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Ecofeminism as invitational rhetoric: Envisioning the shift in Western consciousness

Julie Ann Schutten
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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ECOFEMINISM AS INVITATIONAL RHETORIC:
ENVISIONING THE SHIFT IN
WESTERN CONSCIOUSNESS

by

Julie Ann Schutten

Bachelor of Arts
Northern Arizona University
1997

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts Degree
Hank Greenspun Department of Communication Studies
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

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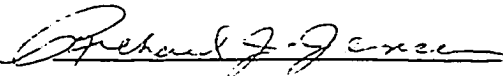
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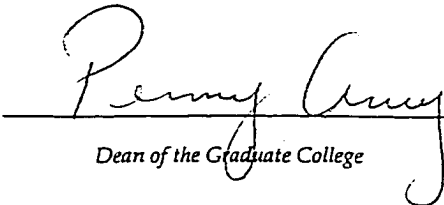
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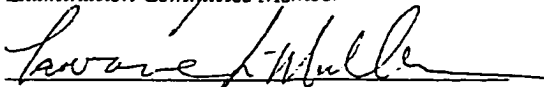
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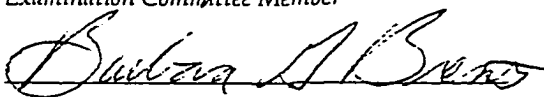
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Dean of the Graduate College


Examination Committee Member


Examination Committee Member


Graduate College Faculty Representative

ABSTRACT

Ecofeminism as Invitational Rhetoric: Envisioning the Shift in Western Consciousness

by

Julie Ann Schutten

Dr. Richard Jensen, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Communication
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Ecofeminists believe the Western patriarchal worldview perpetuates a power-over ideology that contributes to the destruction of the environment. Ecofeminists advocate that understanding the web of life is crucial for attaining a paradigm shift to a mindset that respects all entities. This study examines how ecofeminist discourse offers individuals a new paradigm grounded within feminine systems of meaning--no hierarchical ordering. The theory of invitational rhetoric supports feminist systems of thought, maintaining every entity has immanent value. This study reviews themes represented by the re-emergence of the Goddess as a gateway towards ecofeminist thinking. Additionally, two pieces of ecofeminist discourse are critiqued as invitational rhetoric. Concluding thoughts discuss the need for communication scholars to include discussions of nature in rhetorical dialogues. Furthermore, this project explores the requirements of traditional theory. Questions are raised as to whether or not traditional theory represents female characteristics or disciplines feminine language and style of discourse.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In New Woman/New Earth, Rosemary Ruether writes:

Women must see that there can be no liberation for them, no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination. They must unite the demands of the women's movement with those of the ecological movement to envision a radical reshaping of the basic socioeconomic relations--the underlying values of society.

[The question is] how to effect a political transformation when the terms of the transformation are given by the very order which a revolutionary practice seeks to change.

Jacqueline Rose (as cited in Gaard, 1993, p. 195)
Sexuality in the Field of Vision

Environmental sustainability continues to be an increasingly important issue as more and more of the Earth's resources disappear. People must begin to realize the severity of the current environmental crisis and seek a solution for change. If such a solution is not reached, the human race is in jeopardy. Several organizations (Green Peace, Earth First!, NRDC etc.) continue to search for a way to remedy the imbalance of the environment in order to save the Earth. Ecofeminism encompasses an ideology that is working towards saving the planet.

The destruction of the Earth from pesticides, nuclear power and other industrial components has left the Earth and its inhabitants in crisis. For example, according to the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC), "More than 100 million Americans live in urban areas where the air is officially classified by the Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) as unsafe to breathe (NRDC pamphlet, 1998): “Millions of pounds of toxic chemicals, like lead, mercury and pesticides, pour into our waterways each year contaminating wildlife, seafood and drinking water” (NRDC pamphlet, 1998). National treasures like the Everglades, Lake Superior and the Columbia River System have been ruined because of toxic pollution, chemical spills, development and diversion of freshwater flows by damming etc. These examples illustrate the grave nature of the environmental problem in the United States alone.

Ecofeminists believe that the Western patriarchal worldview¹ perpetuates an attitude that contributes to environmental destruction. Ecofeminists believe that this dominant viewpoint sponsors an attitude of unequal power and the subordination of all beings deemed to be without power. This mindset contributes to a blatant disregard for natural resources and in turn perpetuates an attitude rationalizing the objectification of environmental resources. For example, inefficient packaging of goods contributing to a disposable mentality throughout the world adds to the idea that wasting resources is acceptable. Currently, defenders of this debilitating worldview continue to ignore grave environmental emergencies. Realizing the severity of the environmental crisis, ecofeminists² (Plant, 1993; Warren, 1994; Plumwood, 1993) point to several causes for the demise of the Earth.

This study will analyze how ecofeminist discourse offers new insights for environmental sustainability by inviting the audience to accept new philosophies, political ideologies and alternative histories from an ecofeminist standpoint. Studying the rhetorical components of ecofeminist writings offers a unique opportunity to analyze ecofeminism as a form of rhetoric that illustrates feminine eloquence.

The Ecofeminist movement attempts to break down the existing androcentric (male centered) systems in order to create an egalitarian society. Ecofeminist thinking strives to change the dualistic notion of “woman is to nature as man is to culture” and actively induces the ideology of the interdependence of women, animals and men as equal contributors to the Earth’s rhythmic cycles. While feminism and environmentalism are primary entry points for ecofeminism, women and men also come to ecofeminism through alternative spirituality, animal rights, Goddess³ worship and other progressive affiliations.

Francoise d’Eaubonne created the concept of ecofeminism in 1974 in order to draw attention to women’s potential to bring about an environmental revolution (Stearney, 1994). This type of revolution would entail new gender relations between men and women and between humans and nature (Merchant, 1990). Liberal, radical and socialist feminism have all been concerned with the human/nature relationship that underlay the foundations that led to ecofeminist philosophy. Thus, ecofeminist ideology has derived meaning from each of these three types of feminism. The following section of the paper will outline aspects of feminist philosophies that are found within ecofeminism ideology.

Liberal feminism has sought to disconnect women from nature in an effort to connect everyone (women, men and children) to nature. Liberalists (liberal feminists) generally believe that environmental problems result from the overly rapid development of natural resources and failure to regulate environmental pollutants (Merchant, 1990). When women are given equal educational opportunities and equal work opportunities, they can contribute to environmental conservation. Women join the cultural aspects of

society (public sphere) and may begin to take part in environmental conservation rather than being held in social positions tied to nature only (private sphere). Thus, liberal feminists seek to destroy the essentialist attitude that biology is destiny in an effort to acquire an egalitarian work world. Women are increasingly reaching positions where they can effect change, however, the numbers of women compared to men who hold positions of power in Western society are not yet equal. Striving for equal power is what liberal feminism struggles to achieve.

Radical feminism, developed during the late 1960s and 1970s, was a part of the second wave of feminism. Merchant (1990) states, "The radical form of ecofeminism is a response to the perception that women and nature have been mutually associated and devalued in Western culture and may be elevated and liberated through direct political action" (p. 101). Radical ecofeminism realizes that the prehistoric patriarchal culture dethroned the mother Goddesses and replaced them with male Gods to whom female deities became subservient. Again, in the seventeenth century, Renaissance organicism further degraded nature by replacing nurturing the Earth with the metaphor of a machine leaving the Earth to be dominated by male-developed and controlled technology, science and industry (Merchant, 1990). Ecofeminists believe that the machine mentality of society is responsible for the degradation of the Earth. Through the re-emergence of the Goddess, the mentality of the Earth as a machine may be remedied.

Radical feminism celebrates its ties to nature through the revival of ancient rituals centered on Goddess worship, the moon, animals and the female reproductive system. This vision, where nature is held in esteem, is a source of empowerment for many ecofeminists. Rather than tie women to their biological nature, decreasing their

mobility, radical feminists argue that women's biology should be celebrated as a source of power.

Lastly, both Marxist and socialist feminists see nonhuman nature as the material basis of human life, supplying the necessities of food, clothing, shelter and energy (Merchant, 1990). The goal of a socialist feminist is to direct change toward some form of egalitarian socialist state and in addition strive to resocialize men and women into nonsexist, nonracist, nonviolent, anti-imperialist individuals (Merchant, 1990). Socialist ecofeminism deals with environmental problems affecting third world women like the women's Chipco (tree-hugging) movement in India and Native American women and children exposed to radioactivity and uranium mining.

In addition to the aspects of the feminist movement shaping ecofeminism, environmental dialogue suggests that people can not ignore the power of the dominant Western ideology, which is a masculine discourse, when trying to solve environmental problems. The dominant ideology values up-down thinking and operates as a hierarchy. Technology is viewed as superior to nature and nature is mastered and controlled by utilizing a "power-over" mentality. This worldview functions with either/or thinking and praises the "rational" approach of humans while dismissing the irrational aspects of nature.

Ecofeminism is most clearly understood as a direct extension of feminism and environmentalism. Ecofeminism is a combination of several types of feminism with environmental ideologies. Ecofeminism's goal is to effect environmental change by creating an understanding and appreciation of the web of life on Earth. Conceptualizing the web of life leads ecofeminists to question the linear or unidirectional thinking

inherent in patriarchal systems that operate as the dominant worldview. Through questioning patriarchal thought processes that perpetuate negative environmental consequences, ecofeminists hope for more equally distributed resources. When the current debilitating system is transposed into a more egalitarian paradigm, ecofeminists believe the Earth will be saved. The current system poses a problem for sustainable living in that hierarchical structures have always objectified certain beings considered less important. Connie Bullis (1996) states:

Treating the environment as an issue within a dominant discourse is inadequate because the dominant discourse inherently perpetuates the environmental destruction responsible for the current crisis. Instead, alternative discourses not grounded in the current dominant discourse are essential for adequate transformation. (p. 123)

Ecofeminism responds to the need to alter the existing paradigm by creating new types of discourse. Bullis's statement refers to the difficulty that the Ecofeminist movement encounters operating as an ideology emerging out of a dominant discourse that is laden with patriarchal contexts or hierarchical ordering. The Ecofeminist movement focuses on a desire for a new worldview separate from the confines of a restrictive discourse. In order to adequately transform the current worldview that supports patriarchal ideologies, ecofeminist rhetoric must operate outside the dominant order.

Ecofeminists remind people that the Earth is a web and that humans are all connected to that web. Ecofeminist rhetoric advocates an understanding that the Earth is a living entity. Human domination over the Earth's resources is not accepted and all aspects of the Earth should be viewed as interconnected. As a result, ecofeminists seek

to create interconnectedness and equality in place of separateness and dominance. Adopting an ecofeminist belief system would require embracing the web of life philosophy. This philosophy does not allow for pollution within that web.

In addition to understanding environmental distress, there is a need for people to understand the connection between the rape of the Earth and the rape of women. This connection is crucial to the feminist aspect of ecofeminism. Realization of the interconnectedness may only be achieved through understanding relationships of power. Essentially an understanding of the instrumentalist value (objectification) versus the intrinsic value (web, interconnectedness) must be realized. For example, rape is about power and defining resources (Earth, Women) for use in any way that serves the abuser. The above example may be compared with over excessive use of the environments resources (deforestation) for the needs of the growing capitalistic economy which may be looked at as the rape of the Earth in that the mentality of the abuser (clear-cutter) is an attitude of power-over the environment (forest). Ignoring natural ways to save the environment perpetuates the cycle of abuse and supports a power-over mentality. For example, ignoring the positive use of hemp products rather than clear-cutting trees is one way this type of cycle is sustained within systems of domination. The degradation of the subordinated--Women, the Earth, animals, indigenous peoples--for the use of those individuals and groups holding power, fails to take into account the end result that inevitably will distort the balance of nature. This mentality works towards complete environmental destruction rather than environmental sustainability. This is the call of ecofeminist thinking: to end subordination within hierarchical power structures.

Studying ecofeminism is beneficial as it helps to further efforts made by communication scholars such as Rogers (1998), Jagtenberg & Mckie (1997) who have suggested that the communication discipline must work to revise its communication and discourse to include the nonhuman world. Communication scholars must work to include and understand how nature functions within human “dialogues” and how nature is most often left out of cultural human “dialogues” (see chapter four). Second, it is important to study ecofeminist discourse to aid in further understanding of how to sustain a healthy environment. Environmental sustainability and freedom for the oppressed “Other”⁴ depends on new ideologies that invite original thinking, thus transforming the old paradigm. The concept of the “Other” includes all those beings that are subordinated and/or held down in a powerless position, such as Women and indigenous people. An understanding of how the Ecofeminist movement is communicating the need for a shift in the current worldview is important because the survival of the Earth and empowerment of the Other relies on the current patrilineal structure being challenged.

This project will attempt to identify ecofeminist rhetoric as invitational. By applying the criteria of Foss and Griffin’s (1995) theory of invitational rhetoric to ecofeminist discourse and ecofeminist rhetorical themes, one may identify whether or not ecofeminist discourse responds as invitational. Central questions for this project include the following: What are the themes that are considered invitational and how do they offer audiences an invitation to view the world through a different lens? How does ecofeminist discourse bring together the theory of invitational rhetoric? How do non-

traditional theories help communication scholars begin to embrace new types of discourse previously ignored by traditional methodologies?

If ecofeminist discourse strives to denounce the patriarchal order of Western society then it must function with a methodology that resists the ideals of that debilitating system. It seems that in an attempt not to risk the movement's success, invitational rhetoric is more beneficial to the ecofeminist cause for producing realistic change because it applies *offering* rather than domination over its audiences. Ecofeminist discourse appears to *offer* its ideologies rather than trying to force their audiences to change their opinion. This study will illustrate whether or not the goal of ecofeminist discourse is to invite the reader or audience to view the world with a different mindset. The purpose of this thesis will be to answer the above questions and interpret whether ecofeminist discourse is invitational by applying Foss and Griffin's (1995) theory.

Review of Literature

Previous research illustrates common themes within ecofeminist discourse. The following review will highlight several pieces of well-known ecofeminist discourse. Ecofeminist literature encompasses ideologies dealing with dualities⁵ and instrumentalist ideologies (Plumwood, 1993; Bullis, 1996; King, 1990; Warren, 1994), oppression of the Other (LeGuin, 1989; Plant, 1989; Shiva, 1989), patrilineal subordination (Mies, 1986; Shiva, 1989; Warren, 1994; Birkeland, 1993), Judeo-Christian ethic (Keel, 1997; Mickelsen and Dittman, 1993; Daly, 1973; Warren 1994), Goddess suppression and re-emergence (Rose, 1993; Metzger, 1989; Stearney, 1994;

Spretnak, 1990; Starhawk, 1990), spirituality, the maternal archetype (Stearney, 1994; Gaard, 1993), environmental destruction and women's relationship with nature (Warren, 1993; Salleh, 1997; Stearney, 1994; Stroyls and Bullis, 1993; Yanni, 1993) and grassroots politics (Lahar, 1991). The common thread throughout the literature of ecofeminism provides an opportunity for people to think differently and not conform to Western culture's status quo.

As background for this analysis, two types of literature will be reviewed: books and articles/presentations. Books that have assisted in defining Ecofeminist rhetoric include Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (1962), Vandana Shiva's Staying Alive (1989), Healing the Wounds (1989) edited by Judith Plant, Reweaving the World (1990) edited by Irene Diamond and Gloria Orenstein and Val Plumwood's Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (1993). In addition, there are three articles and one presentation that are of major importance for understanding ecofeminist rhetoric: Karen Warren's presentation on Environmental Stewardship (1997), Kay Lynn Mickelsen and John Dittman's "Ecofeminism: Perspectives on a Social Movement" (1990), Lynn Stearney's article "Feminism, Ecofeminism, and the Maternal Archetype: Motherhood as a Feminine Universal," (1994) and Stephanie Lahar's article focusing on "Ecofeminist Theory and Grassroots Politics." (1991) This review will outline important ecofeminist themes and illustrate the nature of Ecofeminist rhetoric as it serves to offer a different perspective of Women and the web in which humans flourish or perish.

In 1962 Rachel Carson published Silent Spring. Her book served as the inception of the modern ecology movement as well as the roots of the Ecofeminist movement. Carson's scientific research tested aspects of the ecosystem and found that

they are all interdependent on each other. Carson's work found that pesticides used in one area (such as corn crops) would ultimately end up in another area (water sources). Carson's book argued for the elimination of the use of pesticides in North America. Her book became a strong voice in the environmental movement and she is viewed by many as the first ecofeminist advocating an understanding of the web of life. Carson told the story of the Earth as an interconnected environment that depends on each aspect of its ecosystem to survive. Her concern for humans to understand the interconnection of all living beings began the groundwork for the Ecofeminist movement.

