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CHAPTER IO

From Heroic to Holistic Ethics:

The Ecofeminist Challenge

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As the destruction of the natural world proceeds at breakneck speed, nature ethicists have found themselves in search of a theory that can serve to bring this destruction to a halt. [1] Just as the prototypical hero in patriarchal stories must rescue the proverbial "damsel in distress," so, too, the sought-after theory must demonstrate heroic qualities. It must, singlehandedly, rescue the ailing body of "Mother Nature" from the villains who have bound and subdued her. The theoretical underpinnings of environmental and animal liberation philosophies are seen by many ethical theorists as having the necessary "intellectual muscle" to perform this heroic feat. [2] But is a heroic ethic a helpful response to the domination of nature, or is it another conqueror in a new disguise?

It is significant that ecofeminists have, by and large, declined to join the "hunt" for an environmental ethic or "savior theory." The writings within ecofeminism have largely ignored the heated debates engaged in by (predominantly) male philosophers over what should constitute the basis of an appropriate ethic for the natural world. A glance at the vast majority of ecofeminist writings reveals, instead, a tendency to concentrate on exposing the underlying mentality of exploitation that is directed against women and nature within the patriarchal world. [3] Whereas nature ethicists have tended to concentrate on "rescuing" the "damsel in distress," ecofeminists have been more likely to ask how and why the "damsel" arrived at her present plight.

Clearly ecofeminists have taken a different approach to the current crisis in nature. No single theory is sought or expected to emerge, through reasoned competition with the others, as the most powerful or compelling one. In fact, no single ethical theory seems to be sought at all. What have been emerging, rather, are a number of theories or stories that, when woven together into a fabric or tapestry, help to provide a picture or "portrait" of the world in which we currently live. [4] Whereas mainstream nature ethicists have based much of their analysis on abstract principles and universal rules, ecofeminists have tended to highlight the role of metaphors and images of nature. The emphasis has been

not on developing razorsharp theories that can be used to dictate future conduct, but rather on painting a "landscape" (or "mindscape") of the world.

This is not to say that ecofeminists have merely described our current problems, showing no interest in changing the world. On the contrary, ecofeminists have been deeply committed to social transformation. The method of transformation that ecofeminists have subscribed to, however, is premised on the insight that one cannot change what one does not understand. Understanding the inner workings of patriarchal society is emphasized precisely so that society might be transformed. The transformation that ecofeminists wish to bring about is, thus, often implicit in their critiques. If the images of women and nature under patriarchal society have facilitated the exploitation and abuse of both, then, clearly, new ways of perceiving the world must be sought. The natural world will be "saved" not by the sword of ethical theory, but rather through a transformed consciousness toward all of life.

The emphasis on developing new ways of perceiving the world is in keeping with much of the recent work in feminist moral theory. Feminist moral theorists have begun to show that ethics is not so much the imposition of obligations and rights, but rather a natural outgrowth of how one views the self, including one's relation to the rest of the world. Before one can change the current destructive relation to nature, we must, therefore, understand the world view upon which this relation rests. Just as a health-care practitioner would not attempt to treat an illness without understanding the nature and history of the disease, many feminists would argue that it is not possible to transform the current world view of patriarchy without understanding the disease that has infected the patriarchal mind. What, then, is the world view that patriarchy has bequeathed us?

The Conquest of Nature: The Damsel Is Distressed

The predominant image of nature throughout the Western, patriarchal world has been that of an alien force. Nature, which has been imaged as female, has been depicted as the "other," the raw material out of which culture and masculine self-identity are formed. Two major images have been used to achieve separation from nature. [5] One of the most common images has been that of the Beast. [6] The Beast is conceived as a symbol for all that is not human, for that which is evil, irrational, and wild. Civilization is thus achieved by driving out or killing the Beast. On an inward level, this involves driving out all vestiges of our own animality--the attempt to obliterate the knowledge that we are animals ourselves. [7] Outwardly, the triumph over the Beast has been enacted through the conquest of wilderness, with its concomitant claim to the lives of millions of animals driven from their lands.

The triumph over the demonic Beast has been a recurring theme throughout the mythologies of the patriarchal world. Typically, the slain Beast is a former divinity from

the earlier matriarchal world. The serpents, dragons, and horned gods, who were at one time worshiped as divine, are transformed in patriarchal mythology into devils and monsters that must be slain. Thus, Apollo slays Gaia's python; Perseus kills the threeheaded Medusa (the triple goddess), who is described as having snakes writhing from her head; Hercules defeats the terrible multiheaded Hydra; and the pharaohs of later Egypt slay the dragon Apophys. [8] In the Middle Ages, there were countless renditions of St. George's prowess in killing the dragon--again, to rescue the "damsel in distress."

Frequently the death of the Beast is said to herald the birth of light and order, either at the beginning or the end of time. Thus, in the Sumero-Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Marduk kills his mother, the goddess Tiamat, the great whale-dragon or cosmic serpent, and from her body the universe is made. Both Judaism and Christianity continue the dragon-slaying tradition. According to St. John the Divine, at the world's end an angel with a key will subdue the dragon that is Satan. And in the Hebrew legend, the death of the serpentlike Leviathan is prophesied for the Day of Judgment. In Christianity, the task of killing the dragonlike monster was transferred from gods and heroes to saints and archangels. The archangel Michael was a notable dragon-slayer. Faith, prayer, and divine intervention came to be seen as the new dragon-slayers whose task it is to restore the world of order.

These myths of violence and conquest contrast sharply with the mythologies of prepatriarchal cultures. The cosmological stories of these societies typically depicted the beginning of life as emerging from a female-imaged goddess who embodied the earth. Thus, Gaia, in the earliest Greek myths, was thought to give birth to the universe by herself. And the snake, so much feared in our current culture, was worshiped in such societies as divine. By the time of the biblical story of the Garden of Eden, a totally new world view had emerged. Both a woman and an animal were by this time depicted as the source of all evil in the world. And "Man," above all other forms of life, was claimed to have a special relation to the divine.

Today, the heroic battle against unruly nature is reenacted as ritual drama in such masculine ventures as sport-hunting, bullfights, and rodeos. A similar mentality can be seen in the ritual degradation of women in pornography and rape. As Susan Griffin points out, pornography is ritual drama. [9] It is the heroic struggle of the masculine ego to deny the knowledge of bodily feelings and one's dependence upon women and all of the natural world.

The second image of nature appears less heroic but is equally violent in its own way. It is the image of nature as mindless matter, which exists to serve the needs of superior, rational "Man." In this image, animals are depicted as having different, unequal natures rather than as wild or evil creatures that must be conquered and subdued. They are not so much irrational as nonrational beings. Along with women, they are viewed as mere "matter" (a word that, significantly, derives from the same root word as "mother").

Both Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy contributed to the conception of nature as inert or mindless matter. It was the Aristotelian notion of purpose and function, however, that

especially helped to shape the Western world's instrumental treatment of women and nature. [10] According to Aristotle, there was a natural hierarchical ordering to the world, within which each being moved toward fulfillment of its own particular end. Since the highest end of "Man" was the state of happiness achieved through rational contemplation, the rest of nature was conveniently ordered to free "Man" to attain this contemplative goal. Thus, plants existed to give subsistence to animals, and animals to give it to "Man"; and the specific function of women, animals, and slaves was to serve as instruments for the attainment of the highest happiness of free, adult men. There is no need to conquer nature in this conception, since nature has already been safely relegated to an inferior realm.

