recent years, now collected together and revised as *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* (1991). Her book sets out the terms of a long overdue political debate between social ecology and a spiritually oriented culturalist feminism.<sup>1</sup> The guiding parameters of this exchange for Biehl, intimate disciple of Murray Bookchin, are to be the woman-nature connection; origins of domination; political relevance of the Goddess; reason versus unreason; grounds for a naturalist ethic; and women's role in democratic renewal. Biehl attempts to show how an ecological feminism can be housed in social ecology. From a feminist or, more specifically, ecofeminist point of view such as my own, a number of problems attach to this project. Further, while Biehl declares a defense of feminist ideals, there is little interest in women's scholarship. In fact, the mood of writing soon nudges the reader to ask: *Who* is being addressed here, and *Why*? My summation is that Biehl's work has a double function. One is a celebration of Bookchin himself, as friend and philosopher; the second is to capture the emerging Green movement for social ecology.

But this is to run ahead. First, to historicize Biehl's social ecological critique of "ecofeminism." The tension between these two ideological tendencies became clear at the National Green Gathering in Amherst, Massachusetts, June 1987. Bookchin, the father of social ecology, was a key speaker at this event, and spiritual ecofeminist Charlene Spretnak, a mother of Green politics, was another. A sense of competing hegemonies clouded the Amherst meeting, some describing it as a collision between New England rationalists and California mystics. Spretnak was also identified with deep ecology, another West Coast approach to Green thought and total anathema to Bookchinites. The subsequent rise of a Left Green Network and Youth Greens organized from Vermont has been one practical outcome of the Amherst experience — a concerted effort by social ecologists and others on the Left to



ensure an adequate social analysis informs the development of Green politics in the USA.

### I - domination: patriarchal, capitalist, imperialist

The title *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* is misleading, in that it depends on a falsely universalized notion of what ecofeminism is. Her ecofeminist textual sources are: Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature* (1978), Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980), Charlene Spretnak's *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (1982) and *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* (1987), Riane Eisler's *The Chalice and the Blade* (1987), Starhawk's *Truth or Dare* (1988), Andree Collard's *Rape of the Wild* (1989), and essays from anthologies like Plant's *Healing the Wounds* (1989) and Diamond's and Orenstein's *Reweaving the World* (1990).<sup>2</sup> While Biehl claims to engage with a movement, her bibliography deals only with North American material. The upshot of this inadequate research base is that ecofeminists in the wider international community have their political contribution marginalized. Yet, equally unfair, they have to wear criticism that does not necessarily apply to their articulations of ecofeminism. Biehl comments somewhere in her book that the US education system is notably remiss in conveying a sense of history and geographic relativity to its people. Clearly, this serves the impoverished imperialist consciousness in many ways, but it is ironic to see this same limitation reflected in radical American writing as well.

Because ecofeminist politics grows out of a plurality of social contexts, it will have many complexions. Biehl asserts that it is marred by "massive internal contradictions." But one cannot expect the spontaneous organic voice of a worldwide democratic groundswell, like ecofeminism, to show the same degree of philosophic grooming as a statement like social ecology, born of the pen of a singular charismatic figure. Despite differences among ecofeminists, there is always a common strand to women's experiences — things shared by dint of the patriarchal ascription of 'womanhood', and things beyond that. The knowledge of this unity is empowering to women and a delight. Women are discovering themselves as sisters outside the divisive legacies of patriarchal capitalism, colonialism, and even (sometimes) Marxism and Green ideologies. In a global context, women, 53% of the world's

population, are the largest 'minority group.' It is women who put in 65% of the world's work for 10% of the world's pay. This is what marks 'women' out as a significant political category — not an essentialist fabrication as antifeminists want to claim. But *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* forgets this material fact, preoccupied as it is with the status of political ideas. In this respect, New England rationalists display an idealism equal to that of the spiritual feminists who bother it so.