This knowledge led to ecofeminists studying the relationship between the human body and the planet Earth. Ecofeminists today draw connections between the metaphor of the Earth being female and the mistreatment of women on Earth. Ecofeminist Patricia Hynes (1989) states:

For women making the connections between the masculinized ravaging of nature and the rape of women, Carson was a forerunner. She saw the problem for nature: the arrogance of men who conceive of nature for their own use and convenience. We see it for women: a similar arrogance which assumes that women exist for the use and convenience of men.

(p. 55)

The connection between the rape of the Earth and the rape of women aided in the realization that power-over the Earth and power-over women are similarly connected.

In 1989 Vandana Shiva published Staying Alive. Her book brought the ideologies of Third World indigenous peoples to the contemporary Ecofeminist

movement. While Rachel Carson's book took an ecofeminist perspective in attempting to solve the environmental problem of pesticides, Shiva's book more directly addressed the issues of ecofeminists across the globe by studying the position of women in industrial development, specifically the women of the Chipco (tree-hugging) movement in India. Shiva examines the position of women in relation to nature, the forests, the food chain and water supplies. She links the violation of nature with the violation and marginalization of women, especially in the Third World.

The idea of women connected with nature is not new (Bullis, 1996; Gruen, 1993; Gaard; 1993). However, ecofeminists re-visit this idea as one likely cause for the continued degradation of the Earth and Women. This viewpoint offers an explanation difficult to ignore. Shiva's book is responsible for furthering the ecofeminist cause because of the widespread attention she received for her study of India's women and the "Tree Hugging" movement to save the forests.

Also in 1989, Healing The Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism edited by Judith Plant was published. Healing The Wounds, a collected anthology with articles by thirty-one authors, opened a dialogue focusing on re-structuring politics through creating awareness. Petra Kelly (1989) stated in the forward of Healing The Wounds:

To eliminate war and its tools, to eliminate racism and repression, we must eliminate its causes. Our call to action, our call for nonviolent transformation of our society is based on the belief that the struggle for disarmament, peace, social justice, protection of the planet Earth, and the fulfillment of basic human needs and human rights are *one* indivisible.

(ix-x)

The design of Healing The Wounds became a common format for ecofeminist writers. The idea of having several authors cooperate to create one book is practiced in several ecofeminist collections thus typifying the unity of ecofeminists. Healing The Wounds examined the causes of the societal nuclear and anti-environmental problems as well as exploring female spirituality and the effects of religious beliefs within society. This collection was a combined effort by several women to create understanding and offer a new awareness of the world's environmental problems.

Another well-known ecofeminist book was published in 1990. Reweaving The World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism was edited by Irene Diamond and Gloria Orenstein. Reweaving The World is an anthology with articles by twenty-six authors which adds to the vision of ecofeminism as a means of social change. Diamond and Orenstein (1990) state:

With the birth of the Women's Movement in the late 1960s, feminists dismantled the iron grip of biological determinism that had been used historically to justify men's control over women. Feminists argued that social arrangements deemed to be timeless and natural had actually been constructed to validate male superiority and privilege. They asserted that women had the right to be full and equal participants in the making of culture. In this process writers and scholars documented the historical association between women and nature, insisting that women would not be free until the connections between women and the natural world were severed. (ix)

Reweaving The World points toward a need for a new standard in society that would incorporate more egalitarian ways of structuring spirituality and how people treat the environment. This anthology represents one of the pivotal resources for understanding ecofeminism and was one of the first publications offering an invitation for an audience looking to embrace a new worldview.

Val Plumwood's book, Feminism the Mastery of Nature, published in 1993, touches the essence of the ecofeminist view. Plumwood (1993) states:

Feminism the Mastery of Nature draws on the feminist critique of reason to argue that the master form of rationality of western culture has been systematically unable to acknowledge dependency on nature, the sphere of those it has defined as "inferior" to others. Because its knowledge of the world is systematically distorted by the elite domination which has shaped it, the master rationality has developed "blind spots" which may threaten our survival. The future depends increasingly on our ability to create a truly democratic and ecological culture beyond dualism.

(abstract)

Plumwood's (1993) book begins a dialogue discussing how nature is viewed within the realm of dualism. She deduces that every aspect of the "master rationality" must be viewed as political. For example, nature is viewed as a commodity in the world of capitalism. Capitalistic societies thrive on dualistic thinking in order to increase capitalistic competition. Without dualism there is no need for competition. The competition within the capitalist market creates a mindset that anyone can achieve monetary wealth. However, this competitive reasoning is destructive in that it pits

women and men against each other. Pitting men and women against each other is exemplified by the dualistic notion that women are weak and men are strong. This type of ideology holds women down while giving an unfair advantage to males who operate within a capitalistic hierarchy because the valued trait in Western thought is strength. This notion becomes lessened when dualism is taken out of the equation. Breaking down the dualistic mentality is crucial towards achieving egalitarian ways of thinking.

There are two articles and one presentation that are also important to the study of ecofeminism based on the crucial information discuss within their texts. In order to respond to the need to alter the existing paradigm, the following texts offer new conceptual frameworks pointing towards a ecofeminist rhetoric that is invitational. Karen Warren has been involved in a continuous dialogue concerning ecofeminist discourse. In a presentation at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas entitled “Environmental Stewardship: An Ecofeminist Philosophical Perspective” she dissects the underlying foundations of a patriarchal society. Warren (1997) states:

I have argued (Warren, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991a) that a **conceptual framework** is the set of basic beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions which shape and reflect how one views oneself and one’s world. Conceptual frameworks are the socially constructed lenses or filters through which one perceives oneself and others. A conceptual framework is **oppressive** when it explains, justifies, and maintains unjustified relationships of domination and subordination. It is **patriarchal** when it explains, justifies, and maintains the subordination of women by men. (p. 28)

Warren's conception of an oppressive framework proposes a new way to look at patriarchal based systems. Ecofeminists seek a conceptual framework for saving the environment as well as ending oppression for women, indigenous peoples and all oppressed entities across the globe. Therefore, a problem ecofeminists face lies within the destruction of the Earth due to hierarchical methods of order. Warren (1997) lists five important features of an oppressive conceptual framework:

- (1) Value-hierarchical "Up-Down" thinking;
- (2) Value dualism's "Either-Or" thinking;
- (3) Power-Over conceptions of power which function to maintain relations of domination and subordination;
- (4) Conceptions of privilege which function to maintain power-over relations of domination and subordination by "Ups" over "Downs";
- (5) A logic of domination, i.e., superiority (being "Up") justifies subordination (being "Down").

(p. 28)

Warren's analysis of oppressive frameworks is essential for establishing what systems cause power imbalances. Her philosophy is one of the few clearly outlined plans for identifying patriarchal institutions. People must comprehend this conceptual connection in order to grasp the full ecofeminist picture. Ecofeminists agree that there are important connections--historical, empirical, conceptual, political, and theoretical between the domination of women and the domination of nature so that any environmentalism, environmental philosophy, or ethic, which fails to see or capture these connections is simply inadequate (Warren 1997, p. 28). Warren calls on all people to accept responsibility as "stewards" who act as the caretakers of the Earth. The realization of connections between the "isms of domination" (e.g. sexism, racism,

classism, heterosexism, capitalism) is crucial to deconstructing the hierarchical structures across the globe. Warren's views on how the logic of domination is structured create an opportunity for individuals to understand how patriarchal structures function.

Kay Lynn Mickelsen and John Dittman (1993) analyzed the societal structure that oppresses the power-down. Their article, "Ecofeminism: Perspectives on a Social Movement," was originally presented at an Environmental communication conference held in Big Sky, Montana. Mickelsen and Dittman (1993) identify three distinct roads to ecofeminism: the spiritual, the scientific and the social. Discussions of spiritual paths that led to ecofeminist thinking expand on two topics: the Judeo-Christian ethic and Goddess worship. They explain that for 25,000 years Goddess worship was the dominant spiritual guide for humans. It has only been in the last 2,000 years that the Judeo-Christian ethic and Christian religion have reigned as a dominant spiritual structure, especially within Western societies. Judeo-Christian godheads are decidedly masculine, domineering and aloof from the natural world (Mickelsen & Dittman, 1993).

Ecofeminists reject the concept that God and humanity are separate from nature and nature's cycles. For example, Judeo-Christian worship is typically a weekly indoor ritual while Goddess worship more naturally inspires outdoor worship coinciding with the cycles of the seasons and the planets (Mickelsen & Dittman, 1993). The re-emergence of the Goddess is an important aspect for the Ecofeminist movement as it is an outlet for women to raise their awareness and understand how they and others have been subordinated. Ecofeminists often feel that the movement is an attempt to regain some of the power that was lost by the rise of the Judeo-Christian Ethic.

The second path to ecofeminism offers a new understanding of the scientific male-based militarism and industrialism. Today, the Earth is viewed as a commodity for manufacturing and industrializing. The existing paradigm views the Earth as a resource that can be utilized to further “progress.” The instrumentalist ideology inherent within the discipline of science is obsessed with gaining information at any cost (Solomon, Barglow). Those lost or harmed (Earth, Women) become inconsequential. They are used for the benefit of the whole of society.

Scholars (Beyer & Ogletree et al, 1996) have studied the inherent bias of the pharmaceutical industry and medical professions towards studying the effects of drugs on men while ignoring the effects of drugs on women. Science rationalizes this subordination by creating the image of Other. The Other functions as any species outside of the status quo, i.e., the scientific subject.

Mickelsen and Dittman (1993) discuss Judith Plant’s concept of bioregionalism as an alternative to the scientific industrial mentality. Bioregionalism involves adapting people to fit into a region rather than changing the region to fit human needs. It is a process of learning to live within and becoming part of an ecosystem, rather than capitalizing on certain aspects of the Earth, creating devastating blows to parts of the environment (Mickelsen & Dittman, 1993).

Mickelsen and Dittman’s (1993) final path includes the aspect of the social, which centers on the concept of women being socialized or associated with nature and man placing himself above nature. The androcentric view of the world becomes the root problem behind ecological survival: “The Earth is a whole organism requiring the interdependence of all of its parts. As long as men see themselves as above nature and

by extension above women, the unconscionable rape of both will continue unchecked” (Mickelsen & Dittman 1997, p. 293). The instrumentalist ideal of the world is evidenced by the religions that position people (men) above other beings (see chapters three and Four). The Earth is seen, once again, as a resource to be used and manipulated for the purposes of men.

Another aspect of the social path brought to light by Mickelsen and Dittman (1993) is that the environmental movement is woman-based. Because women continue to be responsible for the home, nurturing and caring for others and men go out into the “real world”, the sexual differences in socialization continue to bring women closer to nature while further alienating men. This is evidenced today as women still struggle to be perceived as viable and functioning members of society. Due to the increase in responsibilities for women, such struggles become agitated as public and private spheres collide. Women who are accepted as part of the public sphere are still chiefly responsible for the nurturing tasks of the private sphere. Nurturing tasks are seen as closer to the natural world than manufactured business responsibilities. Thus, if women are seen as closer to the environment, it becomes easier to understand the conceptual framework linking the rape of the Earth with the rape of women. Male power becomes asserted allowing him to do as he wishes to the Earth and women. Much of the environmental destruction seen today is a result of patriarchal concepts including domination and power.

The three approaches to ecofeminism are representative of the underlying themes inherent within ecofeminist discourse. Understanding the principles of the three

paths is critical in order for new ideologies to emerge. Mickelsen and Dittman (1993) state:

These three approaches to Ecofeminism share several common themes. First, the existing view of the Earth as a dominion granted to man by God must be replaced by a view of a planet populated by many interconnected species of which humankind is only one. Second, the seat of spirituality must descend from its far off locus in the heavens to its rightful place within the Earth and all its elements and creatures. Third, progress must no longer be measured in the economic and material gains of a few. It must be measured in the physical and mental well being of all of Earth's creatures and ecosystems. Finally, the notion that one sex is dominant over the other and, in fact the notion of dominance itself must be replaced by a philosophy of interdependence, interconnectedness, and egalitarian cooperation. (p. 293)

This article offers its readers an opportunity to accept and embrace a new paradigm of thought. This ideology gives birth to a new way of viewing the web of life as it relates to saving the Earth and all of humankind.

Further insight to the connection between women and nature can be discovered from communication professor Lynn Stearney. In "Feminism, Ecofeminism, and the Maternal Archetype: Motherhood as a Feminine Universal," Stearney (1994) states that a "gender-neutral metaphor may more effectively serve both the environmental and the feminist interests of the Ecofeminist movement" (p. 145). Initiating a discussion of what motherhood means in society is essential in creating a new image of mother in

Western culture as well as the world. Stearney (1994) states, “Because of its pervasive and cross-cultural nature, motherhood can be understood as an archetype, or a symbol which transcends particular situations and constructs similarities in meaning which both reflect and capture assumptions and thus is persuasive” (p. 146). It is important for ecofeminists to look at the maternal archetype: “Archetypal metaphors function as ‘preferred patterns of imagery’ which are related to cultural evolution” (Osborn, 1967 as quoted in Stearney 1994, p. 146) because the maternal archetype holds women in a position that is useful for nurturing and giving birth yet, suppresses her from other responsibilities.

The rhetorical power of the universal symbol of mother simplifies diverse situations and controls a person’s frame of reference (Stearney, 1994). Initiating discussion surrounding the meaning of mother is crucial to the Ecofeminist movement as it strives to create new symbols or frames of reference in the public’s mind.

However,

Stearney (1994) states:

The maternal archetype functions persuasively within the context of ecofeminism through its ability to (1) construct an analogy between women’s role in biological reproduction and the cycles of nature as a premise of women’s greater attunement to the environment; (2) reinforce the socially created contract that it is women who have the requisite psychological characteristics to “mother,” biologically, and environmentally. (p. 152)

Ecofeminists debate whether or not the experience of mothering gives women particular “authority” in the environmental movement. Ecofeminists (Garb, 1991; Stearney, 1991) question how men can identify with a feminine gendered Earth. This question targets the struggle for understanding how and why the Earth is gendered. If gendered imagery separates men from the Earth, it may further harm the Earth. It is evident, however, that it is important for individuals to understand how the image of motherhood is interpreted and shaped so the Ecofeminist movement may begin the process of re-creating images that are environmentally beneficial.

Stearney’s (1994) article discusses the mother archetype as it relates to Goddess worship. She cites the Gaia hypothesis that was proposed by biologists Lynn Margolis and James Lovelock in 1982. This hypothesis suggests that the planet is a living system designed to maintain and nurture life. This anthropomorphization is in essence a “scientific update of the belief system of Goddess worshipping prehistoric societies” who viewed the world as the great mother who nurtures all forms of life (Stearney, p. 152). The Gaia tradition serves as a source for a relationship to nature from which much ecofeminist spirituality is born, as she is the “great mother and giver of life.” The attempt to understand this type of Earth based spirituality is fundamental to the Ecofeminist movement as it offers individuals gynocentric-centered type of “religion.”

This shift to Earth based spirituality may prove difficult as it requires a change from a conqueror frame of reference to a nurturing mentality. For Western society this involves a major transformation from the mentality of dominance and control to an attitude of healing and nurturing the planet. The use of the image of Mother in environmentalism is not meant to simplify the politics of the situation but rather to unify

people around a caring mentality and ideology. Regardless, the image of Mother is rhetorically powerful as evidenced by the number of cultural roles it brings to the surface. The cultural power of such a symbol must not be overlooked. As Stearney (1994) states:

Just as all women are not mothers, and mothers themselves are different from each other, we must also remember that women are not the opposite of men, but both similar and different. The capacity to love, to cherish, to nurture, and to empathize belongs equally to the domain of men and women, and is, in part, what makes us human. (p. 157)

This image and meaning of Mother invites individuals to examine their relationship with nature, deciphering whether or not they are caring for the Earth or adding to its destruction.

Stephanie Lahar's (1991) article, "Ecofeminist Theory and Grassroots Politics," gives particular insight into ecofeminist discourse as a vehicle for political change.