The Jewish-Christian tradition has also contributed to an instrumental and hierarchical conception of nature. [11] The Genesis account of Creation must bear a large share of the guilt for this state of affairs. In the priestly account of the Genesis story of Creation, we are told that God gave "Man" "dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26). And in the Yahwist version, chronologically an earlier account, we are told that nonhuman animals were created by God to be helpers or companions for Adam, and when they were seen as unfit, Eve was created to fulfill this role (Genesis 2:22). Both stories, in their distinct ways, reinforce the notion that women and nature exist only for the purpose of serving "Man." [12]

The conception of nature as an object for "Man's" use was carried to an ultimate extreme by Cartesian philosophy. According to Descartes, since animals were lacking in "consciousness" or "reason," they were mere machines that could feel no pain. Smashing the legs of a monkey, Descartes "reasoned," would hurt no more than removing the hands of a clock. With Cartesian philosophy, the wild, demonic aspect of nature was, thus, finally laid to rest, and the image of nature as a machine was born.

The image of nature (and women) as mindless objects is typically employed for more practical goals--profit, convenience, and knowledge. Division and control, not conquest, are the guiding motives; the rationality of the detached observer replaces the pleasure of conquest as the psychological mode. The use of animals in laboratories, factory farms, and fur ranches exemplifies this frame of mind, as does the image and use of women as "housewives" and "breeding machines." In the earlier (Beastly) image, nature is seen as a harlot; in this conception, nature is more like a slave or wife.

Although the two images of nature may seem unrelated, they merely represent different points along a single scale. In one image, nature is seen as a demonic being who must be conquered and subdued. In the other image, nature has been subdued to the point of death. Behind both images, however, lies a single theme--namely, the notion of nature as the "other," a mental construct in opposition to which a masculine, autonomous self is attained. In one, the violence appears to be perpetrated by an aggressive masculine will; in the other, through the use of reason. But the underlying theme remains the same--namely, the notion of the aggressive establishment of the masculine self through its opposition to all of the natural world. [13]

Feminist psychoanalytic theory has helped to shed light on the psychological motives that lie behind the need men feel to separate violently from the female world. According to object-relations theory, both the boy and the girl child's earliest experience is that of an undifferentiated oneness with the mother figure. Although both must come to see themselves as separate from the mother figure, the boy child, unlike the girl, must come to see himself as opposed to all that is female as well. Thus, the mother figure, and by extension all women, become not just an other, but the other--the object against which the boy child's identity is formed and defined. [14]

Object-relations theorists, such as Dorothy Dinnerstein, have also argued that it is not just women who become an object against which men establish their sense of self, but that nature becomes objectified as well. [15] Women and nature both come to represent the world of contingency and vulnerability that men must transcend. The twin need to separate from women and from nature can be discerned in typical male rituals of initiation into adulthood. A boy's entrance into manhood is typically marked by separation from women and often by violence toward the nonhuman world. In many tribal cultures a boy is initiated into manhood by being sent off to hunt and kill an animal. In other cultures, "baptisms of blood" occur when a young man goes to war or sexually penetrates a woman for the first time. [16]

The Protection of Nature: The Damsel Is Redressed

If the cult of masculinity has been modeled on the image of predation, the field of nature ethics has been modeled on that of protection. Both animal liberation and environmental ethics spring from a common defensive reaction to the willful aggression perpetrated upon the natural world. Animal liberationists concentrate much of their energies on protecting those animals reduced to the status of inert matter or machines--that is, animals in laboratories and factory farms. Environmental ethicists, by contrast, devote themselves primarily to protecting those parts of nature that are still "wild." But the underlying motive remains the same--namely, the urge to defend and protect. [17]

Various modalities have been proposed for how the defense of nature might best be waged. Typically, nature ethicists have felt compelled to arm themselves with the force of philosophical theory in coming to nature's defense. Whereas patriarchal society has sought to destroy the natural world, nature ethicists have sought to place it under the protective wing of ethical theory. However, as Sarah Hoagland points out, predation and protection are twin aspects of the same world view: "Protection objectifies just as much as predation." [18]

In their attempt to forge iron-clad theories to defend the natural world, nature ethicists have come to rely on the power and strength of a reasoned defense. Reason is enlisted as the new hero to fight on nature's behalf. In the past, humans (primarily men) have conceived of themselves as proprietors of the object-laden natural world. [19] Today, many nature ethicists conceive of themselves not as the owners of nature, but as the owners of value, which it is their prerogative to mete out with a theoretical sweep of their pens. Ethical deliberation on the value of nature is conceived more or less like a competitive sport. Thus, nature ethicists commonly view themselves as "judges" in a game that features competing values out of which a hierarchy must be formed. The outcome is that some must win and others must lose. If a part of nature is accorded high value (typically by being assigned a quality that human beings are said to possess, such as sentience, consciousness, rationality, autonomy), then it is allowed entrance into the world of "moral considerability." If, on the other hand, it scores low (typically by being judged devoid of human qualities), it is relegated to the realm of "objects" or "things," and seen as unworthy of "interests" or "rights." The conferral of value in ethical deliberation is conceived as the conferral of power. [20] "Inherent value" or "inherent worth" (the highest values) accrue to nature to the extent that nature can be rescued from the object world. [21] Much of the heated debate among nature ethicists occurs over what class of entities may rightfully be granted admittance to the subject realm. The presumption behind this conceptual scheme is that if an entity is not graced with the status of "subject," it will become the "object" of abuse.

Both animal liberationists and environmental ethicists seek to curb the willful destruction of the natural world through another act of human will. Reason is, once again, elevated above the natural instincts and asked to control our aggressive wills. The same reason that was used to take value out of nature (through objectification and the imposition of hierarchy) is now asked to give it value once again. A sound ethic, according to this view, must transcend the realm of contingency and particularity, grounding itself not in our untrustworthy instincts, but rather in rationally derived principles and abstract rules. It must stand on its own as an autonomous construct, distinct from our personal inclinations and desires, which it is designed to control. Ethics is intended to operate much like a machine. Feelings are considered, at best, as irrelevant, and at worst, as hazardous intrusions that clog the "ethical machinery." Basing an argument on love or compassion is tantamount to having no argument at all. As Peter Singer boasts in his well-known *Animal Liberation*, nowhere in his book will readers find an appeal to emotion where it cannot be substantiated by rational argument. [22]

In their attempt to forge iron-clad theories to defend the natural world, nature ethicists have, in many ways, come to replicate the aggressive or predatory conception of nature that they seek to oppose. They leave intact a Hobbesian world view in which nature is conceived as "red in tooth and claw," with self-interest as the only rule of human conduct. [23] The presumption is that only reason compels people to submit to sovereign rule--in this case, not that of a king, but that of ethical theory. Ethics, according to this world view, comes to replicate the same instrumental mentality that has characterized our interaction with the natural world. It is reduced to the status of a tool, designed to restrain what is perceived as an inherently aggressive will.

Not all philosophers of nature have relied on axiological or value theory to rescue nature from her current plight. A number of writers, working in what some refer to as the field of ecophilosophy, [24] have sought to ground their philosophy not in the rational calculation of value, but rather in a transformed consciousness toward all of life. [25] Although they share with nature ethicists the urge to rescue nature from the object realm, they reject a "values in nature" philosophy in favor of grounding their philosophy in a particular phenomenological world view.