Bearing in mind that US ecofeminism is Biehl's focus, she expresses disappointment in a literature that fails to "draw upon the best of social theory and meld it with radical concepts in ecology to produce a genuine anti-hierarchical, enlightened, and broadly oppositional movement."<sup>3</sup> She is disturbed by ecofeminists who seem to situate themselves "outside" the emancipatory legacy of Western political culture. As her book goes on, she offers Bookchin's social ecology as the most promising model in this 'malestream' for ecofeminists and other Greens to espouse.<sup>4</sup> Now Biehl is rightly concerned, in that there is no well developed socialist (in the broad sense) ecofeminist account among the texts she addresses. But she is wrong to go on to conclude that ecofeminism as such lacks this analysis. Or more seriously, that it lacks the intellectual resources for arriving at one. German ecofeminist Maria Mies' study *Patriarchy and Accumulation* (1987) offers a coherent analysis of an internationally predatory capitalist system, and how it uses patriarchal violence on women and nature to secure economic ends. Mies steps outside the Western legacy to look for an empirically grounded 'feminine voice,' then brings this voice into dialogue with the basic presuppositions of Marxism itself. Vandana Shiva's *Staying Alive* (1989) is another ecofeminist statement whose postcolonial *exposé* of developmentalism is informed by a socialist analysis. Other ecofeminist positions again have developed from the interplay of gendered living, environmental struggle, and intensive study of dialectical philosophies. This scarcely represents a turning away from social theory.<sup>5</sup>

A key theoretical dispute between social ecology and ecofeminism concerns "the origins of domination"; this aggravates a fundamental nerve in Bookchin's eco-anarchism. Was hierarchy introduced by invading Indo-European hordes as Charlene Spretnak proposes? Or, was it internally generated with the grasp of economic power by a group of men? *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* states that a gerontocracy of this kind was the original status hierarchy among humans,



though Bookchin's earlier writing is more agnostic, and even mentions gender domination as a possibility. Biehl will concede that "perhaps the earliest slaves were women 'weavers' and servants whom patriarchs brought to the service of their wives and families," but wives notwithstanding (*sic*), she will not join with Ynestra King and other ecofeminists who maintain the sexual and labour subordination of women was prototype for all forms of domination.<sup>6</sup> Janet wishes to emphasize that gender stratification is qualitatively distinct from hierarchy as such, and there seems to be nascent within social ecology here something like the dual systems theory developed by socialist feminists to account for the relative autonomy of capitalism and patriarchy. But Biehl dismisses links ecofeminists draw between the origins of family (private property) and state. The only agreement in this area between social ecologists and ecofeminists is that the capitalist separation of home and workplace has damaged women's lives immeasurably.

## II - politics in a 'different' voice

It is urgent to envision restored community and democratic life as social ecology does, but yet another reality of our time may be that before new Green practices are formulated, a deep felt acknowledgement of how women have been historically oppressed needs to be granted. Moreover, a perception of how women's voices have been historically suppressed, and how this has deformed the Western political legacy, needs to be arrived at. Structural change without corresponding change of cultural consciousness runs the risk of an "eternal return." For this reason, social ecology's optimistic assumption that structural integration of women in democratic institutions will suffice to resolve "the woman question" is too reminiscent of mainstream bourgeois reformism to be comfortable. The present generation of feminists tried this tack in the 70s and 80s and found it wanting. Feminist theory has moved on accordingly. However Biehl's book shows no familiarity with the direction (dare I say, legacy) of feminist scholarship since its dalliance with liberalism. One thinks of the vigorous debate among socialist feminists over the relation of capitalist and patriarchal systems; discourse analysis and poststructuralism; and now ecofeminist arguments for equality and sustainability as interlocking political goals.