Lahar (1991) states:

The central theme of most versions of ecofeminism, therefore, is the interrelationship and integration of personal, social, and environmental issues and the development of multidirectional political agendas and action. Ecofeminism is transformative rather than reformist in orientation, in that Ecofeminists seek to radically restructure social and political institutions. (p. 30)

Ecofeminism attempts to offer a set of ideologies to individuals as a way to transform the Western worldview into a more ecologically sound set of politics. Hence, the

central theme of ecofeminist discourse is to restructure and create new political comprehension. Lahar (1991) cites Noel Sturgeon King's definition of ecofeminism as "a practice of hope." She explains that "to have hope is to believe that [the] future can be created by intentional human beings who now take responsibility for it" (p. 32). Ideologies such as the "practice of hope" are integral to ecofeminist discourse. Without the possibility of hope, audiences are less apt to struggle for change. Ecofeminism supports political resistance as it strives for a

promise that it provides not only an orientation worldview but also a basis for responsible action. In order for the movement to fulfill this promise, I believe that it is necessary to establish broad parameters that diverse ideas and actions can be referred to, and to maintain critical and vitalizing links between theory and praxis. (Lahar, 1991, p. 36)

Developing a concrete set of parameters for a functioning political praxis has proven to be the Ecofeminist movement's most difficult hurdle to overcome. Lahar (1991) believes ecofeminists are "looking to develop a better alternative to a classically Western atomistic, materialist worldview-without simply flipping to its polar opposite, a holistic, idealist one with a mirror set of problems" (p. 37). Lahar (1991) feels that ecofeminist discourse attempts to expand the concept of nature through changing people's way of thinking. She states:

The purpose of working out an integrated philosophy of humanity and nature is not only to challenge dualism to reflect more clearly our lived experience in theory but also to describe relations among women, men,

society, and nonhuman nature in a way that is conducive to a high quality of life and antithetical to oppression and exploitation. (p. 38)

While it is clear what the goal of ecofeminism is, it is not clear what individuals should do in the face of environmental situations they encounter in their personal and public life. The political goals of deconstructing oppressive social, political and economic systems are evident, but no ecofeminist advocates the precise way to accomplish this shift in ideologies. In other words, there is no ecofeminist written manifesto telling its supporters how to handle environmental situations. Lahar (1991) states, "The relation of ecofeminist theory to political activism is ideally informative and generative and not one of either prescribing or 'owning' particular actions" (p. 43). Because of this generative or invitational type of discourse, ecofeminists may be heard more clearly because they do not work to force opinion shifts onto their audiences. The wheels of change move slowly and any precise prescriptions in ecofeminist discourse may be perceived as too radical and forceful.

Methodology

Traditionally, rhetorical theories reflect a patriarchal bias because they focus on changing and dominating others (Foss and Griffin 1995, p. 2). Patriarchal rhetoric emphasizes being competitive and imposes "truths" instead of offering new alternatives to an audience. Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin (1995) propose an alternative rhetoric, invitational rhetoric, which is grounded in the feminist principles of equality, immanent value, and self-determination. The concept of invitational rhetoric offers the audience external conditions of safety, value and freedom (p. 2). Safety, value and freedom are

needed to invite the audience to a proposed new mentality such as ecofeminist thinking. These external conditions are necessary for an individual to feel comfortable choosing to change her/his ideologies. Without these feminist conditions, rhetorical theory is traditionally patriarchal.

Implicit in the assumption of rhetoric as persuasion is the idea that humans are on Earth to “alter their environment and influence the social affairs of others” (Foss and Griffin, 1995, p. 2). Rhetorical scholars “have taken as given that it is a proper and even necessary human function to attempt to change others” (Gearhart, 1979 as cited in Foss and Griffin 1995, p. 2). Foss and Griffin (1995) state, “Embedded in efforts to change others is a desire for control and domination, for the act of changing another establishes the power of the change agent over that of other” (p. 3). Foss and Griffin (1995) summarize the traditional conception of rhetoric as being characterized by:

Efforts to change others and thus to gain control over them. Self-worth derived from and measured by the power exerted over others, and a devaluation of the life worlds of others. This is a rhetoric of patriarchy, reflecting its values of change, competition, and domination. But these are not the only values on which a rhetorical system can be constructed, and we would like to propose as one alternative a feminist rhetoric.

(p. 4)

Having defined traditional rhetorical discourse as predominantly patriarchal, a feminist rhetorical perspective is defined as including three factors: equality, immanent value and self-determination. The characteristic of equality recognizes a commitment to relationships and to the elimination of the dominance and elitism that distinguish most

relationships. Invitational rhetoric does not accept oppression and domination as worthy human values. Second, a principle that is intrinsically feminist revolves around believing in celebrated eminent value of all living beings. Foss and Griffin (1995) state, "The essence of this principle is that every being is a unique and necessary part of the pattern of the universe and thus has value" (p. 4). Recognizing the worth of another and an individual's value is not prevalent in a rhetoric that seeks to change an individual's perspective to that of the rhetor. Lastly, a feminist rhetoric must involve self-determination. Grounded in respect for others, self-determination allows others to make their own decisions about how they wish to live their lives.

In an attempt to incorporate feminist values, Foss and Griffin (1995) propose the following: "Although we believe that persuasion is often necessary, we believe an alternative exists that may be used in instances when changing and controlling others is not the rhetor's goal; we call this rhetoric *invitational rhetoric*" (p. 5).

The values incorporated by a feminist rhetoric are inherent within ecofeminist ideologies. It is for this reason that this study will focus on ecofeminism as invitational rhetoric. In addition to the concepts of equality, eminent value and self-determination, invitational rhetoric incorporates the idea of offering as well as creating an environment of external conditions encircling the ideas of safety, value and freedom.

Similar to the rhetorical practice of narrating, offering involves not probing or invading but giving, a process where rhetors tell what they currently know or understand. They present their vision of the world and show how it looks and works for them (Foss and Griffin, 1995, p. 7). Ecofeminist rhetoric invites and offers the audience an opportunity to view the world differently. Offering occurs when people enter an

interaction with a goal, not of converting others to their positions but to share ideas offered in order to come to an understanding of the subject (Foss and Griffin, 1995 p. 8).

Furthermore, this study will explore whether or not the external conditions of safety, value and freedom are meaningful aspects confirming that invitational rhetoric is useful for the study of Ecofeminism. Foss and Griffin (1995) state: "Offering can occur whether or not an audience chooses to join with a rhetor in a process of discovery and understanding" (p. 10). In order for mutual understanding to become a reality, the external conditions of safety, value and freedom must exist. A feeling of safety is created when a feeling of security and freedom from danger exists for the audience. Rhetoric that makes no attempt to hurt, degrade or belittle an audience member produces a feeling of safety. Ecofeminist rhetoric offers safety within its ideologies, because its main purpose is to save the Earth and its inhabitants. Adoption of ecofeminist ideals leads to a safer worldview and environmentally friendly perspective towards life on Earth. Safety instills a feeling within the audience that allows them to share ideas and feelings with the rhetor and not worry about being degraded for doing so.

In addition to the external condition of safety, the second necessity rests within the condition of value. Foss and Griffin (1995) conclude: "The condition of value is the acknowledgement that audience members have intrinsic or immanent worth" (p. 11). Value is conveyed when rhetors not only listen carefully to others but also try to think from their perspectives (Foss and Griffin, 1995 p. 11). Ecofeminists attempt to create empathy for their cause by not devaluing the audience's ideologies. It is the desire of

the ecofeminist to instill a new sense of hope for the environment by presenting new ways of thinking.

Lastly, in order to cause mutually understood external conditions, a free environment is essential. Foss and Griffin (1995) state: "In invitational rhetoric, rhetors do not place restrictions on an interaction. Participants can bring any and all matters to the interaction for consideration; no subject matter is off limits, and all presuppositions can be challenged" (p. 12). Freedom offers the audience the power to choose or decide if a change in belief is wanted. Whether the proposition of the rhetor is accepted or rejected, it is seen as perfectly acceptable within the context of invitational rhetoric. An ecofeminist advocate would try to attain a feeling of freedom within an audience rather than one of dominance and control. Freedom does not include force and subordination of those who are not able to decide on their own or wish to remain within the same mindset. Valuing freedom is crucial to an ecofeminist comprehension.

Ecofeminist rhetoric may be studied as invitational. Invitational rhetoric steps outside of the patriarchy's system of rhetorical research. As Foss and Griffin (1995) contend:

Invitational rhetoric, in contrast, enables rhetors to disengage from the dominance and mastery so common to a system of oppression and to create a reality of equality mutuality in its place, allowing for options possibilities not available within the familiar, dominant framework.

(p. 17)

By offering a chance for change, invitational rhetoric does not force an individual to agree with one certain viewpoint. If change does occur, it is a result of mutual

understanding between rhetor and audience. This insight is gained through exchange of ideas, not a forceful persuasive argument. Invitational rhetoric creates awareness through such understanding. Invention in invitational rhetoric allows for an evolution of interpretations, perspectives, courses of actions and solutions to problems different from those communication scholars are accustomed to with traditional models of rhetoric. The ability to solve a problem and brainstorm a solution is the primary goal of ecofeminism. It strives to solve the subordination of others and in turn to solve the environmental imbalance.

In an effort to revise traditional forms of rhetoric, invitational rhetoric contributes to a mode of communication for women and other marginalized groups in order to support efforts to transform oppressive systems of domination and oppression. Foss and Griffin (1995) postulate that:

At first glance, invitational rhetoric may seem to be incapable of resisting and transforming oppressive systems such as patriarchy because the most it seems able to do is to create a space in which representatives of an oppressive system understand a different--in this case, a feminist--perspective but not to adopt it. Although invitational rhetoric is not designed to create a specific change, such as the transformation of systems of oppression into ones that value and nurture individuals, it may produce such an outcome. (p. 16-17)

Invitational rhetoric presents a feminist vision grounded in alternative reasoning. Because ecofeminist rhetoric does not engage in support of the patriarchy, it is important that its rhetoric operate from a non-patralinial context.

Invitational rhetoric allows the rhetorical scholar to study in detail how ecofeminism offers and invites its audience to deconstruct the current patriarchal worldview. For this reason, the purpose of this study will be to examine how ecofeminist discourse operates as invitational. Foss and Griffin's (1995) theory proposes certain requirements (as mentioned above) for rhetoric to be invitational. This study will examine two pieces of ecofeminist discourse to inquire whether the theory is functional and perhaps propose additions or refinements if necessary. Specifically, in order to illustrate whether or not ecofeminist rhetoric is invitational, the criteria listed within Foss and Griffin's (1995) article will directly be applied to the ecofeminist pieces of discourse. Chapter three and four will analyze the reoccurring themes of ecofeminism and whether or not they include aspects of invitational rhetoric.

Preview

The following will provide a preview as well as give a brief description of the remaining chapters. Chapter two will focus on the methodology that will be utilized for this study. Further review of Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffins 1995 essay entitled "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric" will be the focus of this chapter. As mentioned, invitational rhetoric offers a new framework grounded in feminist ideology for analyzing rhetorical discourse, suggesting a method for marginalized groups to propose change and speak out against oppression without operating from within the system that dominates them.

Additionally, research dealing with non-traditional forms of feminine rhetoric discussed in Belle Edsen's (1985) "Bias in Social Movement Theory. A View from a

Female Systems Perspective” will be analyzed. “The Rhetoric of Women’s Liberation: An Oxymoron” written by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (1973) will serve as theory dealing with consciousness raising groups and the women’s movement. Additionally, aspects of Sara Hayden’s (1997) article “Re-claiming Bodies of Knowledge: An Exploration of the Relationship between Feminist Theorizing and Feminine Style in the Rhetoric of the Boston’s Women’s Health Book Collective” that involve the topic of consciousness raising will also be reviewed. Lastly, Kathleen Hall Jamieson’s (1988) discussion of “effeminate style” will be analyzed to understand the difference in women’s tone and language from other forms of rhetoric.

Chapter three will examine the suppression of the Goddess and the logic of domination that is currently prevalent within societal structure. This chapter will examine how knowledge regarding the repression of the Goddess mobilizes individuals to understand the grounding of the modern day patriarchy. Relevant to ecofeminist theory is an understanding of Goddess spirituality as it relates to the web of life. The logic of domination, arising with the Judeo-Christian Ethic--historically emerging from the book of Genesis in the Bible, is crucial to understanding certain aspects of the current power-over ideology. Awareness of the structuring of spirituality and the hierarchical nature of society offers and invites the audience to embrace a new worldview. These themes will be examined through the lens of invitational rhetorical criteria.

Chapter four will delve into the re-emergence of the Goddess as a gateway towards ecofeminist thinking. This section will look at topics surrounding instrumentalist and subordinating ideologies. Also, Goddess emergence as a new form

of consciousness raising will be analyzed. Other topics including the oppression of the Other and the creation of polar opposites or destructive dualities will be examined. Potentially the new emergence of the Goddess functions as an invitation to acknowledge new understandings and contexts for viewing the Earth. As in chapter three, aspects of invitational theory will be applied to the ecofeminist themes explored within the chapter.

Chapter five will examine Starhawk's (1989) essay "Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism" and Linda Vance's (1993) essay "Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality" in order to establish whether invitational themes are included in the discourse. Foss and Griffin's (1995) theory of invitational rhetoric will be applied to each piece of discourse. This will serve to illustrate if the concept of invitational rhetoric may be directly applied to ecofeminist discourse.

Lastly, Chapter Six will conclude the analysis of ecofeminism as Invitational Rhetoric. Concluding thoughts will be examined: findings, implications, limits of the study will be explored. Future aspects for studying ecofeminist rhetoric will also be discussed.

Notes

¹ It is useful to further clarify what I mean by the term “worldview”. The dominant Western worldview is patriarchal, male based and functions as a hierarchy. When I speak about replacing the dominant “worldview” this is what I am referring to.

² When the word ecofeminism is capitalized it is because it is a social movement.

³ Goddess is capitalized in an effort to extend the same respect to the Goddess as extended to the male term-God. In addition nearly all Ecofeminists capitalize Goddess.

⁴ I capitalize the word “Other” and “Woman” to denote them as categories. I am referring to “Woman” as a cultural conception, not flesh-and blood females or even necessarily encompassing feminine gender traits. When the word Other is put in quotations it is the emphasize it as a social construction and to distance myself from condoning the concept or idea.

⁵ The word dualities refers to the hierarchical mentality present in capitalist and patriarchal societies. For example, nature and culture are understood as completely separate concepts with one being privileged over another.... Other examples include: culture/nature, master/slave, civilized/primitive, human/nature (non-human), public/private, reason/emotion (nature), rationality/animality (nature) etc.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

During the late nineteen sixties many communication scholars (see, for example, K. K. Campbell, 1973; Edson, 1985; Gearheart, 1979; Foss & Foss, 1991; Blair, Brown, & Baxter; 1994; Rogers, 1998) began to recognize the patriarchal bias within communication research. These scholars began to recognize that communication theory was not inclusive of all types of discourse. A particular bias was apparent that exemplified the male system of analysis as the standard for communication analysis. Given the nature of invitational rhetoric as a unique communicative mode, it is productive to analyze and understand what aspects of invitational rhetoric differentiate it from traditional modes of persuasion. This chapter will provide a review of the theory of invitational rhetoric, discussion of the non-traditional rhetorical theory offered by Belle Edson (1985), aspects of a non-traditional rhetorical situation such as consciousness raising discussed by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (1973) and Sara Hayden (1997), and lastly, Kathleen Hall Jamison's (1988) discussion of the voice behind the non-traditional rhetorical styles of eloquence called the "effeminate style." These theories will help build a foundation for recognizing what aspects of ecofeminist discourses are invitational. This methodology will help demonstrate that ecofeminist discourse functions as invitational. The methods applied in this thesis allow the scholar

to affirm that first, there is a continued need to adopt non-traditional methods for analysis and second, whether or not ecofeminist discourse is invitational.

As explained in chapter one, there are three factors required for a discourse to be invitational: equality, immanent value and self-determination. These factors separate invitational rhetoric from traditional forms of rhetoric and ground it in feminist theory rather than patriarchal modes of communication. Invitational rhetoric exists predominantly when control or dominance over others is *not* the goal. As Foss and Griffin (1995) state, "As far back as the Western discipline of rhetoric has been explored, rhetoric has been defined as the conscious intent to change others" (p. 2). The idea of inviting an audience to consider a different viewpoint without the use of force through "loud and oppressive" language styles is utilized within ecofeminist discourse. In fact, through the absence of strategies relying on a conscious intent to change, persuasive outcomes may often become a reality for the rhetor through offering rather than force.