Often the search for this transformed consciousness is described in terminology that borrows freely from the field of resource development. For example, we read of the search for the "conceptual resources" or the "foundations" of an environmental consciousness. [26] Although various religious and philosophical traditions have been proposed as suitable "resources" for the development of this consciousness, it is the images and metaphors of nature within these traditions that are the primary focus of concern. Some of the images and metaphors for nature that have been proffered as "fertile" grounds for the development of an environmental consciousness include that of an "interconnected web," "a community of living beings," an "organism," and an "expanded Self." The science of ecology has provided additional support for a world view that perceives all of life as an interconnected web or a single living being. The tendency of many ecophilosophers is to "mine" these conceptual systems for an ecological consciousness, rather than to examine their own feelings and emotions toward the natural world. [27]

The underlying motive for the reconceptualization of the natural world is the urge to rescue nature from the aggression that is thought to ensue without these conceptual restraints. History has, in fact, shown that particular conceptions of nature have acted as a restraint against human aggression. As Carolyn Merchant points out:

The image of the earth as a living organism and nurturing mother has historically served as a cultural constraint restricting the actions of human beings. One does not readily slay a mother, dig into her entrails for gold, or mutilate her body. . . . As long as the earth was considered to be alive and sensitive, it could be considered a breach of human ethical behavior to carry out destructive acts against it. [28]

Many ecofeminists, inspired by the premodern conceptions of Gaia or "Mother Earth," have consciously sought to reclaim these images. [29] For most ecofeminists, however, this attempt to revive the image of Gaia is grounded not in systematic phenomenology but, rather, in a feeling of spiritual connection with the natural world. A female image of the earth simply seems to have resonance for many ecofeminists as a contrast to the patriarchal notion of a male sky god. [30]

Yet the image of the earth as a living being is insufficient in and of itself to bring a halt to the current destruction of the natural world. The attempt by many ecophilosophers to graft a new image onto our current conception of nature fails to challenge the underlying structures and attitudes that have produced the image they seek to supplant. The underlying tendencies toward aggression that exist under patriarchy are thus left intact.

The Gaia hypothesis, proposed by the scientist James Lovelock, illustrates this point. The hypothesis originally was hailed by ecophilosophers for reviving the notion of the earth as a living being. This initial enthusiasm, however, was subsequently tempered when Lovelock concluded that the earth, as a result of its self-regulating mechanisms, was perfectly capable of enduring humanity's insults. Lovelock boldly claimed, "It seems very unlikely that anything we do will threaten Gaia. . . . The damsel in distress [the environmentalist] expected to rescue appears as a buxom and robust man-eating mother." [31] With Lovelock's theory, the earth was "revived," but the underlying structures and attitudes that promote aggression were left unchallenged. Thus, although ecophilosophers have avoided some of the pitfalls of nature ethics, with its attendant notion of obligations and rights, they have often left unchallenged the deeper problem entailed in the notion of ethics as a form of restraint.

The notion of ethical conduct as restraint of aggression is clearly illustrated in the writings of Aldo Leopold, considered by many to be the founder of ecophilosophy and the environmental movement. Deep ecologists have pointed to Leopold's "land ethic" as the embodiment of their ideal of the expanded Self. According to deep ecologists, when one expands one's identity to the "land" or to all of nature, nature will be protected, since to cause nature harm would be to harm oneself as well. [32] Thus, the expanded Self, not axiological theory, is designed to defend the natural world from human abuse. However, if we examine Leopold's land ethic carefully, [33] we find that what it most clearly conveys is the notion of ethics as a means of restraint. Far from eliminating the aggressive drives that are inherent in patriarchy, the expansion of identity merely contains the aggressive impulses so as not to exceed a specified limit, which might thus endanger the "land."

Leopold's land ethic maintains that a thing is right when it tends to preserve the "integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." [34] This maxim, however, which has been widely quoted, gives an incomplete picture of Leopold's ideas. Not only are the "beauty, integrity and stability of the biotic community" in no way marred by the killing of individual animals for sport; they are actually *enhanced* by it, in Leopold's view: "The instinct that finds delight in the sight and pursuit of game is bred into the very fiber of the human race." [35] He goes on to state that the desire to hunt lies deeper than the urge to participate in other outdoor sports: "Its source is a matter of instinct as well as competition. . . . A son of Robinson Crusoe, having never seen a racket, might get along nicely without one, but he would be pretty sure to hunt or fish whether or not he were taught to do so." [36] In other words, for Leopold, a boy instinctively learns to shoot a gun, and, moreover, instinctively wants to hunt and kill. As he states: "A man may not care for gold and still be human but the man who does not like to see, hunt, photograph or otherwise outwit birds and animals is hardly normal. He is supercivilized, and I for one do not know how to deal with him." [37]

According to Leopold, all boys and men have this aggressive instinct (interestingly, he had nothing to say about women and girls). Ethics, then, enters into the picture as the need to curb, *not eliminate*, this aggressive drive. The ability to exercise (and curb) this

aggressive instinct, through such activities as hunting, is viewed by Leopold as an inalienable right:

Some can live without the opportunity for the *exercise and control* of the hunting instinct, just as I suppose some can live without work, play, love, business or other vital adventure. But in these days we regard such deprivation as unsocial. Opportunity for the exercise of all the normal instincts has come to be regarded more and more as an inalienable right. [38] [Emphasis mine.]

Leopold goes on to complain that "the men who are destroying our wildlife are alienating one of these rights and doing a good job of it." [39] In other words, wildlife should be preserved not because of the animal's inherent right to life, but because of the hunter's inherent right to kill! As he explains, "[The individual's] instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community but his ethics prompt him also to cooperate (perhaps in order that there may be a *place to compete for*"). [40] (Again the emphasis is mine.) As Leopold summarizes his ideas, "An ethic ecologically is a limitation on freedom of action in the struggle for existence. An ethic philosophically is a differentiation of social from antisocial conduct. These are two definitions of one thing. Good social conduct involves limitation of freedom." [41]

Leopold's land ethic is, thus, inextricably tied to his ideas about proper hunting conduct. It involves what he calls "good sportsmanship." Much of Western ethics is based upon a similar idea of good sportsmanship, according to which you compete in the game but play by the rules.

The notion that ethical conduct involves restraining the errant or immoral passions can be found not only in Western philosophy but in Western religion as well. [42] The Christian church changed the focus of morality from prudence to obedience. The sentiments of the Church fathers are aptly captured by Sarah Hoagland--namely, that "evil results when passion runs out of (their) [i.e., the Church fathers'] control." [43] The Church was (and is) fond of buttressing this notion with appeals to biblical authority. We are told that in the biblical story of Genesis, Adam's sin is precisely a failure of will. Adam's failure to obey God's command is attributed to Eve, and Eve's lapse of obedience is in turn ascribed to the snake. Eve has gone down in history as the embodiment of evil for having trusted the word of an animal over God's command.

Obedience to a transcendent God or abstract concept has been one of the most common conceptions of ethics in the Western world. Behind this notion lies the even more fundamental notion of ethics as restraint. Indeed, the model of ethics as a form of restraint can be seen in the Jewish Christian God Himself. Thus, feeling remorse for having destroyed most of the world, God forges a covenant with Noah after the flood to restrain Himself from further outbursts of this kind. [44]

Frequently, aggressive conduct is not prohibited under patriarchy, merely restrained and controlled. Often aggression is explicitly condoned if it is properly channeled into ritualized form. In many cultures, killing a totem animal is customarily condemned, but honored on rare occasions when performed as a sacrifice to a god. Similarly, the laws of Kashrut sanction the killing of animals as long as it is done in a restrained and ritualized fashion, according to "God's command."

The institutionalization of violence in modern society serves a legitimating function similar to that of ritual violence. For example, it is illegal for someone to beat a dog wantonly on the street, but if an experimenter beats the same dog in the protective confines of a laboratory, while counting the number of times the dog "vocalizes," it is considered an honorable activity and called "science." The rules of the experiment operate, like the rules of ritual, to lend legitimacy to the violent act. [45] Animal experimentation is accorded additional legitimation by borrowing the language of ritual. Animals are said to be "sacrificed" in laboratories, not killed. Behind this obfuscation of language lies the tragic belief that somehow, if animals are killed at the altars of science, human beings will be allowed to live. [46]

Aggression is often condoned under patriarchy in the name of an abstract ideal, typically "the greater good." We are told that killing (whether in laboratories, in warfare, or in razing land) is necessary for the greater good of "Mankind." Again, the Christian God himself provides a perfect example of this conduct. Through the killing of his son, "God" is said to have sought the redemption of "Man," and hence the greater good.