While Biehl does not register it, the ecofeminists she describes so acidly carry a very important political message. Whether they be spiritual activists like Spretnak and Starhawk or graduates of Marxism like Omvedt and Mies, each claims a space for women to be heard *speaking on their own terms*. Biehl identifies ecofeminism as "outside" the emancipatory canon of the West, but my understanding is rather that ecofeminist thinkers and activists confront that legacy in a very healthy dialectical fashion. In the late 20th Century, notions of the 'political' have been reshaped by studies in the dynamics of language, psychoanalysis, and gender. Politics is no longer focused exclusively on the mechanics of public order and justice, but seen to penetrate the recesses of daily life and very fabric of the discursive medium itself. The analysis of women's subordination by feminist theorists has given special impetus to this "microphysics of power." In addition to criticizing patriarchal institutions, feminists are now taking stock of how women work co-operatively in groups; how women approach ethical questions and how women communicate in ways that are different from men's behavior models. In reassessing their 'difference' from the dominant masculine ideal, women are turning away from the early liberal feminist desire exemplified by de Beauvoir: to be like men; equal citizens, but on men's terms.<sup>7</sup> Women are reaching out to revalorize what has hitherto been despised as 'feminine.' And one should add, to reinscribe patriarchal conceptions of 'nature' along the way. There are both secular and spiritual forms to this new political thrust by women. Both facets break new ground in different quarters of the patriarchal establishment.

The emancipatory value of malestream thought is under close scrutiny by women scholars. Aware that ecological crisis reframes history, and therefore reframes feminism too, many are now spelling out the broader implications of their critical studies. Ecofeminist writers both contribute to and draw on this work. There are no hard and fast boundaries in the emerging counter culture that is women's knowledge. Some people have even characterized this development as a veritable renaissance in Western learning. Hence, it is a shame that Biehl's book is conceived in isolation from this exciting work. In addition to acquainting herself with the full international corpus of ecofeminist literature, Janet might have tested her arguments about women and politics against the substantial contribution of theorists like Susan Moller Okin, *Women in*



*Western Political Thought* (1979), Mary O'Brien, *The Politics of Reproduction* (1981), Nancy Hartsock, *Money, Sex and Power* (1983), Kathy Ferguson, *The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy* (1984), Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (1988), and Ngaire Naffine, *Law and the Sexes* (1990).<sup>8</sup>

### III - the regressive culture/nature split

*Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* states that: "the essence of democracy is precisely its latent capacity to cut across particular ethnic, gender and other cultural lines."<sup>9</sup> Not only is democracy still latent, but the line that Janet does not mention here is that which cuts humanity off from the rest of nature. As we move towards a Green understanding, it is essential to address the entire gamut of Western domination.<sup>10</sup> Ecofeminism, like deep ecology, is concerned about the oppression of all life forms. Unlike deep ecology (to date), and apparently unlike social ecology, ecofeminists also posit that the same patriarchal attitudes which degrade nature are responsible for the exploitation and abuse of women. Against the dreary, alienating, exploitative society of multi-national capital, Bookchin's neighborhood assemblies and confederation of city states offers an attractive alternative. But as deep ecological Greens and most ecofeminists believe, a *real* political shift means letting go of the culture versus nature polarity all together. A domain assumption of the Western political legacy and of modern instrumentalism, this regressive split also preserves the artificial separation of masculine and feminine genders.

Historical change involves a dialectical movement between discourse and social structure. US cultural ecofeminism in its attempt to discover a feminine political voice has focused primarily on the first moment in this process; social ecology on the second, institutional moment. However, unaware of the deconstructive cultural politics at work in much ecofeminist writing, Biehl labels linkages between women and nature biologicistic and regressive. Now there are occasional women who, in making their way towards a feminist understanding, will argue in a naively patriarchal way that women are superior to men because of innate qualities. Surely, we all heard our grandmothers say as much. The public at large also, very probably, assumes that this is what feminism is about. Even some educated people, deep ecologists and socialists may attribute this kind of literalism to feminist thought. Hopefully,