It is within the arena of offering that invitational rhetoric is most different from traditional rhetoric. As mentioned previously, offering is the process of sharing opinions and offering new ideologies to an audience. Offering can be likened to brainstorming between rhetor and audience. For example, if a professor or student presents an essay in an academic colloquium they are engaging in offering when they present their ideas as valuable but tentative. They are acknowledging that their essay is a work in progress and that they are open to the ideas of others to continually revise and improve the essay. In offering mode the person is open to suggestion rather than establishing her/his superiority (Foss and Griffin, 1995).

Offering must also allow supplementary conditions for invitational rhetoric to thrive: safety, value and freedom. These three elements reside within the ideal of mutual respect for audience and rhetor. The belief that every being has immanent worth and value is primary within invitational rhetorical practices. Hence, the ideas each person possesses are to be valued solely because they belong to that person's reality. Individuals must feel secure, have a feeling of mutual respect and as a result of this feeling become empowered to choose and decide whether or not to accept the rhetor's position (Foss and Griffin, 1995). The mutual exchange of ideas may create an atmosphere encouraging and allowing individuals to alter their ideologies.

As explained in chapter one and the above review, invitational rhetoric illustrates a theory that rejects functioning from within a patriarchal framework. Hence, invitational rhetoric offers rather than dominates an audience. In "Bias in Social Movement Theory: A View from a Female-Systems Perspective," Belle Edson (1985) raised questions about social movement theory and whether or not communication theory operated from a gender biased perspective.¹ Edson's essay analyses the differences of perception between females and males and the roots of Western language constructs.

First, the notion of language as a symbolic and socially shared reality provides a basis for investigating the concept that women and men may possess different perspectives or worldviews: "While language differences between men and women in our culture are subtle, our language is generally male in that it tends not to reflect women's perspectives or experiences" (Edson, 1985, p. 35). How does the creation of language affect rhetorical theory? If a written discourse is not inclusive of female

perspective (through language etc.) can it provide adequate analysis of a text? Hence, how do scholars develop a method inclusive of all genders if the language is innately biased towards men?

Contemporary historians depict that the male domination of Western language is directly linked to learned Latin (Edson, 1985). Latin is what a majority of Western languages are based on and was created by males, taught by males and learned by males. Edson (1985) states:

To find that the language used for academic, abstract, political, legal, scientific, liturgical and administrative matters has the quality that Ong refers to as “a formalized distance from the human lifeworld,” then, is not surprising, for many of the structures of Learned Latin were a direct result of the way academia had been shaped to support the male psyche (p. 35).

Ong’s reference to the “human lifeworld”² is representative of the separation between human kind and those living entities other than humans. Manifest within Western language is the separation of humankind from the rest of the living world. This separateness continues to be cultivated throughout Western culture particularly within language. Hence, it becomes apparent that women’s participation dealing with the language development of Western culture has not been equal with that of men. Edson (1985) states:

In other words, the language of a culture does not serve all of its users equally. The dominant group has access to an input into the language in a way that subordinate groups do not; thus, their definitions, labels and

perspectives tend to be the ones seen as legitimate in a culture. Because the dominant group in our culture is male and our language is male oriented, it tends not to reflect the perspectives or reality of women, the subordinated group. (p. 35-36)

If the language of a culture does not adequately represent both genders and a theory is evolved out of only one view, it can not be seen as a thorough means of analysis. This is not to say that a male-based system theory is not sufficient, it is just not all encompassing from a research and rhetorical perspective.³

The remaining pertinent aspects of Edson's article center on the differences between females and males with regard to relationships, time, decision making, thought and power. While these categories are particular aspects discussed within social movement theory, the concepts of male/female differences within the realm of decision making, thought and power hold particular significance for methodology in this thesis. Based on the work of Anne Wilson Schaeff, Edson (1985) looks at the differences of decision-making processes between the genders.

First, it is important to clarify that pointing out differences between genders must not be mistaken as a hierarchical ordering. Looking at the differences is not to say one way is better than the other but that they are simply different. For example, females have a tendency to make decisions based on consensual process whereas males typically make decisions based on majority vote (Schaeff as cited in Edson, 1985). Women are likely to gather contributions from many resources with foci based on relationships rather than expedient modes of decision making. Decision-making for women utilizes creative energies and invites individuals involved in the decision process to contribute.

Consequently, women's decision patterns focus on cooperation rather than on competitive behaviors (Edson, 1985). This style compliments an invitational type of rhetoric. This cooperative style comes into play with consciousness raising communication, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Next, there is a significantly different way in which women and men tend to characterize thought. The male system of thought is routinely typified as linear whereby one moves from point A to B to C in order to reach a conclusion (Schaf as cited in Edson, 1985). This linear thought pattern is efficient for saving time because if one knows there is a point A and a B then C must logically follow. Juxtaposing this, women tend to operate through dimensional thinking which is "not governed by an Aristotelian type of logic" (Schaf cited in Edson, 1985, p. 37). A majority of public speaking and persuasive techniques are laden with Aristotelian logic not grounded in egalitarian modes suitable for analyzing the rhetorical acts of both genders (see Foss and Foss, 1991; Women Speak and Inviting Transformation for an alternatives to traditional public address texts).

Lastly, it is helpful to examine how women and men achieve and apply power in Western culture. Schaf (1985) states, "In the male system, power is conceived of in a zero-sum fashion" (as cited in Edson, p. 37). Thus, it is sought and gained and is limited in quantity. In this view, when power is gained, one inevitably takes power away from another being. Edson (1985) states regarding power:

While we all may acknowledge that knowledge is socially constructed and that all humans may participate in the construction of knowledge, not all of the explanations or theories about the world are seen as legitimate

and acceptable. There is always a selection process at work, determining which theories will be heard, worked with, and recognized. *Such is the case in our culture, so that the female perspective, although it exists, is generally not recognized or sanctioned* [emphasis added]. (p. 37-38)

The power keepers of society have selected who is listened to in society and the way in which they will be heard (from a male system standpoint). The ability of female system theories to arise may prove difficult due to imbalances with the power keepers of any specific discipline. Subsequently, the way theory is developed naturally functions from a person's standpoint (Wood). According to Wood (1997) "Different social groups like women and men develop particular skills, attitudes, ways of thinking, and understanding of life as a result of their standpoint within society" (p. 66). Therefore, if traditional communication theory has been developed by men, it reflects male system standpoint. Consequently it would *not* sufficiently represent feminine viewpoints. Consequently, this poses a problem when communication theories do not look at all types of discourse because they have been designed to look at only certain types of discourse (i.e. Aristotelian rhetorical theory etc.). Hence, if the theories available for communication scholars are designed from a male system standpoint they may not accurately analyze discourse that functions outside of that system. Thus, a particular piece of discourse may be construed as being invalid because it does not fit the perimeters of male system theory. It is for this reason that communication scholars (Foss and Griffin, 1995; Foss and Foss, 1991; Edson, 1985) began to create new methodologies that more accurately represent feminine discourse. One may even suggest that no theory is acceptable because of exclusionary dangers inherent within developing a theory. Ultimately, if a

theory is necessary it should be gender neutral and encourage an ideology of equality. Included with such a theory would be the ability to more sufficiently analyze movements, speeches, and all non-traditional communication texts (family stories, graffiti, letter writing etc.). Theories such as invitational rhetoric strive to accomplish this goal.

Illustrating many of the aspects incorporated within invitational rhetoric is the non-traditional form of discourse called consciousness raising. Lack of female involvement in the public sphere forced women to gather in other arenas for validation. In a female system, power is seen as limitless because women tend to have little legitimate power. In so doing, women have developed a system that is more cooperative in nature (for example sharing power in a group setting) (Edson, 1985). One way women in the nineteen seventies began to legitimize themselves was to raise their awareness within what was called consciousness raising groups. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, in 1973, wrote "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" paving the way for communication scholars to re-define what rhetorical acts entailed by looking at what defined a genre of feminist rhetoric.⁴ In 1997 Sara Hayden wrote an article entitled "Re-claiming Bodies of Knowledge: An Exploration of the Relationship between Feminist Theorizing and Feminine Style in the Rhetoric of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective." Consciousness raising would classify as a non-traditional rhetorical text.

Consciousness raising entails transcending shared experience to the collective (women, Ecofeminists etc.). During the 1970s women came together to understand that

they were not alone in their experiences of being the “Other” of Western society as well as all over the world (see Chapter Three for further definition of Other).

Campbell (1973) states,

In its paradigmatic form, “consciousness raising” involves meetings of small, leaderless groups in which each person is encouraged to express her personal feelings and experiences. There is no leader, rhetor, or expert. All participate and lead; all are considered expert. The goal is to make the personal political: to create awareness (through shared experiences) that what were thought to be personal deficiencies and individual problems are common and shared, a result of their position as women and there is no “message”, no “party line.” (p. 79)

During this experience, no rules impede the call for creating awareness. Creation of a climate in which each individual is free to share experience and the participants seek to understand their lives in new ways is characteristic of a rhetorical arena suitable for transcending new ideologies. An atmosphere where individuals are encouraged to dissent in order to find the path that is best for them to function points to the criteria needed for rhetoric to be invitational. Campbell (1973) states:

Feminists believe that sharing personal experience is liberating, i.e. raises consciousness, because all women [people], whatever their differences in age, education, income, etc., share a common condition a radical form of “consubstantiality” that is the genesis of the peculiar kind of identification they call “sisterhood.” (p. 84)

Campbell (1973) continues by commenting that “Feminists would argue that ‘sisterhood is powerful’ because it grows out of the recognition of pervasive, common experience of special caste status, the most radical and profound basis for cooperation and identification” (p. 84). Whatever label chosen by a subordinated people (sisterhood, brotherhood, ethnic minorities--all Others), the bottom line is that consciousness raising is supported by those individuals needing an environment to discuss their identity as subordinated Other. This functions as invitational because it focuses on cooperation and on self-determination both qualities of invitational rhetoric. Also, personal experience and the sharing of an individual experience are considered invitational aspects of a discourse.

Much like Campbell’s quest to differentiate the genre of women’s liberation rhetorically, Hayden (1997), in an article that looked at the rhetoric of the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, touches on how feminist theories have had a profound impact on the discipline of communication.

Beginning from the recognition that women have been and continue to be systemically oppressed, feminist theorizing has had as a fundamental goal the description and explanation of the origins of women’s oppression so that women and men can begin to envision means to change their worlds. (Hayden, 1997, p. 128)

One way to bridge these worlds is to create awareness. The concept of bringing genders together and of creating unified theory leads to a discussion of “feminine style.” Reflected within communication theory (Jamieson, Wood, and Burgoon) research illustrates that women and men communicate and speak in different manners. One

aspect of women speak is called “feminine style” and is utilized during consciousness raising. Hayden (1997) reflects on Campbell’s (1973) essay by stating that “Further investigation into the rhetoric of feminists from both the first and second wave, however, led Campbell to conclude that what had at first appeared to be an ‘unusual’ style was, in fact, common to many feminist texts” (p. 130). The unusual style was what led Campbell to first utilize the metaphor of the oxymoron; later she began to refer to this style as “feminine” (Hayden, 1997). What was construed as “feminine style” was evident within the non-traditional rhetorical form of consciousness raising. Hayden (1997) cites the work of Frye (1993) on consciousness raising as an aspect of “feminine style”:

In consciousness-raising women [people] engage in a communication that has aptly been called “hearing each other into speech.” It is speaking unspoken facts and feelings, unburying the data of our lives. Through talking together and sharing experiences, many of which had previously been unspoken, she [Frye] claims “new webs of meaning” can be generated. (Frye as cited in Hayden, 1997, p. 133)

This kind of consciousness raising embraces differences and claims that all people’s experiences of oppression are not necessarily the same. This creates an individual “web of meaning” (Frye as cited in Hayden, 1997). Through this “web of meaning,” new ideologies and understandings of the environment can be manufactured. Individuals will no longer feel alone in their oppressed nature. The more time that is spent raising consciousness, the greater chance there is that the “feminine style” of theorizing will become a part of the meaning-making processes of society. Consciousness raising will

be explored with regard to the re-emergence of the Goddess as a form of raising and creating awareness about the environment and ecofeminist realities in chapter four.

The last concept beneficial for my analysis is similar to “feminine style” but is called “effeminate style.” The phrase was coined by Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1988) in her book Eloquence in an Electronic Age: the Transformation of Political Speechmaking. The book focuses on the dramatic shift in speechmaking that occurred during the rise of the electronic age. Speechmaking during the electronic age would require a more “effeminate style” or tone. Jamieson (1988) states:

History has many themes. One of them is that women should be quiet....

This chapter examines the exorcism involved in unlearning silence and relearning those forms of speech traditionally condemned as;

“effeminate” forms ideally suited to effectiveness in an electronic age.

(p. 68)

Dualistic stereotypes can be held responsible for the silencing response women had towards speaking out in public. Jamieson (1988) states: “Because it was presumably driven by emotion, womanly speech was thought to be personal, excessive, disorganized, and unduly ornamental. Because it was presumably driven by reason, the manly style was thought to be factorial, analytic, organized and impersonal” (p. 76). Western culture’s dualistic notion of man is to reason and strength as female is to chaos and hysteria ruled the rhetorical world for decades. If a woman chose to give up reproduction for the pursuit of worldly ideas she was thought to want to be a man. The state was civilized by manly speech and corrupted by effeminate speech, strengthening the idea that a woman’s place was in the home and nowhere near the public realm.

Jamieson (1988) comments, “Apparently believing that female speech would drain the nation of its testosterone, opponents of women’s rights claimed that the transfer of power from the military to the unmilitary sex involves national emasculation” (p. 77). Jamieson (1988) states, “We judge discourse today by standards set by the ‘manly style.’ Insofar as it was combatively argumentative and saw overcoming its audiences as a desired end, the rhetor of fire and sword was manly” (p. 80). Jamieson’s comment brings up discussion regarding the differences between male style and female style as it specifically relates to traditional standards of male based theory. Helping to define what male style actually involves, Wood (1997) states: “Manly speech tends to regard talk as a way to exert control, preserve independence and enhance status” (p. 173). This is exemplified by a general tendency for male-based communities or organizations to use speech to exert power proving oneself. According to Wood (1997) “Men often use talk to establish and defend their personal status and their ideas, by asserting themselves and or by challenging others” (p. 173). This male style is reflected within traditional theory as it focuses on forcing change within an audience by exhibiting superiority and expertise. “To establish their status and value, men often speak to exhibit knowledge skill, or ability. Equally typical is the tendency to avoid disclosing personal information that might make a man appear weak or vulnerable” (Wood, 1997, p. 173). Invitational theory, consistent with female style, calls for sharing, disclosure and generating a feeling of freedom where no single person is perceived of as an expert. Hence, this tendency within a theory evades a need to foster superiority over the audience and is consistent with female style.

Furthermore, the age of television ushered in a different consequence for male speaking patterns “manly discourse took on additional meanings: it was impersonal, rational, direct, and data based” (Jamieson, 1988, p. 80). Within the realm of the television world womanly characteristics and speaking styles would be embraced. The traditional “manly” type of discourse would not prove successful for communicating to a television audience. Marshall McLuhan states:

The traditional male style is too hot for the cool medium of television. Where men see language as an instrument to accomplish goals, women regard it as a means of expressing internal states... . In group settings, men focus on accomplishing the task, women on maintaining the harmony and well-being of the group. (McLuhan as cited in Jamieson, 1988, p. 81)

Hence, the once condemned traits of “effeminate style” became valued and are now worthy and necessary to reach individuals of the electronic age of society. For example, this is evidenced by Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton by their ability to create a feeling of disclosure during campaign debates. Jamieson (1988) states, “The inability to disclose some sense of private self on an intimate mass medium has proven a barrier for most men in politics today” (p. 81). The ability to expose both private and public self for the intimate medium of television employs the female style of eloquence, helping this style to become more practiced.

How then is this relevant for aspects of voice within ecofeminist rhetoric?

Female style of voice is not a voice that sees overpowering its audience as a means to an end. The “effeminate style” that reached the world through television exists in all

aspects of society where women are articulating and disclosing beliefs. Any aspect of society where women or other subordinated individuals bridge the gap between the private and public realm utilizes “effeminate style” of speech. Ecofeminist rhetoric utilizes the “effeminate style” of disclosure and voice to create a feeling of cooperation and intimacy between the rhetor and audience. These concepts will be explored in chapter five.