Since the Enlightenment, ethical theory has tended to be based less on the Word of God and more on the god of Reason. [47] The theme of controlling the unwieldy passions, however, has remained intact, receiving its most refined expression in the thought of Kant. While science and technology were mining nature for her riches, Kant, in analogous fashion, was attempting to strip human ethical conduct of its immersion in the natural world. As he writes, "To behold virtue in her proper shape is nothing other than to show morality stripped of all admixture with the sensuous and of all the spurious adornments of reward or self love." [48] Moral individuals, according to Kant, rise above their personal inclinations or nature, and act out of duty. Duty is determined first by pure reason or logic, stripped of all feeling, and then by the exercise of the will.

The conception of morality as the rational control of irrational and aggressive desires contrasts sharply with the way in which many women have described their ethical behavior and thought. Research by Carol Gilligan suggests that women's ethical conduct and thought tend to derive more from a sense of connection with others and from the feelings of care and responsibility that such connection entails. Men's sense of morality, on the other hand, tends to derive more from an abstract sense of obligations and rights. According to one of Gilligan's respondents, Amy, "Responsibility signifies response, an extension rather than a limitation of action. Thus, it connotes an act of care, rather than restraint of aggression." For Jake, by contrast, responsibility "pertains to a limitation of action, a restraint of aggression." [49]

For many women, what needs to be explained is not how and why people should be compelled to behave in moral ways, but how and why compassion and moral behavior fail to be sustained. As Alison Jaggar states, "Because we expect humans to be aggressive, we find the idea of cooperation puzzling. If, instead of focusing on antagonistic interactions, we focused on cooperative interaction, we would find the idea of competition puzzling. [50]"

Truncated Narratives

The founding of ethics on the twin pillars of human reason and human will is an act of violence in its own right. By denigrating instinctive and intuitive knowledge, it severs our ties to the natural world. But the violence of abstraction operates in other ways as well. Wrenching an ethical problem out of its embedded context severs the problem from its roots. [51] Most nature ethicists debate the value of nature on an abstract or theoretical plane. Typically, they weigh the value of nature against the value of a human goal or plan. For example, we are asked to weight the value of an animal used for research in a laboratory against the value of a human being who is ill. The problem is conventionally posed in a static, linear fashion, detached from the context in which it was formed. In a sense, we are given truncated stories and then asked what we think the ending should be. However, if we do not understand the world view that produced the dilemma that we are asked to consider, we have no way of evaluating the situation except on its own terms.

What, for example, is a mother to say when she is told that the only way that her child can be saved is through the "sacrifice" of animal life? The urgency of the situation leads the mother to believe what she is told and to feel that it is "right" that the animal should die to save her child's life. It is understandable that the mother would choose her daughter's life over that of an anonymous animal. It would also be understandable, however, if the mother chose the life of her daughter over that of an anonymous *child*. This, however, is not the ethical dilemma that she is asked to consider. No one has asked her to juxtapose the life of one human against that of another. Although it would clearly be more helpful to experiment on a human child to help save the life of another child, no one is proposing this. Animals, however, have been relegated to the status of objects or property. As such, their bodies can easily be conscripted into this tragic human story. [52]

The mother of the ailing daughter consumes this story; she does not create it or even enact it. She is not the one who will be injecting poisons into animals and watching their bodies writhe in pain. She is not the one who will slice into their brains to see what bits of knowledge might lie therein. She is the consumer of a narrative or story from which these details have been conveniently excised.

Currently, ethics is conceived as a tool for making dramatic decisions at the point at which a crisis has occurred. [53] Little if any thought is given to why the crisis or conflict

arose to begin with. Just as Western allopathic medicine is designed to treat illness, rather than maintain health, Western ethical theory is designed to remedy crisis, not maintain peace. But the word "ethics" implies something far less dramatic and heroic--namely, an "ethos" or way of life.

According to Iris Murdoch, moral behavior is not a matter of weighing competing values and making the proper, rational choice. Rather, as she argues, what is crucial in the moral life is the act of attention before a moral choice is made. In her words, the moral life is "not something that is switched off in between the occurrence of explicit moral choices. What happens between such choices is indeed what is crucial." [54] Murdoch contends: "If we consider what the work of attention is like, how continuously it goes on and how imperceptibly it builds up structures of values round about us, we shall not be surprised that at crucial moments of choice most of the business of choosing is already over." [55] Morality, for Murdoch, is far from the notion of the rational control of an inherently aggressive will. When one directs a "patient, loving regard" upon "a person, a thing, a situation," according to Murdoch, the will is presented not as "unimpeded movement," but rather as "something very much more like obedience." [56]

It is precisely this loving regard that patriarchal culture has failed to attain. Rather, in the patriarchal "look," nature has been reduced to a set of objects or symbols that are used to attain a sense of self that is detached from the rest of the natural world. Nature is imaged as wild and demonic, passive and inert, but never as a community of living beings with instincts, desires, and interests of their own.

The patriarchal mind has managed to look, but not see, act but not feel, think but not know. Claude Bernard, considered by many to be the founder of modern medicine and the widespread use of animals in research, embodies this failure of perception. According to Bernard: "The physiologist is not an ordinary man: he is a scientist, possessed and absorbed by the scientific idea that he pursues. He does not hear the cries of animals, he does not see their flowing blood, he sees nothing but his idea, and is aware of nothing but an organism that conceals from him the problem he is seeking to resolve." [57]

It is this fixation on abstraction (God, Reason, ideas, or the "Word") that has hampered the patriarchal mind from perceiving other forms of life in caring ways. In order to disengage from this fixation on abstraction, it is necessary to engage in practice. If ecofeminists are serious about transforming the patriarchal world view, we must begin to take our own experiences and practices seriously. We might, for example, decide, on an abstract plane, that we are justified in eating meat. But if we are dedicated to an ecofeminist praxis, we must put our abstract beliefs to the practical test. We must ask ourselves how we would feel if we were to visit a slaughterhouse or factory farm. And how would we feel if we were to kill the animal ourselves? Ethics, according to this approach, begins with our own instinctive responses. It occurs in a holistic context in which we know the whole story within which our actions take place. It means rethinking the stories that we have come to believe under patriarchy, such as the belief that we must experiment on animals to save human life, or the belief that we must eat meat to lead healthy lives. [58] As Carol Adams points out, we are brought up to accept that being

eaten is the logical ending to the story of a farm animal's life. [59] But stories such as these can only be conceived by a patriarchal mind that is unable to conceive of nature as important apart from human use.

Patriarchal society is adept at truncating stories and then adapting them to its own needs. It is true, for example, that some animals are predators; however, the vast majority are not. [60] Most of the animals that humans eat are, in fact, vegetarian (cows, pigs, chickens). We are asked, under patriarchy, to model our behavior not after the vegetarian animals but after the predators. The narrative of predation thus becomes a convenient "pretext" to justify a wide range of violent acts. No other species of animal confines, enslaves, and breeds other animals to satisfy its taste for flesh. Yet, under patriarchy, *this* story remains untold. Nor are we told that predatory animals generally kill other animals only for survival reasons; that, unlike humans, these animals would not survive without eating meat. The story of predation is wrenched out of the larger context and served to us to consume.

Since we live in a fragmented world, we will need to stretch our imaginations to put it back together again. It is often difficult for us to conceive of the impact that our personal conduct has beyond our individual lives. Reason is easily divided from emotion when our emotions are divided from experience. Much of the violence that is perpetrated against the natural world occurs behind closed doors or out of our view. Most of us will never see a slaughterhouse, fur ranch, or animal research laboratory. If we are to engage in an ecofeminist praxis, the least we can do is inform ourselves of what transpires in these places. If we are to make holistic choices, the whole story must be known.