a glance at Alison Jaggar's classic *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (1983) will set these wayward intellects straight.<sup>11</sup> For the majority of feminists, be they liberal, radical, socialist or ecofeminist, the social construction of gendered identity is as foundational a premise as ownership of the means of production was to Marx. -- Just imagine telling a Marxist that her theory is reactionary because it sets up one class of excellent achieving human beings over and above another. Yet this is the sort of logic by which opponents of ecofeminism have tried to undermine it. Reading ecofeminism through a conventional patriarchal 'either nature or nurture' dichotomy, Janet wants to suggest that its arguments are incoherent; self-contradictory because some women emphasize innate forces and others talk like social constructionists. Moreover, King, who gives credence to both 'levels' of efficacy, is assumed to be contradicting herself. These days, nearly all feminist men and women concur that our social identities are produced by the interaction of both ideological and material (including biological) forces, so the attempt to write ecofeminism off as biologism does little to enhance the standing of social ecology.

The intolerance of linkages between women and nature stems from a binarist tradition that social ecology (and most Marxism) has not distanced itself from with due care. Biehl takes her cue from the immanent critique that liberal feminists served up to the master discourse during the 70s. This rejected the patriarchal ascription of women as factually 'closer to nature,' while it clung to the pejorative value judgement implied.<sup>12</sup> Given that this brand of feminist politics is the most visible approach in the USA today, Biehl receives *raison* as a majority position. Majorities are not always right though, as Bookchin, ever champion of dissent, reminds us. For many majorities, their time has simply come and gone. Understandably, one of the first liberal feminist goals was to overturn the way in which men have been keeping women subject as 'natural bearers and rearers of children.' Early in the Second Wave, it became a priority for most thinking women to be able to live out their lives as freely as men did. We sought to distinguish ourselves in academic fields; we sought economic parity alongside men in the workforce; and equal time on Party platforms. To this end we put down the wilderness of our bodies with infallible man-made technologies like the pill and copper.<sup>7</sup> For liberal feminists and many socialist sisters, this equal opportunity track is still a political



end in itself. Others among us soon began to see that the world of men was not what it was cracked up to be. It was certainly not compatible with any notion of global equity and ecological sustainability.

The terms of feminist politics needed to be deepened and broadened, and this was the point at which ecofeminism arrived, at least in the West. Other women, housewives, grandmothers, peasant farmers in Asia and Africa embroiled in struggle for environment or peace, stumbled across similar insights to those of us in the movement. The way women were resourced and often abused -- at home, at work, and in political organizations -- paralleled men's exploitation of nature. As this Third Wave in feminism got off the ground, ancient cultural metaphors, redolent in Western literature and in the mythologies of many peoples, took on a new political relevance and potency for women. But the patriarchal image of 'mother-nature' conveyed less an absolute truth about ourselves than it revealed an underlying compulsion within men to dissociate themselves from women and from nature, placing themselves over and above both by ideological devices -- the *polis*, among others.

*Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* would have women place themselves along with men over and above 'nature.' Conversely, ecofeminist politics enlists men to join women in reaffirming their place as part of nature and in formulating new social institutions in line with that perception. Too much distracted by metaphor and myth in cultural and spiritual ecofeminism, Biehl loses sight of this profoundly democratic project. She has even dubbed ecofeminism a movement "based on metaphors." She overlooks the groundswell among women in the Two Thirds World and their Western sisters, practical people, skilled in provisioning for other's needs. Such ecofeminists are conscious of the ecological value of what they have learned in their lowly (ascribed) labors: domestic and rural workers both, mediators of nature for children and men. Statistically and qualitatively, women are the real proletariat. Possibly because Biehl lives in an advanced technological society, marked by a sharp divide between those who do thinking work and those who labor with their hands, she does not readily arrive at this perception of women's productive function. The same blind spot is a problem for many people in the USA, and this includes some of the ecofeminist writers she chastises for too much emphasis on mythological themes. The lack of a strong grass roots socialist consciousness in America

has constrained its vernacular radicalism. However, it follows that by down playing the materiality of feminine exploitation, Biehl misses out on the way in which nature, and women's bodies 'as nature,' are resourced. Consider scientific research on in vitro fertilization and surrogacy, for example. Like her local ecofeminist sisters, Biehl concentrates on 'right consciousness.' That means shifting from 'power over' to a society where 'power with' is the norm. For Biehl, this vision translates into a political praxis centered on self-management and town meetings. Cultural ecofeminists have in mind nothing less than the dissolution of 'politics' as such, altogether.