Discussion

The communication theories and concepts examined in this chapter will be utilized for analyzing ecofeminist discourse throughout this thesis. It has been established that several communication methods of analysis operate from a male system perspective. It is this type of restrictive framework that moved communication scholars to begin formulating new types of rhetorical analysis which include feminine styles of perception. Important in this shift is the realization that this debate is not about one style of analysis surpassing another but that many current theories do not adequately allow all types of communication texts to be analyzed. Invitational rhetoric was created to analyze communication texts that are non-traditional. Foss and Griffin (1995) state: “Our goal in offering this theory is to expand the array of communicative options available to all rhetors and to provide an impetus for more focused and systematic efforts to describe and assess rhetoric in all of its manifestations” (p. 5). Non-traditional texts, as illustrated in this chapter, are manifested in many forms. Typically, these types of rhetoric utilize a more effeminate tone combining the issues of disclosure, freedom, and the inherent worth of the individual or being and are not involved with forcing change

upon their audience. The above methodology suggests that ecofeminist rhetoric may function as invitational rhetoric. The remainder of this thesis will analyze how ecofeminist discourse is invitational by examining how the messages involved in ecofeminist rhetoric via the Goddess offer an audience a new awareness potentially *offering* change. Second, Starhawk (1989) and Vance's (1993) ecofeminist discourse will be analyzed applying the methods discussed during this chapter.

Notes

¹ It is important to remember that during the time Edson wrote this article there were very few female communication scholars who had written about the patriarchal bias in communication theory. For this reason Edson may have relied heavily on Schaeffs analysis. In so doing she may have created too rigid of a dualism. Communication theory is not negative because it has been created from a male system standpoint but negative in that it does not adequately reflect the standpoint of women and minorities, etc. As long as communication scholars continue to utilize only one framework of analysis we are stifled as a discipline.

² Walter Ong's notion of "a formalized distance from the human lifeworld" is representative of the separation of man from nature. Ong states "Sex linked, public, male language encoded a very particular perspective into our lives...An affinity seems to exist between early modern science in its need to hold at arm's length the human lifeworld with its passionate, rhetorical, practical concerns, and Learned Latin as a tongue..." (Ong cited in Edson, 1985, p. 35). Particularly interesting in this quote is the commenting on the need for science to hold nature (life-world) at arm's length. Further reading about the nature of orality and language is interesting and may be found in Orality and Literacy, by Walter Ong (1982).

³ Much like standpoint theory is a theory called muted group theory. Developed by Edwin Ardener and his wife in 1973, this theory states that women perceive the world differently from men because of women's and men's different experiences and activities rooted in the division of labor. Because of their political dominance the men's system of perception is dominant, stifling the free expression of women's alternative models of the world (cited in Edson, 1985). This theory developed from an archeological perspective therefore states that if an archeologist studies for example the Navajo people and they study only the men and furthermore with male theory they can not accurately tell about Navajo women.

⁴ When Campbell wrote this piece she undoubtedly utilized a more male-system approach of analysis. It is important to note that analysis such as Sara Hayden conducted in 1997 was not status quo for a female communication scholar in 1973. Analyzing a text such as the Women's Health Book Collective would not have fit into an Aristotelian approach. This is why I comment that Campbell paved the way for theories of today to emerge.

CHAPTER 3

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE GODDESS, THE LOGIC OF DOMINATION

During the Paleolithic era the Earth was widely viewed as a holistic web of life. Each part of that web was woven in with every other living being. Thus, life was interdependent and every aspect of the circle of life was respected. A spiritual connection with the Earth was a part of everyday life. Prehistoric societies worshipped the Goddess of nature, spirituality, the Great Mother, the giver of life and creator of all. The Goddess was once demonized by the West but is now being rediscovered by individuals seeking a meaningful spirituality and sustainable relationship with the Earth. The ideas inherent with the wisdom of the Goddess embody the message many ecofeminists try to convey to their audiences. These societies, while not perfect, lived in harmony with the natural rhythms of the Earth. Riane Eisler (1990) states:

This is not to say that these were ideal societies or utopias. But, unlike our societies, they were not warlike. They were not societies where women were subordinate to men. And they did not see our Earth as an object for exploitation and domination. (p. 23)

A mentality that encouraged an egalitarian method of living prevailed within these first civilizations. How was Goddess worship and an intrinsic cyclical view of nature almost completely destroyed? How does an understanding of this destruction *invite* individuals

to view the ecofeminist perspective that often positions the Earth as a Mother and as living Be-ing?¹ These questions will be explored during the course of this chapter via ecofeminist writings that deal with the topic of Goddess ideology.

This chapter will first give a brief herstory² of why the Goddess was worshiped and her connection with the Earth according to ecofeminist perspectives. Second, the suppression of the Goddess will be addressed. Third, interpretations of the book of Genesis will be analyzed illustrating the concept of “Other.” Fourth, the logic of domination will serve as a foundation for a discussion of ecofeminist rhetoric dealing with the patriarchal power-over ideology. How does explaining the idea of power-over offer individuals a different view of governing establishments? Lastly, a discussion of the means by which power is taken away from the Other will illustrate the justification utilized by oppressive frameworks. The concepts addressed during this chapter depict how ecofeminist discourse offers awareness to its audiences by examining and understanding the patriarchal system that disintegrated awareness of the Goddess. An awareness of the matriarchal structuring of pre-Western Civilization and an understanding of the patriarchal paradigm that destroyed this heritage invites and offers audiences an opportunity to embrace a new worldview.

As the herstory of the Goddess is emerging, so has individuals’ comprehension of the logic of the patriarchal domination responsible for her demise. Specifically, this chapter will examine the suppression of the Goddess and the logic of the domination that oppressed her image. Uncovering the repression of the Goddess invites individuals to question the patriarchal institutions responsible for the domination of the Goddess. Crucial to ecofeminist theory is an understanding of Earth-based (Goddess) spirituality.

It is through this spirituality that individuals are invited to adhere to an ideology that values the immanent worth of all beings.

The viewpoint of the Goddess invites nature into the dialogue between individuals³. Re-establishing the dialogue between humans and nature will ultimately facilitate a more holistic approach towards life, “one that values life”, that works to listen to “nature,” “matter,” and “the feminine,” and that approaches them as participants in a dialogue (Rogers, 1998, p. 246). Communication that strives to understand the social construction of reality, while important, is not the major need for saving the environment. The natural relationship with the Earth must be re-established and understood for the ecofeminist ideology to develop a communicative dialogue. An understanding of the logic of domination leads individuals in a new direction. An acceptance of the ecofeminist invitation to renounce the patriarchal ethic that destroyed the Goddess and people’s natural relationship with nature is fundamental to Goddess spirituality.

Consistent with striving to further a new worldview, ecofeminists also try to re-introduce the concept of the interdependence of the Earth. Many ecofeminists believe cyclical mentality is needed to advance a healing and new holistic view of the Earth. This ideal was held by the people of the Paleolithic era. The people of that time operated with an understanding of the web of life and saw immanent value in all living beings. Looking at some early words and their meanings points to this idea. For example, the word ritual comes from the Sanskrit word *rtü* meaning *menses*. *Menses* translated from Latin into English means a month to denote the periods of the yearly calendar. One of humankind’s earliest rituals was connected to women’s monthly

bleeding (Gadon, 1989). The blood from the womb that nourished the unborn child was believed to have mana or magical power. Thus, women's periodic bleeding was viewed as a cosmic and important event. Juxtaposed today when the periodic bleeding of women is viewed by society as a burden, embarrassment and something to be concealed not celebrated. This monthly event was equated with natural cycles such as the waxing and waning of the moon. Women were viewed as the conduit to the sacred mystery of life and death (Gadon, 1989). Gadon (1989) states, "In these Places (where the Goddess was honored) the major passages of human life, the changing seasons of the year, the agricultural cycle, and the movement of the heavens were woven into a world view that celebrated the ongoing rhythm of life, death and regeneration" (parenthesis added, p 2). The religion of the Goddess is Earth based. It is a spirituality that operates with a cyclical understanding of the environment.

The Suppression of the Goddess

Historical references that record the religion of the Goddess have recently been uncovered by archaeologists and prehistorians with a singular vision and commitment of bringing to life the roots of Western civilization. The story of the Goddess began in Europe and the Near East from the Paleolithic into the Late Classical Age (Gadon, 1989). This complex story covers an enormous time span encompassing more than 30,000 years of human history (Gadon, 1989). These efforts have disclosed that the "family tree" of Western Civilization connects humans to a matrilineal lineage, traceable through images of the Goddess.

It is useful to first look at the relationship between the Goddess and nature. Ice Age people fashioned many images of the sacred female from the tusks of the woolly mammoth. Nearly two hundred female figures have been found at dwelling sites across Eurasia from the Pyrenees in western Europe to Lake Bakal in central Siberia (Gadon, 1989). The most widely known of these figures is Willendorf from Austria.⁴ According to Paleolithic people, the Earth was understood metaphorically in relation to the natural processes of women, the great womb out of which all life emerged. The Earth was the mother, especially of the animals upon whose continued presence human life depended (Gadon, 1989). During this prehistoric time, the predominant view was that the “world is born not made; it is a birth process” (Gadon, 1989). It is important to realize that at the time the Goddess was first being worshiped, the mystery of life (childbirth) was not yet understood. Men’s role in the procreation process may not have been fully understood until animals were domesticated and bred.

The Goddess was respected as both sacred female and sacred nature. Paleolithic artifacts are saturated with omnipresent sexual symbolism not meant to be erotic but rather representative of the reverence humans had for reproduction and the energy that emanated from the Earth. This ideology is represented by the continuous use of the triangle symbolism of the vulva seed in cave petroglyphs.⁵ Archeological research and excavations make it evident that the way of Goddess was predominant with the Paleolithic people on Earth. An ideology or culture that worshiped and placed value on the birth cycle would presumably be cyclical in thinking and understood the web of life, not ignoring their role in that process. With the rise of the Judeo-Christian ethic came

the downfall of the Goddess and with her undoing came the overthrow of nature based ideology (Walker).

For centuries, biblical writers (men) have broken the Goddess figure down into several “Goddesses” using different names or titles. According to Barbara Walker (1996),

If such a system had been applied to the usual concept of God, there would now be a multitude of separate “gods” with names like Almighty, Yahweh, Lord, Holy Ghost, Sun of Righteousness, Christ, Creator, Lawgiver, Jehovah, Providence, Allah, Savior, Redeemer, Paraclete, Heavenly Father, and so on, *ad infinitum*, each one assigned a particular function in the world pantheon. (p. 346)

The aspects of the female Supreme Be-ing have been broken up into several different Goddesses, as exemplified above, creating less continuity among her believers. While a majority of the Goddess attributes were re-titled and named, others were masculinized, humanized or diabolized (Walker, 1996). Efforts by historians to erase aspects of the Goddess were in some part successful, evidenced by the lack of understanding and information available about Goddess spirituality today. Typically, when a shift in power occurs, the new power keepers will assimilate the traits of the old power keepers. The shift from holistic spirituality to patriarchal, monolithic spirituality exhibits this as indicated by the adoption of Goddess traits by the replacing male Godheads.

Historical accounts prove beneficial in continuing the search for how the Goddess was silenced. For example, evidence shows a female figure was seen as more powerful than the male by virtue of her power. She was not only the mother of all but

the deity who infuses all creation with the vital blood of life. Gods may prosper only when they partake of her wisdom and adopt (steal) her powers until they commit the ultimate symbolic matricide by setting up an all masculine theology evidenced today overridingly by Judeo-Christian theologies. Walker (1996) states: “The strength of the Goddess was harnessed to support the new male religions as the strength of women’s nurturing, caretaking instinct was harnessed to a patriarchal marriage system supporting men” (p. 346). The God of today displays the traits once assigned to the Goddess. For example, it is God who gives us life, we are born from his image and in his image of divine love. Perhaps the most pivotal of the Goddess traits that male Gods stole was the ability to give life, a quality apparent in female aspects of life. This re-assignment of life-giving traits was ensured. As Walker (1996) states:

Men long since tore down the Goddess’s shrines, as Christian Gospels commanded them to do (Acts 19:27). Yet even in a society that trivialized and vilified it, the core concept lives on. Some people believe that a new feminine theology will emerge from the core concept during the present century. (p. 347)

George Mylonas wrote that during the reign of the early Christian Emperor Theodosius, “The Christians, especially in the large cities of Antioch and Alexandria became the persecutors and the pagans the persecuted; temples and idols were destroyed by fire and their devotees mistreated” (as cited in Stone, 1976, p. xvii). The temples were then taken over by the fathers of Christianity. The writers of the Judeo-Christian Bible seem to have glossed over the sexual identity of a female deity who was sacred to the neighbors of the Hebrews in Canaan (Palestine), Babylon and Egypt. The Old

Testament does not even have a word for Goddess. She is referred to as Elohim in the masculine gender, to be translated as God (Stone, 1976). However the Koran of the Mohammedans was clear when it read “Allah will not tolerate idolatry...the pagans pray to females” (Stone 1976, p. xviii). These examples illustrate the conscious effort to destroy pagan (holistic) spirituality as instructed by the teachers and followers of the Bible. The Pagans and worshipers of non-monolithic religions were deemed the Other.

Interpreting Genesis

The “Other” (Plant, 1989; LeGuin, 1989; Shiva, 1989) is any being that is subordinated or withheld from positions of power. Relevant to this discussion is how power was taken away from women within Christianity. Women are not empowered within the Bible but are held responsible for the fall of man and viewed as temptresses devoid of power positions (exemplified by the fact that women can not hold power positions within the church). The issue is not specifically the book of Genesis but rather the interpretation of the passage; as Rogers (1990) states:

First, Eve is often seen as childlike and gullible, for she was easily persuaded by the serpent to violate God’s prohibition against eating the fruit. In this interpretation, Eve bears some degree of responsibility for the subsequent Fall from grace, but she lacks evil intent. Second, Eve is characterized as the seductress: After eating the fruit, she convinces Adam to do likewise. This interpretation generally sees eating the fruit as a metaphor for sex. Hence, women are seen as being more susceptible

to physical pleasures and sexual desire in particular (as in Augustine's interpretation). (p. 10)

Interpretations such as the above advance the stereotype that women can't handle power. Additionally this passage portrays women as gullible children who are easily persuaded. This implies that women do not have a strong will and are ruled by their desires. Rogers (1990) continues to state:

Aside from the specific acts related to the Fall, Genesis is also seen as a justification for the subordination of women for two reasons: (1) Eve was created from Adam to be his mate, and (2) as a part of her punishment, God specifically proclaimed Eve's subservience to Adam. (p.10)

Interestingly, with the new understanding of the Goddess, individuals begin to understand aspects of the "Fall" that were not previously accessible. To gain clear understanding of the logic of domination, it becomes important to look back at the historical interpretation of the "Fall from God's grace" written in chapter three of the book of Genesis. This Biblical text has been used as a justification for the subordination of Women as Other.

The story of Adam and Eve says that there was a time when women and men lived in harmony with nature (the time of the Goddess). The Garden is probably a symbolic reference to the Neolithic period since the invention of agriculture made possible the first gardens on Earth (Eisler, 1990). The lost paradise was a time when the Earth was not male dominated. The Bible states that it was a time before a male god decreed women to be subservient to man. Subsequently, individuals have been taught that the Fall from paradise is an allegory of God's punishment of man, and particularly

women, for a sin of disobeying the command not to eat from the tree of knowledge. The entire Christian faith relies on the punishment of Eve and Adam as a source of desire for the “Son of God” to come to Earth again to save people from eternal sin. Additionally, scholars (Rogers, 1990; Daly, 1974) have speculated that the subordinate positioning of women in society is based in part on the role of temptress--Eve’s “foolish” choice to eat the fruit of knowledge.

New archeological evidence reveals that this story derives from Babylonian myths based on folk memories of a time before “brother turned against brother and man trod woman down under his heel” (Eisler, 1990, p. 27). This story represents the time when the spiritual conscious shifts from an egalitarian system to a patriarchal system. Supporting the idea of new archeological and mythic information lending new insight regarding the story. Eisler (1990) states:

Why, for example, would Eve take advice from a serpent? The answer is that the serpent was in ancient times a symbol of oracular prophecy. Moreover because the serpent was for millennia associated with the worship of the Goddess (as a symbol of cyclical regeneration since it sheds and regrows its skin), Eve’s continued association with the serpent also represents a refusal to give up the old Goddess centered religion.