The story of meat eating must include not only the brutal treatment of animals on factory farms and in slaughterhouses, not only the devastating impact of meat eating on the ecology of the earth, on world hunger, and on human health--it must include *all* these and other details, which it must then weave together into a whole. Only when we have all the details of this and other stories will we be able to act holistically with our bodies, minds, and souls. It is the details that we need to live moral lives, not obedience to abstract principles and rules. [61]

Holistic medicine provides a fitting paradigm for holistic ethics. Just as holistic medicine seeks to discover the whole story behind dis-ease, so, too, holistic ethics seeks to discover the whole story behind ethical dilemmas. Western allopathic ethics, on the other hand, is designed to treat the symptoms of patriarchy (its dilemmas and conflicts), rather than the disease embodied in its total world view. Allopathic ethics, like allopathic medicine, operates on the notion of heroism. [62] Just as Western heroic medicine spends most of its time, money, and resources on battling advanced stages of disease and emergency situations, so, too, Western heroic ethics is designed to treat problems at an advanced stage of their history--namely, at the point at which conflict has occurred. It is not difficult to discern why allopathic medicine spends little to no research money on prevention. [63] Prevention is simply not a very heroic undertaking. [64] How can you fight a battle if the enemy does not yet exist? It is far more dramatic to allow disease and

conflict to develop and then to call in the troops and declare war. The drama of illness is seen to lead ineluctably to the climax of a heroic, technological fix.

Heroic medicine, like heroic ethics, runs counter to one of the most basic principles in ecology--namely, that everything is interconnected. Ecology teaches us that no part of nature can be understood in isolation, apart from its context or ecological niche. So, too, I would argue, our moral conduct cannot be understood apart from the context (or moral soil) in which it grows. By uprooting ethical dilemmas from the environment that produced them, heroic ethics sees only random, isolated problems, rather than an entire diseased world view. But until the entire diseased world view is uprooted, we will always face moral crises of the same kind. There is an ecology to ethics, just as to every aspect of the natural world. If we do not care for our moral landscape, we cannot expect it to bear fruit.

Weaving New Stories

The "environmental crisis" is, above all, a crisis of perception. It is a crisis not only by virtue of what our culture sees, but by virtue of what it does not see. Adrienne Rich has shown how "lies, secrecy, and silence" have been used to perpetuate the exploitation of women. [65] The same may be said to apply to the exploitation of all of the natural world as well. If we are to transform the destructive consciousness that pervades our current culture, we must break through the lies, secrecy, and silence. This is not an individual endeavor. Holistic ethics is a collective undertaking, not a solitary task. It is a process of helping one another to piece together the wider stories of which our lives form a part. It means filling in the missing links. It may mean approaching a woman on the street who is wearing a fur coat and asking her if she is aware of how many animals died to make her coat, and if she is aware of how much suffering the animals had to endure. At the same time, it means understanding the cultural context that leads this woman to see glamour where others see death. She is the product of a society that robs women of their own self-image and then sells it back to them in distorted form. She thinks that she is "dressed to kill"; we must let her know that others have been killed for her to dress. [66]

In order to engage in holistic ethics, we must also disengage from patriarchal discourse. Patriarchal discourse creates dilemmas that it then invites us to resolve. Thus, animal experimenters typically invite us to answer the question, "Who would we save if we had to choose between our drowning daughter and a drowning dog?" The crisis scenario is designed to lead us to believe that only one life can be saved, and only at the other's expense. Disengaging from patriarchal discourse means that we must refuse to dignify these dualistic questions with a response. Even to consider such questions is to give support and validity to the patriarchal world view. [67] The best response to such questions is, perhaps, to pose a question of our own. We might ask why the child is ill to begin with. Was it due to the hormones found in the meat she was fed, or was it perhaps

due to the consumption of drugs that had proved "safe" after testing on animals? And why was the proverbial dog touted by research scientists "drowning" to begin with? Had someone thrown the dog in the water (or, rather, the laboratory) in the pathetic belief that somehow, through the dog's death, a young child's life would be saved? And how and why did we develop a culture in which death is seen as a medical failure, rather than as a natural part of life?

As we disengage from patriarchal discourse, we begin to hear larger and fuller stories. Hearing these bigger stories means learning to listen to nature. The voice of women and the voice of nature have been muted under patriarchy. Women and nature are considered objects under patriarchy, and objects do not speak, objects do not feel, and objects have no needs. Objects exist only to serve the needs of others. But despite our society's refusal to listen, nature has been increasingly communicating her needs to us. Nature is telling us in myriad ways that we cannot continue to poison her rivers, forests, and streams, that she is not invulnerable, and that the violence and abuse must be stopped. Nature is speaking to us. The question is whether we are willing or able to hear. [68]

The notion of obligations, responsibilities, and rights is one of the tools used by heroic ethics. But genuine responsibility for nature begins with the root meaning of the word-- "our capacity for response." Learning to respond to nature in caring ways is not an abstract exercise in reasoning. It is, above all, a form of psychic and emotional health. [69] Heroic ethics cannot manufacture health out of the void of abstraction. Psychic and emotional health cannot be manufactured at all. It can only be nurtured through the development of a favorable environment or context within which it can grow. The moral "climate" must be right.

Ecofeminists and other nature writers have often proclaimed the importance of a "holistic world view." By "holism" they refer to the notion of the "interdependence of all of life." But interdependence is hardly an ideal in and of itself. A master and slave may be said to be interconnected, but clearly that is not the kind of relation that ecofeminists wish to promote. The *quality* of relation is more important than the fact that a relation of some kind exists. If our society is to regain a sense of psychic health, we must learn to attend to the quality of relations and interactions, not just the existence of relations in themselves. Thus, when hunters claim to promote the well-being of the "whole" by killing individual animals, or to "love" the animals that they kill, we must challenge their story. Our own notion of holistic ethics must contain a respect for the "whole" as well as individual beings.

Re-specting nature literally involves "looking again." We cannot attend to the quality of relations that we engage in unless we know the details that surround our actions and relations. If ecofeminists are sincere in their desire to live in a world of peace and nonviolence for all living beings, we must help each other through the pains-taking process of piecing together the fragmented world view that we have inherited. But the pieces cannot simply be patched together. What is needed is a reweaving of all the old stories and narratives into a multifaceted tapestry.

As this tapestry begins to take shape, I stretch my imagination into the future and spin the following narrative. Many, many years from now, I am sitting by the fireside with my sister's grandchild. She turns to me and asks me to tell her a story of how things used to be, in the distant past. I turn to her and speak the following words:

"Once upon a time," I tell her, "there existed a period we now call the Age of Treason. During this time, men came to fear nature and revolted against the earlier matriarchal societies which had lived in harmony with the natural world as we do now. Many terrible things occurred during this time that will be difficult for you to understand. Women were raped and the earth was poisoned and warfare became routine.

"Animals were tortured throughout the land. They were trapped and clubbed so people could dress in their furs. They were enslaved in cages--in zoos, in laboratories, and on factory farms. People ate the flesh of animals and were frequently ill. Researchers told people that if they 'sacrificed' animals in laboratories they would be cured of disease. People no longer trusted in their own power to heal themselves and so they believed what they were told.

"The men had forgotten that they had formerly worshiped the animals they now reviled. Instead they worshipped a God that told them they had a special place in Creation, above all the other animals on earth. They found great comfort in this thought. And so they continued their cruelhearted ways."

As I conclude my fantasy, I imagine my grandniece turning to me with a look of disbelief.

"Did they *really* used to eat animals?" she queries.