#### IV - science, spirituality and ethics

For Biehl, ecofeminism operates with "a mystified conception of nature." Yet, classical and modern patriarchalism both mystify nature (and women) to appropriative ends, and that includes Western scientific reason. It is epistemologically unsound for her to say simply that "natural history reveals . . ." While an experience of nature like planting or giving birth may be direct, our thought about that experience is always culturally mediated. Thus, while social ecology's synthesis of the material constitution of our world through geology, biology and beyond provides indispensable foundation for a Green philosophy, the argument put forward in *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* conveys a rather reified notion of science. True, Biehl writes that "science must be understood as the history of science," but she also leaves behind statements like "the truth is that many parts of nature do in fact function mechanically" or "physical science is quite simply true."<sup>13</sup> Her dismissal of ecofeminism as mere social constructionism or worse "a movement based on metaphors" is pertinent in this context. It misconstrues the extent to which metaphor operates in the constitution of all knowledge. Western science, for example, passed (or staggered) from "organism" as guiding perceptual metaphor to "mechanism." The latter is still paradigm dominant in the lower reaches of scientific activity, though an imagery of "chaos" now insinuates itself along the professional margins. The writing of Murray Bookchin is also replete with metaphor -- making him one of the most perceptive and persuasive writers alive today. Without metaphor, the beautiful symbiosis of life forms portrayed in social ecology would surely not have been



conceived. There is always an hermeneutic moment in science, be it physics, or indeed, the feminist sociology of knowledge. Could it be that this soft hermeneutic underbelly to epistemology parallels the existence of that invisible feminine substrate of 'caring' which lurks behind patriarchal ethics?

Does Biehl really believe in scientific objectivity *sui generis*? It is now quite plain that men's intellectual culture has been permeated, if not inspired, by sexual metaphor. The misogynist Platonic dualism of mind against body, subject against object, through Descartes to contemporary analytic positivism, is the linch pin of 'scientific truth.' Consider Bacon's vision of this endeavor: "It is Nature herself who is to be the bride, who requires taming, shaping, and subduing by the scientific mind."<sup>14</sup> Further, the intensely personal flavour of this 'pursuit' for men, the taste of knowledge as 'mastery,' is just as apparent in the speeches of Nobel Prize winners today as it was in the imagination of science's 17th Century founding fathers. Men of the Western legacy such as Bacon have enthusiastically purveyed the woman-nature image, just as it has fallen to ecofeminists to enthusiastically deconstruct the many-sided political potentials of this metaphor. A subtle exercise this, given the ever present tendency of discursive structures to reclaim their own. Even so, the work is a necessary part of our feminist emancipatory project in a time of ecological crisis. Remembering always that whatever intellectuals may make of this metaphor, it nevertheless filters the lived daily reality of most men and women.

Among social constructionist evaluations of scientific practice, women's critiques of science have moved ahead very quickly. To name some North American studies which should be accessible: Evelyn Fox Keller's *Reflections on Gender and Science* (1985), Sandra Harding's *The Science Question in Feminism* (1986), Donna Haraway's *Primate Visions* (1988).<sup>15</sup> Strictly speaking, it is science which must now be charged with irrationalism. Bypassing current feminist scholarship that draws variously on Marxist, hermeneutic, psychoanalytic, and semiotic techniques, Biehl simply assumes ecofeminists display (womanly) irrationalism by 'rejecting science.' The claim, of course, is a logical extension of her parochial view of ecofeminism as governed by Goddess worship. A closer reading of ecofeminist literature reveals it unfolding in dialogue with this critical literature, often co-terminus with it. Several ecofeminists, for instance, have published analyses of science in academic forums. And if patriarchal credentialing is the