(p. 27-28)

Eve’s refusal to acknowledge God’s monopoly of the tree of knowledge is a mythical device to justify male dominance and an authoritarian mentality. What is crucial within this story is the importance of the shift from Goddess-nature-based ideology to male-based monolithic ideology. This shift represents the beginning of the logic of

domination Ecofeminists (Eisler, 1990; Warren, 1994; Christ, 1990) believe is responsible for the destruction of the Earth and the suppression of the Other.

The role of ecofeminists is to offer the path of the Goddess as an alternative to the male-based theology that destroyed her centuries ago. Hence, a full understanding of the logic of domination positions individuals in a new light ready to hear and be offered new ideological opinions. In her essay "Ecofeminism Our Roots our Flowering" Spretnak (1990) states that an ecofeminist understanding is composed of three paths, one of which is exposure to nature-based religion usually that of the Goddess. Goddess spirituality is a point where individuals enter the realm of nature-based mentality, not specifically because of the Goddess, but rather the ideal of living in harmony with nature acts as an invitation to save the environment.

The Separation of Humanity from Divinity

Further deconstruction of the Judeo-Christian Ethic comes with an acceptance of Earth based religion as sponsored by an adoption of Goddess spirituality. During the mid 1970s, many radical/cultural feminists experienced the exhilarating discovery through historic and archeological sources of a religion that honored the female and seemed to have as its "good book" nature itself (Spretnak, 1990).

What was intriguing was the sacred link between the Goddess in her many guises and totemic animal and plants, sacred groves, and womblike caves, in the moon rhythm blood of menses, the ecstatic dance the experience of knowing Gia, her voluptuous contours and fertile plains,

her flowing waters that give life, her animal teachers. (Spretnak, 1990, p. 5)

The discussion of cyclical nature based religion operated as a catalyst to invite feminists to view the environment differently. When adopting a Goddess mentality, it becomes natural to ask the question of why the Goddess has not been involved in Western society's spiritual dialogue. Following this realization, an individual may then begin to question whether the aspects of the Goddess could be included within a capitalistic society that operates from a male monolithic mindset? This understanding may create cognitive dissonance⁶ for individuals, particularly after an understanding that the Goddess operated put the needs of nature before the needs of the business deal. Once the audience questions the patriarchal system, they may begin to look for alternative systems of thought. By providing the differences between a cyclical system and a capitalistic system, ecofeminists illustrate how a sustainable environment functions effectively within a cyclical order, not a capitalist one.

One major difference between Judeo-Christian and the Goddess religions may be realized when people become aware that Goddess spirituality promotes a dialogue with nature in many ways. One clear expression of this natural dialogue is the fact that nearly all Goddess ceremonies are held outside and often on the Earth's holy days of alignment--equinoxes and solstices as well as the cycles of the moon, which are all linked to the menstrual cycle. Hence, the concept of God and humanity being separate from nature's cycles is rejected by ecofeminists.

Carol Christ comments further on theology's construction of the nature-spirituality dialogue. The Earth is not only social, political and economic but at root is

spiritual (Christ, 1990). She believes that people fail to recognize the connection between all beings to the web of life. Christ (1990) states, "Instead many people uncritically accept the view that 'man' is superior to 'nature' and has the right to 'use' the natural world in any way 'he' sees fit" (p. 58). This attitude is apparent within modern society's disposable attitude, the clear cutting of the rainforests and several other environmental situations begging for attention but failing to be remedied because of society's need to "progress" and continue the technological revolution before looking at its consequences. Although Christ believes this view to be clothed in the garb of modern science, such a view has its root in theological conceptions that separate God and humanity from nature and is a key point for many ecofeminists (Christ, 1990). Within the designs of Judeo-Christian mentality come the ideologies of power-over constructs and a feeling that God and humanity are separate from nature and nature's cycles. This separation allows people to rationalize environmental destruction of the Earth. If the Earth were viewed as a deity, or even a living entity, the degradation of the planet would not be justified. Additionally, Starhawk (1989) suggests that the shift from the Western theological tradition of the hierarchical chain of being to an Earth-based spirituality begins the healing of the split between spirit and matter.

Gordon Kaufman (as cited in Christ, 1990) states that in Western theology personal moral will separates both God and humanity from nature. Western theology believes that God stands outside the physical world to justify imposition of morality on humankind and that humans are created in the image of God, which once again separates them from nature. Christ (1990) believes this view to be common within Judeo-Christian faiths and suggests that the separation of humanity, divinity and nature

is a perception that must be altered. It is this perception that commands a mentality of separateness and subjects individuals to hierarchically ordering their beliefs. Given the cultural fear of death, it stands to reason that a person would order God higher than the Earth if their salvation in the “afterlife” depended on their faith. The idea of separateness fosters people’s need to believe in the afterlife. If the life lived on this Earth was the only one (if people were not waiting for an afterlife) how might people’s attitude towards the environment change?

Goddess worship is holistic and inclusive of the environment as part of the “higher power” making it difficult for those following Goddess spirituality to support the logic involved with power-over constructs and the domination inherent in those systems. If the new monolithic system were going to take over the properties of the Goddess, it would have to be dominant over her powers. It is evident that the task of early theologians was to wipe out evidence and images of female deities, i.e., the Goddess. Whereas the time of the Goddess spanned 30,000 years, the era of Judeo-Christianity has lasted for only about 5,000 years (Walker, 1996; Gadon, 1989). The suppression of the Goddess was necessary in order to allow the new male Godheads ultimate power.

The Logic of Domination

However, how did the logic of domination become ingrained into Western culture according to ecofeminist philosophies? Karen Warren (1997) offers insight towards understanding how the logic of domination triumphed. Warren (1997) states, “Humans are said to have domination over the natural environment in a way which

permits them to treat nature as they please, of viewing nature as having merely instrumental or extrinsic value” (p. 25). Typically Genesis 1 and 2 support this notion of extrinsic value with regard to nature granting humans “domination over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the earth and everything living upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). The idea of extrinsic value directly contradicts Foss and Griffin’s (1995) invitational rhetoric which calls for “immanent value” of all living beings. Ideologies of domination position humans as heirs to and more rational controllers of the environment (God’s Kingdom): “In short humans are legitimate dominators of less valuable, less prestigious, lower status nature” (Warren, 1997, p. 25). Hence, a feeling of being higher or in control is not conducive for a shift to Earth-based spirituality. Positioning aspects of nature and certain people (women, indigenous people, non-Christian worshipers) as less responsible for the environment compliments the hierarchy that exists within Judeo-Christian orders.

Discussion of domination invites a *dialogue centering on the conceptual framework of the Judeo-Christian Ethic and the patriarchal aspects associated with such an ethic*. Warren (1994) defines a conceptual framework as a “set of basic beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions which shape and reflect how one views oneself and one’s world” (p. 184). She further states that a framework is oppressive “when it explains, justifies and maintains unjustified relationships of domination and subordination” (Warren, 1994, p. 184). An organization intending to have both genders in power would have both operating equally in positions of power. This is not the case when looking at most Judeo-Christian religions. Additionally, looking at the “Fall” in the Bible holds women responsible for the “fall of man”, thus maintaining a position of

subordination towards women. Warren (1997) defines patriarchy as the systematic, structural unjustified domination of women by men (p. 181). At the heart of this oppressive patriarchal framework is the justification of male gender privilege and power-over.

One way to understand power is in terms of resourcefulness: power is the ability to mobilize resources to accomplish a desired end (Warren, 1994). Hence, people who lack power or are in powerless positions lack the ability to mobilize the required resources. Those individuals and natural entities become labeled as Other and are no longer valued within this type of hierarchy. Power-over entails a maintenance and justification of relations of domination and subordination by the coercive use or threat of force, imposition of harms and sanctions, expression of disapproval, displeasure or restriction of liberties of the power Downs by the Ups (Warren, 1994). When analyzing the Judeo-Christian faiths, one may question whether the concept of Hell etc. function as a sanction or harm that may be inflicted if a individuals *will* does not conform to the ideals of the church. In short, are these sanctions for the benefit of the individual or the power keepers? The logic of domination is necessary to maintain and justify patriarchy. Powers-over relations encourage oppressive frameworks to flourish.

Dissecting power relationships invites a discussion of the current worldview. In order to invite change, an alternative image or ideal is offered. Starhawk (1990) states:

The vision we want to create must also reflect a different model of power, one rooted in our understanding of the Earth as alive. We live in a system where power is power-over, that is, domination and control; it is a system where a person or a group of people has the right to tell other

people what to do, to make their decisions, to set standards they have to live up to...and we have internalized the system of domination. (p. 76)

The ecofeminist vision rests within the desire to achieve the ideal egalitarian or equal power distributed system. The goal is not just to change who wields power but to transform the structure of power itself, creating new visions of power. The emergence of Goddess spirituality is a reflection of the desire to create a change. When the spirit becomes immanent within each of us there will be no split between heaven and Earth, the Earth will be seen as the "heaven" and the logic of domination will end. When each person becomes Goddess or God, people will have the inalienable right to be on Earth and to be alive (Starhawk, 1990). Achieving this task is difficult when the logic of domination is ingrained in people from birth and continually reinforced by polar opposites--dualistic notions of society. Only when humankind acknowledges that there is no difference between the spirit, humanity and nature will the Earth be perceived as a living Be-ing.

Discussion

Religion or spirituality operates in society to help aid in the formation of values, beliefs and morals. Religion is a body of teachings, a lineage or a practice that an individual ritualistically participates in to gain an understanding of the universe and reach a state of higher consciousness. This body of understanding (spirituality or religion) functions as a way to understand the universe. The most common idea that a Judeo-Christian Ethic fails to offer its members is the idea of immanent worth. The logic of domination inherent within patriarchal systems of order contradicts Goddess

spirituality and suppression of power-downs, ensuring a power-over dysfunctional system. The immanent value of all living beings protects the idea that every being is unique and a necessary part of the web of life. Immanent value derives from a simple principle that “your life is worth something.... You need only be what you are” (Starhawk 1987, as cited in Foss and Griffin, 1995, p. 4). People can not determine worth by hierarchical positioning. People may not earn, acquire or prove worth; it is a natural part of all beings. All entities are worthy of a clean and safe environment and an atmosphere free from domination, subordination and control. Immanent value and freedom are two properties linked to invitational rhetoric.

If people continue to operate within a system that does not create an image of immanent value, it will become increasingly difficult to picture the Earth through any lens but one of power and domination. Ecofeminism invites individuals to listen to a new understanding of the universe: “The only holistic approach that involves an anthropomorphized concept of deity is Goddess spirituality” (Spretnak, 1989, p. 128). A Goddess spirituality differs substantially from the concept of God that people adhere to today. No one is interested in worshipping “Yahweh with a skirt, a distant, judgmental, manipulative figure of power who holds us all in a state of terror” (Spretnak, 1989, p. 128). Shifting from a single male Godhead to a female Goddess without an understanding of the difference between both ideologies would foster the same logic of domination. In short, ecofeminists do not wish to force a change that gives the patriarchal construct of power-over power to women by taking it away from men. They wish to adopt a spirituality that symbolizes the way the Earth is naturally set up: “All forms of being are One, continually renewed in cyclic rhythms of birth,

maturity, death” (Spretnak, 1989, p. 128). Receiving the Goddess ensures an adoption of immanent value in all living Be-ings and serves as a catalyst towards a deconstruction of the logic of domination within Western mentality.

The aspects of immanent value are crucial for the theory of invitational rhetoric proposed by Foss and Griffin (1995). Understanding the logic of domination is one way ecofeminists invite individuals to look at a different ideology that cultivates a holistic worldview and environmental sustainability. As ecofeminists write and discuss the topics addressed in this chapter, their audience is given information not distributed by mainstream society. By creating awareness and offering a different view of the world, individuals are offered the opportunity to understand the themes of ecofeminist discourse and how those themes encourage a change in Western culture. These ecofeminist themes offer an invitation to learn more about the interconnectedness of the Goddess and the Earth as a new spirituality and social paradigm. Ecofeminists struggle to create an understanding of the establishments that perpetuate the logic of domination so individuals can interpret new meanings derived from existing knowledge. Information pertaining to ecofeminist themes is readily available but not widely distributed. Ecofeminists expose this information to their audiences to further their cause.

Notes

¹ Choosing to re-write words with different accents and syntax are often utilized within feminist writing. The word Be-ing is written differently to accentuate an entities more active role instilled within a Be-ing than being. Several Ecofeminists write the term this way. Mary Daly defines Be-ing as “Ultimate/intimate reality, the constantly unfolding verb of verbs which is intransitive, having no object that limits to its dynamism. The final cause, the good who is self-communicating who is the verb from whom, in whom, and with whom all true moments come. Actual participation in the ultimate intimate reality.” (Daly, 1987, p. 64)

² While the word history does not literally mean “his-story” it is apparent in certain instances that it becomes inappropriate to use this word. Particularly when individuals typically view the word as meaning his-story reflecting the idea that the history we are taught is typically taken from male frames of reference or reflects a male view. Ecofeminists and feminists use the word herstory to illustrate that it is “her-story” and not derived from a male centered view. It is for this reason that I choose to pattern myself by writing the word herstory where I feel it is important and appropriate. Language choices and images have long been studied in relation to the images they create within individuals. In order to slowly affect change conscious language changes and choices must be realized.

³ Inviting nature into a dialogue responds to the need for human Be-ings to include nature as a part of their system of meaning. Hence, equally important to every aspect of life is the Earth itself. For further insight see “Overcoming the Objectification of Nature in Constitutive Theories: Toward a Transhuman, materialist, Theory of Communication” (Western Journal of Communication, Summer, 1998).

⁴ The Earth Mother of Willendorf, ca. 30,000-25000 B.C.E. appears to be in the late stages of pregnancy and typically appears marked with red ochre the Earth pigment color of the life-giving blood. This pigment was placed on the limestone figure to represent the blood of new life.

⁵ Gadon (1989) states that India proves very insightful with respect to the triangle symbolism of female genitalia. In Hindu *Shakta* tradition the Goddess is worshiped as the ultimate reality and the *yantra*, the downward pointing triangle, is the ritual diagram used in meditation to invoke her presence.

⁶ Cognitive dissonance refers to the idea that an individual experiences when their set of beliefs; values or morals are challenged. In this instance the individuals idea of “man” being held higher than nature and an understanding of the relationship between the Goddess and the destruction of the Earth becomes a reality. The offering of this ideal to individuals may create cognitive (mental) dissonance that may or may not lead to a desired change of the individual’s ideologies.

CHAPTER 4

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE GODDESS AS A GATEWAY TOWARDS ECOFEMINIST THINKING

Ecofeminist rhetoric exposes audiences to a new interpretation of Western systems of domination. Aspects of Goddess spirituality foster an adoption of immanent value in all living Be-ings enabling the deconstruction of the logic of domination. This understanding invites audiences to participate in the re-emergence of the Goddess. Through the re-emergence of the Goddess, audiences are able to initiate a dialogue with nature that is necessary to overcome systems of domination. Richard Rogers (1998) states: "I believe objectification negates the possibility for dialogue. That which is quintessentially feminine in the dominant traditions of the Western world--call it nature, matter, physicality, body--has long been rendered irrelevant" (p. 249). A dialogue inclusive of nature is characteristic of ecofeminist ideologies. It is important to note that the term dialogue is not referred to in the verbal sense of the word but rather the immanent dialogue between humans and the environment. It is the dialogue between humans and the environment that must be re-instated in order to promote a shift within current systems of thought. In contrast objectification--the denial of immanent value lessens the possibility for nature to enter into human dialogues.

As discussed in chapter three, the cyclical system of the Goddess functions in an environmentally sustainable manner. Ecofeminist advocates do not strive to worship the

Goddess as supreme higher power but utilize Goddess ritual as a means of understanding and illustrating a time when sustainable living was a realistic success. Liberation of the oppressed and the dissolving of dualistic notions allows a new consciousness to emerge and advances a potential paradigm shift within Western society.

This chapter will further analyze the oppression of the Other. Destructive dualities that hold subordinated beings (Other) in power-down positions will be examined as instrumental ideologies and objectifying frameworks. Recognizing the creation of polar opposites or dualistic norms serves as a platform for deconstructing Western systems of domination. Goddess worship functions as a gateway towards this deconstruction by fostering an understanding of the concept of Other and its attendant instrumental or objectifying frameworks. Thus, the deconstruction of dysfunctional systems of power invites the inclusion of nature as a valid part of cultural dialogue. In addition, this chapter will examine how consciousness-raising forums that gather for the purpose of Goddess spirituality serve as an invitation for individuals to deconstruct the current Western ideologies in favor of more egalitarian ways of thought.