"Yes," I answer gently, and much, much worse. But now that is all a matter of history. Like a very bad dream. Now, at long last, we can live in peace and harmony with all the creatures of the earth. The Age of Treason has passed."

NOTES

1. I have used the term "nature ethicists" to refer broadly to those writers working in the fields commonly referred to as "environmental ethics" and "animal liberation." I prefer the term "nature ethics" to that of "environmental ethics" since it more clearly implies the inclusion of humans within its parameters. The term "environmental ethics" tends to reinforce a dichotomous view of "humans" and "the rest of nature." For clarity, however, I sometimes use the term "environmental ethics" in order to distinguish this philosophical perspective from that of animal liberation. I also distinguish "nature ethics" from the field of "ecophilosophy" (see n. 24). In contrast to nature ethicists, who seek to develop an

environmental ethic, ecophilosophers, as referred to in this chapter, seek to develop *ecological consciousness* (see below).

2. In a nationwide march on Washington for animal rights held on June 10, 1990, one (male) speaker boasted that "we are no longer a movement of little old ladies in tennis shoes; ours is a movement with *intellectual muscle*" (my emphasis). Heroism has been an undercurrent not only in nature ethics and ecophilosophy, but in the environmental movement as well. Phrases such as "the race against extinction," the "fight to save the planet," and the "war against pollution" all betray an underlying heroic stance. Radical environmental groups such as Earth First! also freely employ the terminology of warfare. The back cover of a popular book on the radical environmental movement boldly asserts that "war has been declared--perhaps history's most important war--and it's being waged to save the world from ourselves"; see Rik Scarce, *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement*, with a foreword by David Brower (Chicago: Noble Press, 1990). The description of a television show reflects the same heroic mentality. The show, geared toward children and billed under the heading "Bashing the Ravagers," is described as featuring five young "planeteers" who are embodied by Gaia, the spirit of the earth, to "battle" a group of "eco-villains." The planeteers, who combine forces during crisis situations, mysteriously generate a (male) superhero, Captain Planet, sporting a form-fitting costume and bearing a distinct resemblance to that popular hero Superman. John Carman, *TV Week*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 30, 1990, p. 3.

3. Some of the major works on ecofeminism include Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland, eds., *Reclaim the Earth: Women Speak Out for Life on Earth* (London: Women's Press, 1983); Andree Collard with Joyce Contrucci, *Rape of the Wild: Man's Violence Against Animals and the Earth* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Meta-Ethics of Radical Feminism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978); Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds., *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1990); Elizabeth Dodson Gray, *Green Paradise Lost* (Wellesley, Mass.: Roundtable Press, 1981); Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); *Heresies* 13 (1981): "Feminism and Ecology"; Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983); Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Philadelphia: New Society, 1989).

4. The theme of weaving together women's voices recurs throughout both ecofeminist and feminist thought. According to Karen Warren, a feminist ethic is, of necessity, a contextualist ethic, which is properly viewed as a *collage* or *mosaic*, a tapestry of voices that emerges out of felt experiences. The point is not to have one picture based on a unity of voices, but a pattern which emerges out of the very different voices of people located in different circumstances": "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 139. Support for a pluralist conception of ethics can also be found in the work of Christopher D. Stone, *Earth and Other Ethics: The Case for Moral Pluralism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 115-52; also see Jim Cheney, "Postmodern Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 11 (1989): 117-34. For a contrast to the "multivocal" conception of environmental ethics, see Baird Callicott, who

argues in "The Case Against Moral Pluralism," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 99-124, for a "univocal ethical theory" that involves "one metaphysics of morals: one concept of the nature of morality . . . one concept of human nature . . . one moral psychology."

5. The analysis of the images of nature in Western society that follows is drawn from my unpublished manuscript, "Befriending the Beast and the Body: The Ecofeminist Challenge."

6. I am indebted to Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature* (New York: Meridian Books, 1978), for my understanding and use of the term "Beast."

7. For an in-depth analysis of how both masculine self-identity and Western civilization are founded upon the attempt to transcend animal and female natures, see Wendy Brown, *Manhood and Politics: A Feminist Reading in Political Theory* (Totawa, N.J.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1988); Marilyn French, *Beyond Power: On Women, Men, and Morals* (New York: Summit Books, 1985); Susan Griffin, *Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981).

8. Monica Sjuo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 250-51.

9. Griffin, *Pornography and Silence*, p. 55.

10. For a detailed analysis of the functionalist conception of women within Western political thought, see Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

11. The best-known formulation of this argument was made by Lynn White, Jr., in "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," in *The Environmental Handbook*, ed. John Barr, 3-16, reprinted from *Science* 10 (1967): 1203-7. White's thesis instigated an outpouring of literature defending the Christian religion against his critique. Typically, the defense has hinged on the contention that the scriptural notion of "stewardship" implies not only privilege but responsibility. See, for example, Robin Attfield, *The Ethics of Environmental Concern* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). Despite valiant attempts to place stewardship in a more benign light, there is no escaping the fact that it still implies a hierarchy with humans at the top.

12. Elizabeth Dodson Gray, *Green Paradise Lost*, 4, argues that the pattern of the first Genesis account reflects a "hierarchical" conception, whereas the second is more accurately described as "anthropocentric," in that "everything is created around the male, including the female [who is] created from his rib to be his helpmate." However, as she argues, "the interpretation through the ages has blended the accounts in Gen. 1 and Gen. 2 into a single Creation Tradition, which has been both hierarchical and anthropocentric."

13. I am indebted to Catherine Keller for my understanding of the multiple manifestations of the masculine "separative self"; see *From a Broken Web: Separation, Sexism, and Self*

(Boston: Beacon Press, 1986). For a related theme, see Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

14. See Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978) .

15. Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and the Human Malaise* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976) .

16. For a critique of Anglo-European culture's emphasis on warrior virtues, see Barbara Ehrenreich, "The Warrior Culture," *Time*, October 15, 1990, 100. See also the letter of response by Ward Churchill, co-director of the Colorado American Indian Movement, which critiques Ehrenreich for failing to see the nonviolent ways in which manhood is recognized in many tribal cultures: "Ehrenreich and Indians," *Z Magazine*, November 1990, 5. It is interesting, I feel, that Churchill cites "hunting" as an example of a "nonviolent" rite of passage into adult masculine self-identity.

17. For a more detailed critique of the divisions between the philosophies of animal liberation and environmental ethics, see my "Liberation of Nature: A Circular Affair," *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985): 135-49; also see my "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Can Ecofeminism Bridge the Gap?" paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Women's Studies Association, Akron, Ohio, June 20-24, 1990.

18. Sarah Hoagland, *Lesbian Ethics: Toward New Values* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Institute of Lesbian Studies, 1989), 31.

19. Both stewardship ethicists and reform environmentalists merely admonish humans to care for the object-laden world with due respect. Ecotheologians typically remind humans that nature is not the property of "Man," but rather the property of God. The object or property status of nature is, thus, left intact, with God, not humans, seen as the landlord of the world. For example, ecotheologian Richard A. Baer, Jr., argues in "Higher Education, the Church, and Environmental Values," *Natural Resources Journal* 17 (July 1977): 48, that the earth is "property that does not belong to us." As Roderick Nash comments, "From Baer's perspective *Homo sapiens* rents an apartment called nature. God is, quite literally, the landlord. He expects compliance with basic 'principles of etiquette' in the use of his creation . . . humankind does not have unconditional freedom to conquer and exploit what it could never, in the last analysis, own." From *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 101.

20. Significantly, the word "value" derives from the Latin *valere*, meaning "to be strong, hence well." It derives from the same root word as "valiant" and "valor." Values in ethics confer power and strength.