name of the game, Merchant is also a member of the American Academy of Science. Boston ecofeminist Pat Hynes is a qualified civil engineer. I was a foundation member of both the Women in Science Enquiry Network in Sydney and active with the Society for Social Responsibility in Engineering for several years. Kenya ecofeminist Wangari Maathai is a Professor of Agricultural Science, and India's Vandana Shiva, a trained physicist turned policy analyst. Tasmanian ecofeminist activist Janis Birkeland is a former attorney and urban planner.<sup>16</sup>

As an old ecofeminist adage has it: "Women can move mountains. But they don't." Already the few women to enter science have begun to change both questions asked and methods used. Observe; in detailed respectfully empathic study: nurture what is given. Now there is some continuity between women's approaches to science and to ecofeminist spirituality. Biehl mentions Starhawk's principle of hylozoism, Merchant's interest in vitalism, and Carol Christ's emphasis on immanence. Ecofeminist spiritual practices play up the grounded material quality of the sacred. And this is not unrelated to the way many women feel in awe of a nature that speaks through their bodies -- a life-giving force, beyond freedom. Women's attitudes to both scientific and to spiritual practice are committed to being present, embodied, integral, whole. Conversely, the Western patriarchal legacy in religion and science exorcises 'the body' as contamination: hence the rationalist mind/body split.<sup>17</sup> Biehl's primary misgiving over ecofeminist 'immanence' is that its ontology (her word) is cyclic rather than progressive. She feels this mitigates against a liberatory politics, in contrast to the linear ontology of social ecology, for example. Yet surely, looking at Green priorities, a trajectory of pure choice is rationalist illusion: 'an embourgeoisement of freedom' to borrow Bookchin's insightful phrase. The freedom of some is always enjoyed at the expense of others: and here, social ecology's grounding of 'subjectivity' in the cradle of immanence begs gendered examination. Freedom was an important piece of ideology at a time when the classical liberal notion of human agency was coming into Western consciousness. But democratic citizenship, really fraternal emancipation, was only ever gained at cost to women tacitly absorbed into social provisioning through a hidden sexual contract. On a global scale, the freedom that men and (some) women in a postmodern commodity culture believe they enjoy rests on the labours of a mostly off-shore underclass, of



women food growers and silicon slaves. Commoner told it ages ago: there's no such thing as a free lunch. Yet many Western adults are slow to grasp this Piagetian principle. We live in a material world and freedom has material parameters. After women's embodied labors stands the resource substrate of nature, next in line of appropriation. In order to arrive at a Green society, where gender equity is global and a sustainable exchange is established with nature, we may have to rethink the unbridled Western fetish for the transcendent state. True freedom involves limits: an acceptance of our humble, embodied condition. Without awareness of this, the most enlightened citizenry is as free as infant children are.

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*Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* is not a generous contribution, and not really a feminist one, as Biehl imagines it to be. While she breathes new life into the ideas of social ecology, the verbal dismemberment which titillates in Bookchin's style is also revived. In general, social ecology celebrates the more wholesome views of the fraternity who carved out our ideals of freedom and equality, but the Western political legacy implodes with unexamined patriarchalisms, and these continue to spoil socialist, ecological, and (some) feminist programs. The material dimension of women's oppression; the 'difference' in perception that it creates; the relevance of this different voice to a new ethic of nature -- all are deflected by Biehl's tendency to essentialise 'humanity,' and to a lesser extent, her preoccupation with archaeological hypotheticals. With feminism, she correctly dismisses any notion that sexual difference should carry a difference in status. But we need to be very clear on how the "world historic" manipulation of women is to be done away with in a future Green utopia. Janet would do our politics a great service if she made use of contemporary feminist scholarship to free up dialogue *within* social ecology.