In order to comprehend why nature has been left out of the dialogue of Western society, one must look at the concept of Other. Women for centuries have been left out of the dialogue in the public sphere (Griffin). The decision-makers have been men. The creation of the "Other" from a patriarchal standpoint is as follows: Male=good, Female=bad, man=human, woman=other (Dworkin, 1974). Hence, if nature is gendered, female it is placed within the category of Other, left out of the dialogue, and is seen as having no intrinsic worth. Ursula Le Guin (1993) states:

Civilized man says: I am Self, I am Master, all the rest is Other--outside, below, underneath, subservient. I own, I use, I explore, I exploit, I control. What I do is what matters, What I want is what matter is for. I am that I am, and the rest is women and wilderness, to be used as I see fit. (as cited in Plumwood, p. 141)

Dismissing women and wilderness as “Other” is one way to further an instrumental idea of the Earth. By gendering the Earth female and assigning negative dualisms to “her” exploiting the Earth’s resources is seen as justified-- for the use of “man.”

Instrumentalism: The Earth as “Other”

How is nature feminine? Stearney (1994) focused on the importance of the maternal archetype in our understanding of nature. Most importantly she states that utilizing gender-neutral metaphors “may ultimately prove more useful... for the ecofeminist project” (p. 157). Our language is filled with several metaphors gendering the Earth as female, excluding males from the dialogue of nature. Examples of such language are “Mother Earth”, “virgin wilderness,” (meaning untouched by man) and references to rivers and lakes as female—“taming her wild waters”--exemplify gendering of the Earth as female. In addition to actually referring to the environment in a feminine way, the polarities associated with nature are associated with feminine contexts. For example, nature is irrational while culture is reasonable thus creating the dualistic notion that man is to culture as woman is to nature. Nature exemplifies order through chaos--destroying one area to rebuild another (for example, forest fires, while destructive creates new life). Nature is uncontrollable and erratic in every aspect of its

Be-ing. Patriarchal society does not value erratic responses; it values reason and control. The Earth consequently becomes the Other, resulting in the alienation of humans from nature. Hence, the liberation of human “Others” may not be effected without the liberation of nature (Gaard, 1997). Understanding how all forms of domination are interconnected is a central tenet to ecofeminists. Reaching this understanding is the invitation offered throughout Ecofeminist discourse via the Goddess.

As long as the Earth continues to be positioned as Other, it will be seen only for its worth to the establishment. All those seen as Other are believed to have no immanent worth. For example, the Colorado River has no right to exist in its own state; humans must figure out how it may be used to benefit human existence. This type of means-end reasoning can be seen within Capitalist and Marxist frameworks which both see humans as first and the Earth second, as a resource. This instrumentalist view operates from a standpoint that intelligence, reproductive capacities, technology and the environment may all be harnessed for the use of humankind. Thus, an instrumentalist mentality values only the use of the being by humans. For example, one could ask whether women are given birthing compensation (e.g. time off from work) to aid in their pregnancy or to ensure the reproductive means reach an end? Hence, are women valued for intrinsic worth or for their reproductive value? This type of instrumentalist attitude is prevalent within Western thought and objectifies in order to ensure the means-end philosophy that is detrimental to the environment and the Other.

Means-end mentality that manipulates all aspects of existence for humankind’s “advancement” requires an ethical process for rationalizing this type of abuse. As

discussed in chapter three, ecofeminists critique the separation of humankind from the Earth and show how this division is detrimental to the environment because it places humans above the Earth. The separation of humans from their environment allows the objectification of the Other to be more easily rationalized. Raymond Barglow (1994) states:

If you and I no longer regard ourselves as inhabiting the same moral universe, then we may very well feel that we can treat one another any way we please. Labeling another person, or group of persons [or nature, women] the “enemy” can serve this function; denying their humanity makes it easier to destroy them without suffering remorse. (p. 95)

In this passage Barglow refers to the separation of Earth from body. If a person separates himself or herself from another group, a hierarchical ordering may become prevalent. Hence, it is this separation or disconnection “civilized” individuals participate in that allows them to objectify the Earth and those entities positioned as Other without feeling ethically immoral. A good example of this type of rationalization occurred during the Tuskegee Syphilis experiment which was declared “ethically unjustified in 1932” (Solomon, 1985, p. 233). For forty years male Negroes were *unknowingly* exposed to and denied treatment for the syphilis. The men involved in the study were treated and viewed as Other in order to rationalize the harm being done to them. The experiment was for the “good of man” and for the sake of science. Scientific and technological objectification questions the validity of human ethical evaluation and typically operates from an instrumentalist framework. Withholding respect from

intimate objects and individuals allows for objectification and constitutes the discriminating process that negates ecofeminist ideologies.

One way the destruction of nature is rationalized and ensured is through the use of metaphor. As discussed earlier, the Earth has been gendered female and thus operates as Other-- it is either seen as "less than" (female) or as a dead, lifeless thing. In addition to the metaphor of a female gendered Earth aiding those who objectify the planet, the metaphor of beast serves a similar function. The beast is positioned as not being human. It embodies a symbol of evil, irrationality and a wild animal that is not fit for existence (Keel, 1997). Civilization is achieved by driving out and killing the beast. This is most often exemplified by man's controlling of nature. Chaos and disorder must not be tolerated and the beast must be driven out. Thus, the evil of the beast is the scapegoat for claiming the lives of millions of animals driven from their lands each year. It is interesting to note that animals (beasts) are placed into the category of Other because they too are seen as having no imminent worth. They are to be consumed and utilized for the purposes of humans once again exemplifying the instrumental view that dominates Western thought. Marti Keel (1997) states:

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. 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. (p. 219)

The polar opposites created by masculine systems of thought do not allow males to feel openly, let alone to rely on body and emotion more than the rational mind. As stated earlier, body is nature and mind is culture, thus positioning females with nature (body) and males with culture (mind). The image of beast as Other leads to yet another image pitting humans against nature, excluding them from the vital dialogue needed to ensure the sustainability of the planet.

In addition to the representation of beast, the image of nature as “mindless matter” which exists to serve the needs of “superior rational man” functions as a powerful rationale insuring the separation of humans from nature (Keel, 1997). As mentioned earlier, animals are depicted as having a different, unequal nature from humans. Keel (1997) comments that animals 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’)” (p. 219). Viewing the Earth as matter helps to rationalize its destruction and to allow Others who do not benefit or serve some use to mankind to be subordinated. Keel (1997) points to Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy as contributing 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. 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. (p. 219)

Thus the plants existed to nourish the animals and the animals to feed man. The function of women, animals and slaves as instruments was to serve men and to aid in their attainment of the highest happiness of free, adult men (Keel, 1997). Consequently, there is no need to control what has already been deemed inferior and weak. Additionally, as mentioned in chapter three, the Jewish-Christian tradition has also contributed to the instrumentalist hierarchy assigned to nature.¹ The conception of nature as an object for “Man’s” use was taken 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, domonic aspect of nature was, thus finally laid to rest, and the image of nature as machine was born. (Keel, 1997, p. 220)

Viewing nature as a machine aids in the rationale needed to subordinate without ethical implications because machines are seen as inanimate objects with no immanent worth. Ordering nature as Other and as machine pits humankind against one another and any other animal or being intruding on the progress (technology) is used insofar as it furthers the machine’s success. Keel (1997) states: “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’” (p. 220).

It has been established that in Western Culture the Earth is gendered female and nature's dualistic traits are assigned to women (irrational, wild, etc.) as well as women's dualistic meaning to the Earth. Through the metaphors of the Earth as female, beast and mindless matter, men are separated violently from the female (nature) world--leaving the temple of the body. Feminist psychoanalytic theory has offered some suggestions about the motivation behind this separation. Both boys' and girls' earliest experiences are that of undifferentiated oneness with the mother figure. The boy and the girl must see themselves as separate from the mother figure eventually but unlike the girl, the boy must come to view himself as opposed to all that is female as well (Keel, 1997). Keel (1997) states: "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" (p. 220). Women and nature come to represent a world of vulnerability, a controlled entity to be used, and a contingency that men must transcend. The separation from women and from nature may be seen and understood by looking at rituals of initiation into manhood as Keel (1997) points out:

A boy's entrance into manhood is typically marked by separation from women and often by violence toward the nonhuman world (animals). 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. (p. 220)

Growing up learning the polarities of women and men and the conquering mentalities inherent in instrumentalist ideals necessary for male-system markets to flourish demeans

the natural sustainable way of the Earth and Goddess. The desire to transcend and separate from all that is considered female in the name of all that is masculine encourages escape from the body thus leaving nature (body) out of the cultural dialogue of Western society. The polarities of Western culture create a need for males to be fundamentally different from females. In order to avoid being demeaned for vulnerability and morality, all the aspects of body that are attached to females--blood, emotion are viewed as undesirable and become what males strive to separate from in order to achieve what is holy and worthy--those values positioned as masculine.

Positioning the environment and subordinated beings as Other keeps the current system in place and assures the success of the "machine," securing the place of feminine and masculine maleficent dualisms. Ecofeminists strive to relay the message of the oppressed Other and an understanding of the instrumentalist attitude inherent in Western mentality. Goddess spirituality serves as a platform for discussion promoting sustainable living environments. Ecofeminists utilize this information as a gateway or invitation furthering a paradigm shift and a change of consciousness. Consequently, if "objectification negates the possibility for dialogue" (Rogers, 1997, p. 249), it makes sense that an arena for a dialogue to emerge out of is needed to spread the Ecofeminist movement. Goddess spirituality potentially provides the type of environment needed to bring nature back into humankind's dialogue. When people gather to speak to the Goddess, they not only come to be in the presence of a undifferentiated Be-ing but to raise consciousness about the current state of affairs within the environment and the dominator models that are destroying the Earth. Rogers (1997) states: "To listen to 'nature' instead of objectifying and subjugating it/her/them, is perhaps similar to

Nietzsche's will to power: the affirmation of becoming and multiplicity, the embracing of the lack of totality and the impossibility of control" (p. 263). The temple of the Goddess is a place where people come to listen to nature. The beginning of the lost dialogue between humans and the natural world may start to unfold again. It is this re-emergence of the Goddess that is the gateway to Ecofeminist thinking.

Consciousness Raising

The gateway towards a non-oppressive system of thought encompassing nature in its dialogue becomes visible in Goddess ritual. As a non-traditional form of rhetoric, consciousness raising entails transcending shared experience to the collective. Consciousness raising is supported by those individuals needing a free environment where they can discuss their identity as subordinated Other. For example, the experience of the Goddess is offered to audiences via ecofeminist authors. The experience and stories shared in ecofeminist discourse may raise the consciousness of the reader. Thus, ecofeminist discourse does not function as a "non-traditional" group but the message of the Goddess invites non-traditional dialogue. As the message begins to expand, reaching more individuals, an understanding of the shift needed to save the environment becomes evident. Creation of a climate where individuals are free to express themselves and to understand their lives in new ways is apropos for transcending old ideas exemplified through consciousness raising. This type of freedom for speech is representative of invitational rhetorical requirements as well as typifying an arena for the "effeminate style" of speech.

Why is this new or Neo-Paganism so sought after today? Margot Adler (1989)

states:

Modern Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft [in America is] a surprising and amazing attempt by Westerners in the heart of our industrial society to create non-authoritarian and non-dogmatic religions.... What's unusual about modern Pagans is that they remain anti-authoritarian while retaining rituals and ecstatic techniques that, in our culture, are used only by dogmatic religions or are the province of small and forgotten tribal groups. (as cited in Gadon, 1989, p. 237)

Worshipping the Goddess offers a new way for individuals to find comfort within spirituality without having to conform to an "organized" religion: "The Craft today is undergoing more than a revival, it is experiencing a renaissance, a re-creation" (Starhawk as cited in Gadon, 1989, p. 237). It is Starhawk's as well as others' (Adler, Gadon, Plumwood) belief that ritual has the power to transform reality--to reveal the "sacred" already resting at humankind's fingertips (Gadon, 1989). This transformation involves communing nature, body, mind, and spirit together to encourage a doctrine furthering sustainable environments. Adler (1989) estimates that there are 100,000 active pagans (in the US), men and women, a live subculture who call themselves witches, Druids and Goddess worshipers (as cited in Gadon, p. 237). Adler (1989) comments: "Neo-paganism has no set creeds, no priestly establishment and is a religion of immanence, not transcendence, based on experience, not words. People who call themselves pagans consider themselves part of a religious movement that antedates Christianity and monotheism" (as cited in Gadon, p. 237). Within a consciousness-

raising framework, according to Campbell (1973), “There is no leader, rhetor or expert,” (p. 79) everyone involved is considered an expert and worthy of leadership. This leaderless attitude is exemplified within Goddess ritual frameworks.

In addition to participation in the movement against monolithic religions, pagans also share a goal of living in harmony with nature in an effort to lessen the separateness that current societal rituals induce (such as the indoor ceremonies of Judeo-Christian faiths--pagans ground spirituality outside including the Earth). For example, while attending the temple of the Goddess, children are not viewed as a disturbance unlike some monotheistic religions that have created cry rooms to keep the children from interrupting the ritual.² Goddess ritual is also often held outside with and in the presence of nature not in a building or manufactured place. Harmony with nature is an aspect of Goddess mentality that has disappeared in most of society and Ecofeminist rhetoric seeks to offer the way of the Goddess as an opportunity to regain this integrity.

Goddess worship consciousness raising has the potential to create awareness, once again letting people understand and learn about the degradation to women, animals and nature towards creating a new partnership. It was this same type of consciousness raising during the 1960s that made many painfully aware that the role of women in traditional religion was deviant at best (Gadon, 1989). Goddess mentality also fosters a oneness with body, allowing men to embrace what they have been socialized to transcend, thus bringing “God” back to the Earth not separating deity from humanity ultimately breaks down polarities and encourages environmentally friendly ways. Commenting on the importance for religious systems to be egalitarian, Carol Christ (1990) states: “Religious symbol systems focused around exclusively male images of

divinity create the impression that female power can never be fully legitimate, or wholly beneficent” (p. 59). The re-emergence of the Goddess as a vital spiritual connection illustrates the worth of religions centering around female deities. Yet it is important to remember that the Goddess is not simply the changing of the male God to a female body. The Goddess represents the breath of the universe. As an embodiment of the universe, she is usually seen as immanent and present in every Be-ing (Stein, 1996). As mentioned in chapter three, Goddess mentality functions as an egalitarian system. Elinor Gadon (1989) states: “To date no archaeological, historical, or anthropological evidence has been found for any widespread female dominant cultures in which males were oppressed. Goddess cultures, as we have observed, were woman centered and egalitarian” (p. 303). The message of the Goddess centers around ecofeminist ideology and is not intent on shifting the “power” from one deity to another. Thus, the time of the Goddess was not a time that men were oppressed. The directive of individuals worshipping alternative deities like the Goddess is to raise awareness and promote change through self-discovery, consequently bridging the gap between the spirit and the Earth, joining them as one entity capable of transcending gender and dominance in favor of a sustainable planet.

Discussion

Communing via the temple of the Goddess, individuals share thoughts and concerns for the Earth and themselves. Through recognizing the models of domination incorporated in Western culture, individuals grow together because of their common understanding. Goddess spirituality teaches humanity that there is no need to separate

spirit from matter in order to feel fulfilled. Everything that human beings are is immanent and only need to be accepted and recognized to attain enlightenment. The Goddess embraces the “feminine style” of speech that has been denounced by the patriarchy. Therefore, those who learn to listen to nature by way of the Goddess come to understand an “effeminate style” and begin the change of social consciousness. Speaking unspoken facts about the destruction of the Goddess and the oppression of the Other has begun the consciousness raising process that Frye (1993) calls “hearing each other into speech” (p. 133). Because of this type of sharing, new “webs of meaning” are generated. Embracing Goddess centered spirituality fosters an understanding necessary to sustain the environment.