21. Inherent value is typically defined as the value that an entity possesses independent of its utility or interest to other beings. Thus, those beings that have "inherent value" are said to be valued for themselves. According to Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*

(Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 243, only those individuals who are "subjects of a life" may be said to possess "inherent value." Although "inherent value" is supposed to exist independently of a valuing consciousness, there is no escaping the fact that it is humans who determine which entities have it and which do not. Paul Taylor uses the term "inherent worth" in an essentially identical manner to Tom Regan's use of "inherent value." See *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

22. Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York: Avon Books, 1975), xi.

23. Kenneth Goodpaster has argued that mainstream, modern ethical theory rests on the premise of egoism, and the corollary notion that ethical consideration for others is reached by a process of generalization. "From Egoism to Environmentalism," in *Ethics and Problems of the 21st Century*, ed. K. E. Goodpaster and K. M. Sayre (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 21-35.

24. There is considerable fluidity in the terminology of nature writers, and I am aware that not all writers employ the distinction I make between ecophilosophy and nature ethics. For alternate definitions of ecophilosophy, see Henrik Skolimowski, *Ecophilosophy: Designing New Tactics for Living* (Salem, N.H.: Marion Boyers, 1981); Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: A Summary," *Inquiry* 16 (1973): 95-100.

The term "ecosophy" has also been proposed to refer to "ecological wisdom," as opposed to the more abstract, philosophical approach implied by the term "ecophilosophy." This approach seems to bear the closest affinity to an ecofeminist consciousness or ethic; see, for example, Alan Drengson, *Beyond The Environmental Crisis: From Technocrat to Planetary Person* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989); Arne Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, trans. and ed. David Rothenberg (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

25. As George Sessions states, "The search then, as I understand it, is not for environmental ethics but for ecological consciousness." See *Ecophilosophy* 3 (1981): 5a.

26. Examples of this language can readily be found in the pages of the journal *Environmental Ethics*. See, for example, Richard Cartwright Austin, "Beauty: A Foundation for Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985): 197-208; Eliot Deutsch, "A Metaphysical Grounding for Nature Reverence: East West," *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1986): 293-316; Ernest Partridge, "Nature as a Moral Resource," *Environmental Ethics* 4 (1984): 101-30; "Asian Traditions as a Conceptual Resource for Environmental Ethics: Papers from Sessions on Environmental Ethics and Asian Comparative Philosophy," *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1986). (Emphasis added.)

27. Some ecophilosophers do explicitly emphasize the role of feeling, intuition, and experience in ethical consciousness. Baird Callicott, in particular, has argued for the

notion of an environmental ethic founded upon "love and respect." See "Elements of an Environmental Ethic: Moral Considerability and the Biotic Community," in *In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York), 70. However, Callicott also insists in "Intrinsic Value, Quantum Theory," *ibid.*, 160, that this "expanded moral sentiment" is grounded in a *single* phenomenological world view. The single, "seminal paradigm" that Callicott proposes for contemporary environmental ethics rests on Humean axiological foundations, as embellished by the thought of Darwin and Leopold.

Deep ecologists also emphasize the experiential nature of ecological consciousness. According to Bill Devall and George Sessions, "The ultimate norms of deep ecology . . . cannot be grasped intellectually but are experiential": *Deep Ecology: Living As If Nature Mattered* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1985), 69. Jim Cheney, however, has argued that the consciousness that deep ecologists refer to derives from an abstract metaphysic rather than a "narrative embedment in a specific set of relationships." See "The Neo-Stoicism of Radical Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 11 (1989): 324.

For a feminist analysis of the role of feeling in nature ethics and ecological consciousness, see Jim Cheney, "Eco-Feminism and Deep Ecology," *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1987): 115-45; Josephine Donovan, "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory," Chapter 7 in this volume; Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature," 135-49; Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," 125-46.

28. Carolyn Merchant, "Mining the Earth's Womb," in *Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology*, ed. Joan Rothschild (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), 100.

29. Some feminists have expressed misgivings about restricting the image of the earth to that of a mother figure. As Linda Vance argues in Chapter 5 in this volume, the image of nature-as-mother acts as "a reminder that our primary role is as caretakers and providers, and that our only source of power is the threat to become angry and withhold our bounty. . . . it sounds like a not very subtle warning to us that only mothers, only women who nurture and provide, deserve to be safe from rape."

30. Linda Vance has provided a refreshingly honest explanation for her decision to characterize the earth as female: "If I didn't think of nature as female, I wouldn't be able to feel such enormous pleasure in her presence." In other words, one might argue genderizing the earth as female is a matter of sexual preference! See Chapter 5 in this volume.

31. James Lovelock, "Gaia: A Model for Planetary and Cellular Dynamics," in *Gaia: A Way of Knowing*, ed. William Irwin Thompson (Great Barrington, Mass.: Lindisfarne, 1987), 96.

32. In the words of deep ecologist Arne Naess, "Care flows naturally if the 'self' is widened and deepened so that protection of free Nature is felt and conceived as

protection of ourselves." In "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," the Fourth Keith Roby Memorial Lecture in Community Science, Murdoch University, Western Australia, March 12, 1986, 39-40.

33. The following analysis of Leopold's ideas is drawn from my "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology: Reflections on Identity and Difference," in *Covenant for a New Creation: Ethics, Religion and Public Policy*, ed. Carol Robb and Carl Casebolt (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Press, 1990). An earlier, abridged form of the article also appeared under the same title in *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, ed. Irene Diamond and Gloria Orenstein (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1990), 128-37.

34. Aldo Leopold, "Land Ethic," in *A Sand County Almanac: With Essays on Conservation from Round River* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 262.

35. Leopold, "Goose Music," *ibid.*, 227.

36. *Ibid.*, 232.

37. *Ibid.*, 227.

38. *Ibid.*, 227.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Leopold, "Land Ethic," 239.

41. *Ibid.*, 238.

42. For a discussion of the elevation of reason and devaluation of emotion in Western ethical thought, see Hoagland, *Lesbian Ethics*, 157-97; also see Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), 102-6.

43. Hoagland, *Lesbian Ethics*, 158.

44. Genesis 8:20-21: "The Lord said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every creature as I have done.' "

45. Other parallels between science and ritual are not hard to detect. Thus, science is an activity that must be conducted in secret, where only the initiated (i.e., other scientists) have the power to cast spells (i.e., perform experiments). The accepted methods of verification in scientific investigation (hypothesis, tests, and results) also operate much like a magical spell. If the procedure is not faithfully followed, the spell (i.e., the experiment) is said to have no effect (i.e., to be inaccurate). The spells and incantations

found in ritual also find their parallel in the lingo that scientists have developed, which only the initiated (i.e., other scientists) are able to understand.

46. The sacrificial motive behind animal experimentation was appreciated by many of the early anti-vivisectionists in the 1800s. Anna Kingsford argued, "An almost exact parallel to the modern vivisector in motive, method, and in character is presented by the portrait thus preserved to us of the medieval devil-conjurer. In it we recognise the delusion, whose enunciation in medical language is so unhappily familiar to us, that by means of vicarious sacrifices, divinations in living bodies, and rites consisting of torture scientifically inflicted and prolonged, the secrets of life and of power over nature are obtainable." See her " 'Violationism,' or Sorcery and Science," lecture presented to the British National Association of Spiritualists, January 23, 1883, and reprinted in *Light*, February 4, 1882, 55-58.

47. The similarity in the roles played by Reason and Revelation is aptly described by Beverly Harrisson in "Keeping Faith in a Sexist Church," in *Making the Connections: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics*, ed. Carol Robb (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 214: "Reason' replaced 'Revelation,' but both were hypostasized and portrayed as nonrelational qualities, possessions of subjects, the one of God alone, the other of 'man' alone."

48. Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. H. J. Paton (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), 94.

49. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 37-38.

50. Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 41.