While ecofeminism can endorse much that is useful in social ecology, the time has come for women to discover and articulate what is ethically meaningful for themselves. To this point in history, men have not had to listen to women's ideas; many are still trying not to. Others with a properly democratic conscience realize they now have an exacting political role to play in learning how to hear. There is no symmetry in the emancipation of men and women, as Biehl supposes there

should be. Hopefully, there will be complementarity. Meantime, to give Ferguson the last word: "A specifically feminist discourse can suggest a reformulation of some of the most central terms of political life: reason, community, freedom . . . [but] the specific organization of an alternative social order and the means for achieving it, are never really answered on paper or all at once; they emerge over time as people begin to think and live differently."<sup>18</sup> Biehl's essays stand as a reminder to the urgency of that personal/political practice.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup>Janet Biehl, *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1991).

<sup>2</sup>Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature* (New York: Harper, 1978); Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature* (San Francisco: Harper, 1980); Charlene Spretnak, *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (New York: Anchor, 1982) and *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* (Santa Fe: Bear and Co, 1987); Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade* (San Francisco: Harper, 1987); Starhawk, *Truth or Dare* (San Francisco: Harper, 1988); Andree Collard, *Rape of the Wild* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989); Judith Plant (ed), *Healing the Wounds* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1989); Irene Diamond and Gloria Orenstein (ed), *Reweaving the World* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990).

<sup>3</sup>Biehl, p.1.

<sup>4</sup>Murray Bookchin, *Towards an Ecological Society* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1981); *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto: Chesire, 1982); *The Philosophy of Social Ecology* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1990).

<sup>5</sup>Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation* (London: Zed, 1987); Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive* (London: Zed, 1989); Ariel Salleh, "Epistemology and the Metaphors of Production," *Studies in the Humanities* vol 15, (1988).

<sup>6</sup>Biehl, p.145.

<sup>7</sup>Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Random, 1968).

<sup>8</sup>Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton University Press, 1979); Mary O'Brien, *The Politics of Reproduction* (London: Routledge, 1981); Nancy Hartsock, *Money, Sex and Power* (New York: Longman, 1983); Kathy Ferguson, *The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988); Ngaire Naffine, *Law and the Sexes* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990).

<sup>9</sup>Biehl, p.149.

<sup>10</sup>See Ariel Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology: the ecofeminist connection," *Environmental Ethics* vol 6 (1984); Michael Zimmerman,

"Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics*, vol 9 (1987); Ariel Salleh, "The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate: a reply to patriarchal reason," *Environmental Ethics* vol 14 (1992).

<sup>11</sup>Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (New Jersey: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983).

<sup>12</sup>Ironically, another liberal feminist rejection of ecofeminism is offered by Robin Eckersley, disciple of deep ecologist Warwick Fox. The model of Simone de Beauvoir has been as intellectually stimulating for women as it has proved compromising to their political practice. See "The Paradox of Ecofeminism," *Proceedings of the Eco-politics V Conference*, University of Adelaide, 1989.

<sup>13</sup>Biehl, p.105, p.92.

<sup>14</sup>Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p.36.

<sup>15</sup>Keller, *op. cit.*; Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1986); Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (New York: Routledge, 1990). There is a useful summary in Benyamin Lichtenstein, "Feminist Epistemology: a thematic review," *Thesis Eleven*, no 21 (1987). See also the foundational critiques of rationalism laid by Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason* (London: Routledge, 1984); Luce Irigaray *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1985).

<sup>16</sup>As a counterbalance to Biehl's suggestion that ecofeminist women are using their politics to carve out academic careers, it should be noted that 4 out of the 7 named in this paragraph left high status, securely salaried positions to give themselves over to activism.

<sup>17</sup>For many ecofeminists, this representation is symptomatic of the masculine struggle for independence from the originary body of the mother/nature.

<sup>18</sup>Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p.155.