51. The importance of context for ethics is also emphasized by Jim Cheney, who argues in "Eco-Feminism and Deep Ecology," 144, that "to contextualize ethical deliberation is, in some sense, to provide a narrative or story, from which the solution to the ethical dilemma emerges as the fitting conclusion." See also Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," 125-46. The research by Carol Gilligan suggests that the contextual approach to ethical deliberation is, in fact, more characteristic of women. When faced with an ethical problem, women attempt to obtain more information and to reconstruct the dilemma in its contextual particularity, whereas men tend to resolve it through adherence to abstract principles and rules. See *In a Different Voice*.

52. According to Joseph Meeker, Western culture is premised upon a tragic world view in which conflict is presupposed, along with the necessity for its resolution through heroic death. As he argues in *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), 37, "From the tragic perspective, the world is a battle

ground where good and evil, man and nature, truth and falsehood make war, each with the goal of destroying its polar opposite." Meeker holds that the tragic world view lies at the heart of our current environmental crisis. He contrasts the tragic world view with the more environmentally compatible mode of comedy, which is premised on the desirability of adaptation and survival: "Comedy illustrates that survival depends upon people's ability to change themselves rather than their environment, and upon their ability to accept limitations rather than to curse fate for limiting them. . . . When faced with polar opposites, the problem of comedy is always how to resolve conflict without destroying the participants. Comedy is the art of accommodation and reconciliation" (39). Although Meeker draws no connection between the tragic world view and that of patriarchy, I would argue that they are one and the same.

53. For an excellent critique of mainstream philosophy's emphasis on crisis situations, see Joe Mellon, "Nature Ethics Without Theory," Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1989, 56. Mellon argues that "moral crisis cases are not matters of decision at all; we act because . . . we must." He explains that "moral crises do not present us with some *right* thing to do. They are extreme situations in which one is forced to act as best one can." The bad faith of animal experimenters, according to Mellon, is that they make no effort to avoid the "crisis situations" that they routinely invoke to justify the use of animals in the "war against disease." As he states, "if no efforts are made to learn, and no steps are taken to avoid, then it seems poor form indeed to claim that what one is facing is a crisis, and that one is entitled to the extreme measures which might be justified in a genuine crisis situation. Vivisectionists do precisely this. They are wedded to their methods, and have no intention of giving them up."

54. Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (London: Cox and Wyman, 1970), 37.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid., 40. Linda Peckham expressed to me her dismay over Murdoch's choice of the word "obedience" to refer to the will's role in moral decision-making (conversation, December 5, 1990). She suggested that the word "cooperation" might convey a less dictatorial sense of the will. The word "obedience" is, in fact, so overlaid with Jewish-Christian connotations that it is difficult to conceive of it as anything other than a commanding voice. Interestingly, the word "obedience" derives from the Latin *ob* (meaning "toward," "facing," or "upon") and *audire* (meaning "to hear"). If "obedience" in its root meaning refers to the notion of listening to one's "inner voice," then perhaps there is some call for retaining this word in reference to ethical thought.

57. Cited in John Vyvyan, *In Pity and in Anger: A Study of the Use of Animals in Science* (Marblehead, Mass.: Micah Publications, 1988), 11.

58. Meat eating has been shown to be a major cause of disease due to the high levels of protein, bacteria, cholesterol, chemicals, hormones, and fat found in meat. For more on the health hazards of meat eating (as well as its other adverse effects), see Barbara Parham, *What's Wrong with Eating Meat?* (Denver: Ananda Marga Publication, 1979);

John Robbins, *Diet for a New America* (Walpole, N.H.: Stillpoint, 1987); on health aspects only, see John McDougall, *McDougall's Medicine: A Challenging Second Opinion* (Piscataway, N.J.: New Century, 1985).

59. Carol Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York: Continuum, 1990), 91-94.

60. Stephan Lackner estimates that, disregarding the creatures slaughtered by humans, "only 5 percent of all animals are killed by other animals. Ninety-five percent of all animal lives are terminated without bloodshed: by old age, sickness and exhaustion, hunger and thirst, changing climates, and the like." *Peaceable Nature: An Optimistic View of Life on Earth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 12.

61. I am indebted to Mellon, "Nature's Ethics Without Theory," for an appreciation of the central role played by "details" in ethical conduct and thought.

62. For more on the heroic, warfare mentality that underlies Western allopathic medicine, see my "From Healing Herbs to Deadly Drugs: Western Medicine's War Against the Natural World," in Plant, *Healing the Wounds*, 96-111.

63. Western medicine's lack of concern for prevention can be seen in the fact that despite estimates showing that 80 percent or more of all cancers are attributable to environmental factors, medical research continues to pour billions of dollars into finding magic (chemical) cures for this and other diseases. See John H. Knowles, "The Responsibility of the Individual," in *Doing Better and Feeling Worse: Health in the United States*, ed. John H. Knowles, M.D. (New York: Norton, 1977), 63.

64. I do not mean to imply that the ethos of heroism is the only reason for Western medicine's dismal neglect of preventive medicine. Certainly the profit motive has been an important contributing factor as well. Preventing disease, as most researchers know, is not profitable. It has been estimated, for example, that as many people make a living from cancer today as die from it: see Hans Reusch, *Slaughter of the Innocent* (New York: Civitas Publications, 1983), 71. Animal experimentation also provides a convenient legal cover to drug manufacturers: thus, when the drug thalidomide was extensively tested on animals and yet went on to produce birth defects in 10,000 children born to pregnant mothers who took it, the drug's manufacturers were acquitted on the grounds that research on animals could not reliably predict how a drug would affect humans. *Ibid.*, 8-10.

65. Adrienne Rich, *On Lies, Secrecy and Silence: Selected Prose 1966-1978* (New York: Norton, 1979).

66. Some of the anti-fur movement's campaign literature has tended to blame women for the existence of furs. One well-known ad features a woman dragging a coat behind her, trailing a pool of blood. The words of the ad state, "It takes 40 dumb animals to make a fur coat, but only one to wear it." A milder reproach can be found in a Humane Society

ad that depicts a woman hiding her face behind her purse. The caption declares, "You should be ashamed to wear fur." Although the latter ad does not stoop to name calling as in the former case, it nonetheless reinforces the traditional function of advertising, which has been to tell women what they should feel or do (in this case, be ashamed). The best approach, in my opinion, is not to blame women, but rather to provide them with the missing narrative pieces that are needed for them to think and feel on their own.

67. In a similar vein, Sarah Hoagland contends that to engage in debate over whether or not women should have rights is to acknowledge implicitly that women's rights are debatable. As she points out in *Lesbian Ethics*, 26, "Men's rights are not debatable. Thus, in agreeing to defend women's rights [one] is solidifying status quo values which make women's but not men's rights debatable in a democracy."

68. Josephine Donovan echoes a similar theme in her suggestion that it is both possible and necessary to ground an ethic for the treatment of animals in "an emotional and spiritual conversation with nonhuman life forms. Out of a women's relational culture of caring and attentive love, therefore, emerges the basis for a feminist ethic for the treatment of animals. We should not kill, eat, torture, and exploit animals because they do not want to be so treated, and we know that. If we listen, we can hear them." See Chapter 7 in this volume.

69. Along similar lines, Mary Daly argues that "unlike 'justice,' which is depicted as a woman blindfolded and holding a sword and scales, Nemesis has her eyes open and uncovered--especially her Third Eye. Moreover, she is concerned less with 'retribution,' in the sense of meting out of rewards and punishments, than with an internal judgment that sets in motion a new kind of psychic alignment of energy patterns": *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), 240. Similarly, Sarah Hoagland says in *Lesbian Ethics*, 265, that her desire in writing that book was to participate in a new kind of psychic alignment of energy patterns, a moral revolution.



[Back to the Syllabus](#)