It is not important whether individuals believe in the “power” or “promise” of the Goddess. It is important that through introducing the Goddess, via ecofeminist discourse, an individual’s consciousness becomes raised. In addition, the Goddess as a feminine symbol reminds women and men of the legitimate history that has been buried. Through the re-emergence of the Goddess, the 30,000 years prior to a patrilineal and monolithic era may be remembered. The temple of the Goddess is one potential arena where ecofeminist discourse invites awareness and an understanding of the instrumentalist, objectifying system inherent within Western cultures. Charlene Spretnak (1989) states:

She is *immanent* in our lives and our world. She contains both female and male, in Her womb, as a male deity cannot; all beings are *part of Her*, not distant creations. She also symbolizes the power of the female body/mind. There is no “party line” of Goddess worship; rather, each

person's process of perceiving and living Her truth is a movement in the larger dance--hence the phrase "The Goddess Is All." (p. 128)

This passage epitomizes the message of the Goddess as well as the communication many ecofeminists strive to attain with their audiences. Furthermore, the aspects of invitational rhetoric require a discourse to hold each individual and Be-ing as having immanent worth is exemplified by this quote. A deity that blends body, mind and self together blurring gender and not objectifying or creating an Other is the way of the Goddess. In order to attain a sustainable environment, instrumentalist mentality and oppressive systems must be challenged. Through the gateway of the Goddess, ecofeminist discourse utilizes invitational rhetoric to offer a new message to their audience--a message of undifferentiated existence. The re-emergence of the Goddess introduces a scenario where nature is included in the dialogue of Western culture to affirm that the spirit is not separate from the self, but immanent in all Be-ings on Earth.

Notes

¹ The Genesis account of creation states that “man” had dominion over every living thing that moved upon the earth (Genesis 1:26). The Yahwist version tells us that nonhuman animals were created by God to be helpers or companions for Adam, when they were seen as unfit that was when Eve was created (Genesis 2:22). This reinforces the notion that women and animals are on Earth to serve man (Keel, 1997).

² The observations regarding children and the type of activities that are experienced at a Goddess temple are first hand experiences of the researcher. Children and caretakers of the children are allowed to exit the temple re-entering the circle whenever needed. The temple etiquette, if any is needed before the ceremony begins and during this time it is explained that the Goddess is forgiving and does not mind mistakes for this is what makes us all unique, thus having immanent worth.

CHAPTER 5

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF ECOFEMINIST RHETORIC AS INVITATIONAL

Thus far, this analysis has explored the themes surrounding the invitational aspects of ecofeminist rhetoric. In order for a new social system to develop within Western culture, images and new ideologies must evolve. Common ecofeminist themes agitate against the status quo through offering up a new comprehension for understanding the dialogue between humans and nature. Ecofeminists cultivate the ideals of these new ideologies via the Goddess, information regarding dualistic notions and the concept of the Other, understanding instrumentalist and male-based systems of power, power-over constructs and a variety of other philosophies previously discussed in this analysis. It is clear that the authors of ecofeminist discourse are engaged in a struggle to express these ideologies for a culture molded to reject the natural in favor of the material.

This chapter will explore two pieces of ecofeminist rhetoric. The discourse will be analyzed through the use of Foss and Griffin's (1995) theory of Invitational Rhetoric. Other methods of analysis will touch on the non-traditional rhetorical use of voice called "effeminate style" (Jamieson, 1988). Invitational rhetoric attempts to offer opinions and ideologies to an audience. An invitational rhetor does not try to dominate her/his audience, rather he/she believes that each individual has the right to choose the

persuasive aspect of the rhetorical message when it is right for them to do so (Foss and Griffin, 1995). As Foss and Griffin (1995) state: “Invitational rhetors do not believe they have the right to claim that their experiences or perspectives are superior to those of their audience members and refuse to impose their perspectives on them” (p. 5-6). Thus, it stands to reason that ecofeminist rhetoric would benefit by operating outside of the traditional model for persuasion utilizing a more “appropriate” form such as invitational rhetoric. This is not to say that traditional forms do not have their place for worthy analysis but consistent with the analysis in chapter two, invitational rhetoric is more suited for ecofeminist discourse as it does not subordinate or intend to dominate its audience in the effort to seek change.

Because invitational rhetoric is grounded in a feminist belief system, it must include three factors: equality, immanent value and self-determination. In addition to the above criteria, invitational rhetoric strives to combine the ideal of offering as well as creating an environment including the external conditions of safety, value and freedom. The following chapter will examine Starhawk’s (1989) essay “Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism” and Linda Vance’s (1993) essay “Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality.”

Starhawk’s (1989) essay encompasses several of the themes discussed in the previous chapters. Her essay attempts to create a foundation for the audience towards an understanding of what earth-based spirituality is and how it functions as a part of the ecofeminist cause. Foss and Griffin (1995) state that the practice of offering involves inviting the audience to view the world differently. Offering would not entail probing for change or invading the audience’s individual opinion but rather a process of sharing

in order to come to a new understanding. One of the most instrumental and beneficial tools for identifying if a discourse is invitational is through the rhetor's use of language. Starhawk's (1989) language in the first three paragraphs of her essay offers insight regarding Earth-based spiritualities:

Earth-based spirituality influences ecofeminism by informing its values. This does not mean that every ecofeminist must worship the goddess, perform rituals, or adopt any particular belief system. *We are not attempting to promote or enforce a spiritual practice: in my own tradition, we do not proselytize and we believe firmly that our way is not the one, right, true and only one for everyone.* Many people live very fulfilled and satisfying lives without doing anything that we would typically call spiritual, and that's fine [emphasis added]. (p. 174)

Emphasis in the above passage illustrates the cohesiveness of the pronoun "we" to allocate a feeling of togetherness and that the rhetor conveys a feeling of inclusion with her audience. In addition, at the beginning of the passage, the rhetor states that the purposes of ecofeminist earth-based affiliations are to *inform* their audiences of the values inherent in these types of spiritualities-- not to persuade. Starhawk (1989) continues to address those members of her audience who may not subscribe to any spirituality or to any type of earth-based spirituality by stating that "our way is not the one, right true and only one for everyone" (p. 174). This passage dissuades the possibility of any distractions the audience may have listening to Starhawk's message based on their current spiritual identity.

Foss and Griffin (1995) theorize that in order for mutual understanding to become a reality, the external conditions of safety, value and freedom must exist. Starhawk acknowledges these conditions by recognizing that her audience has immanent worth through her acceptance that they may belong to and support other spiritual ideologies. Value is conveyed when rhetors try to think from others' perspectives (Foss and Griffin, 1995). It appears that Starhawk recognizes that her audience may potentially be interpreting this type of discourse for the first time and by not devaluing the audience's ideologies she can create empathy for her cause. The first passage of her essay encourages a feeling of freedom by not seeking to dominate or control the audience. It becomes obvious through Starhawk's use of inclusive language and her appreciation for individual diversity that her essay is intent on exposing the audience to the messages inclusive of earth-based spiritualities rather than discounting current ideologies and forcing a change, thus *offering* new ideas.

Invitational rhetoric does not accept oppression and domination as worthy human values. An intrinsically feminist viewpoint, and aspect of invitational rhetoric, revolves around the celebration of every living being as having immanent worth and value. In an effort to describe one of the aspects of earth-based spirituality, Starhawk discusses the idea of immanence, stating: "Earth-based spirituality is based on three core concepts. The first is that of immanence: the Goddess is embodied in the living world, in the human, animal, plant, and mineral communities and their interrelationships" (p. 177). Whether the Goddess is an aspect of your belief system is irrelevant. What is relevant is the idea that the spirit world is attached and grounded within the Earth.

Starhawk (1989) states:

Immanence challenges our sense of values. When the sacred is immanent, each being has a value that is inherent, that cannot be diminished, rated, or ranked, that does not have to be earned or granted. Immanence also shifts our definition of power. Power is not only power-over, the ability to manipulate, control and punish-but also power-from-within, *the inherent ability each of us has to become what we are meant to be--as a seed has within it the inherent power to root, grow, flower, and fruit* [emphasis added]. (p. 177)

Starhawk utilizes the earth-based spirituality of the Goddess to invite the audience into a discussion involving the way individuals position and define power constructs. The italicized part of the passage points to the self-determination aspect of invitational rhetoric that allows and encourages individuals to make their own decisions about how they wish to live their lives. Furthering this idea, Starhawk states: "Personal power increases when we take on responsibility, and develops through our personal integrity, living our beliefs, acting on our ideas, striving for balance. We cannot gain power from within by trying to get something for nothing" (p. 177). Starhawk does not explicitly state that the way to attain this power can only be accomplished by this one way. Discussing what immanent value entails solidifies Starhawk's position. Her argument is clear in that it becomes apparent to the audience that the current worldview does not associate power with the natural environment. Resonating with the audience is the idea that the spirit world is attached and grounded in the Earth.

Starhawk (1989) grounds the concept of associating Earth matter as spirit by stating:

For example, from the Native American sweat lodge or the African bimbe-*we can only gain real power if we return energy and commitment to the real life, present-day struggles of those communities. Power from within must be grounded, that is, connected to the earth, to the actual material conditions of life, for the material world is the territory of the spirit in earth-based traditions [italics added].* (p. 177)

In this passage, Starhawk attempts to offer ideas critiquing how non earth-based spiritualities hold the spirit above the Earth and humankind. In turn, this practice creates a separation of spirit and matter as discussed in chapter four: “Immanence is also a concept that works against the passivity sometimes attributed to spiritual philosophies” (Starhawk, 1989, p. 178). Rather than implying that *all* spiritual philosophies are passive regarding immanence, Starhawk softens the message by saying *sometimes*. Passivity furthers the separation of spirit and matter condoning the destruction of the Earth perpetuated thorough the belief that when individuals die they potentially go to a “better place” above the Earth, for eternity. Starhawk (1989) states: “Earth-based spirituality does not see human beings as separate from nature, nor does it imagine the human order and the natural order as opposites at war” (p. 178). Earth based Goddess mentality grounds spirituality on Earth and there is no one else to save the populace but the individuals themselves.

It is difficult for the above ideas to be conceptualized, particularly in Western culture where monotheism is the governing form of spirituality. At no time in Starhawk’s essay does she disparage or insult her audience by debasing the system of

belief audience members might employ. This is the criterion invitational rhetoric identifies as safety. When the discourse makes no attempt to hurt, belittle or degrade an audience member, it produces a feeling of safety (Foss and Griffin, 1995). As stated, Starhawk illustrates the negatives of the current worldview via the message of earth-based spiritualities.

Consistent with a mindset of earth-based spiritualities, Starhawk was able to point out her dissenting attitude with regard to environmentalists and the current worldview. During the opening pages of Starhawk's essay, she explains the need for inherent and immanent value to be extended to everyone. Invitational rhetoric requires that this value and immanence be extended to *all* living beings regardless of their position in the hierarchy. In addition, an acceptance and understanding that all beings are interconnected furnishes the basis for earth-based spiritual politics. After having demonstrated the great need for immanence to be established as a serious societal value, Starhawk (1989) explains: "This understanding means that feminists, Pagans, and other individuals who have identified with the perspective of interconnection cannot support many of the opinions expressed by environmentalists" (p. 179). Starhawk's appeal begins through an attempt to move her audience towards and acceptance of the ideas of interconnectedness and immanence and thus the invitation to view the world through a different lens.

To help exemplify how individuals ignore the ideal of immanence and interconnected relationships, Starhawk (1989) shares an opinion expressed by one of the founders of Earth First! Dave Foreman. He believed that people should oppose sending aid to famine victims in Africa because that is nature's answer to human overpopulation.

Starhawk maintains that for individuals operating from an earth-based spirituality, the above rational or solution would not be acceptable because it denies compassion and would be unethical because it violates an understanding of the immanent presence of the sacred on Earth (Starhawk, 1989). This example leads to a discussion of how value must be restored to all living Be-ings (women, homosexuals, animals, all races, etc.). It becomes clear to the audience that unless individuals can comprehend the systems of oppression operating throughout the world, people can not develop a political strategy or program of political action that will make sense (Starhawk, 1989): “It is in the interests of those who rule to prevent us from seeing these connections--because such knowledge is power” (p. 180). Starhawk appeals to an individual’s innate desire for freedom and encourages people to join together, challenging the values of power-over for use of the environment in favor of immanence and valuing all life.

Lastly, Starhawk (1989) proposes how a movement informed by the values of earth-based spirituality would address and construct a political agenda reflecting the importance of interconnectedness. Starhawk (1989) states regarding this proposal that: “What follows is *my personal formulation*, a sketch meant to *stimulate thinking*, not a *final platform*. Its order does not necessarily represent priorities of importance: a list is necessarily linear, but the issues are all interconnected” [emphasis added] (p. 182). The italicized words of this sentence highlight the language used by Starhawk consistent with the ideas of offering. Once again, offering occurs when the rhetor enters an interaction with a goal not to convert others to their exact position but rather to share their ideas and offer an alternative understanding of the subject (Foss and Griffin, 1995). Starhawk does not state that her proposal is the *only* way to achieve sustainable

environments or that her way is the best. Rather, she offers these ideas as a gateway to help stimulate the reader's thinking regarding sustainable environments via conceptualizing immanent value. Starhawk's (1989) list includes four categories: Liberty and justice for all, A sustainable livelihood for everyone, A sustainable environment for everyone and Support a multiplicity of spiritual directions. Throughout the description of all four of these classifications Starhawk (1989) continues with her use of the inclusive pronoun "we." Particularly evident of invitational rhetoric is the last grouping that asks individuals to support a multiplicity of spiritual directions.

Addressing how one might actualize this practice, Starhawk (1989) states:

By not interfering with the practices of groups or individuals as long as they don't interfere with the rights of others; by countering stereotypes and educating people about earth-based spiritualities; by protecting the land, the wilderness, and the ancient sacred place of all traditions; by not allowing privileges to some traditions that are denied others; and, basically, by keeping church and state separate. (p. 183)

This entire passage is consistent with the theoretical implications of invitational rhetoric. Invitational rhetoric strives for a free, safe and supported environment in which individuals make up their own minds without fear of indignity. Starhawk (1989) solidifies this desire by stating:

People cling to power, wealth, and privilege, and cannot necessarily see that they might benefit, in the long run by sharing more equally. But *our* belief in the immanent value of all, and *our* understanding that the means *we* use themselves determine the ends we will create, place inherent

restriction on the means of persuasion *we* can use [italics added].

(p. 183)

This passage is interesting in that Starhawk is once again inclusive with her language by stating “*our* belief in the immanent.” The reader is left to fill in the blanks. Does she mean herself and other ecofeminists or is she inclusive of her audience assuming they have changed their previous mindset or were accepting of her beliefs from the beginning of her essay? Regardless, the language implies a sense of responsibility. Starhawk subtly positions herself as the leader without proclaiming that her way is the only way thus the audience’s natural response is to desire a feeling of inclusion and understanding. No individual wants to perpetuate destruction and think of themselves as inherently accountable for the demise of the Earth. It is for this reason Starhawk’s does not blame or accuse, rather she invites unity and understanding furthering environmental sustainability.

Starhawk (1989) also states in the last sentence that because of believing in immanence persuasive methods are restricted. For example, as stated in chapter one of this study, *ecofeminist discourse may not function with traditional methodologies* because those methods are inherently patriarchal and are in direct opposition to the ecofeminist cause. Following with this thinking, any sort of dominance or violence utilized to further the ecofeminist cause would be hypocritical. Starhawk offers suggestions for how to nonviolently and constructively bring about a change of consciousness, leaving her audience with a sense of hope. Starhawk (1989) concludes: “Although the structures of war and domination are strongly entrenched, they must

inevitably change, as all things change. We can become agent of that transformation, and bring a new world to birth” (p. 184).

Similar to Starhawk (1989), Vance’s (1993) essay *offers* the audience an opportunity for viewing the world through a different practice and understanding. In keeping with the ideas of invitational rhetoric, Vance shares her own experience through a recollection of how nature has been neglected in the dialogue within society. It appears that Vance shares and offers her opinions in hopes of liberating her audiences by pointing them towards a new mindset. Vance (1993) believes that comprehending ecofeminism begins by “understanding, interpreting, describing, and envisioning a past, a present and a future all with an intentional consciousness of the ways in which the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature are intertwined” (p. 126). Utilizing the inclusive language of “we” much like Starhawk, Vance (1993) continues to explain that: “Without an appreciation of the past, *we* don’t know where *we* ’ve come from. Without knowledge of the present, *we* can’t know where we are. And, most critically, without a vision of the future, *we* can’t move forward” [italics added] (p. 126). Vance (1993) includes herself, shaping a feeling that people are in this together. The word *we* implies that all individuals have something to gain to help aid the current ecological crisis. Through understanding the past, present and future of ecofeminism, Vance educates her audience regarding the infrequently discussed ecofeminist views of the world. Vance (1993) begins by telling a story of how she feels when she is in the forest relating it to a home away from home. Vance (1993) states:

I live in a town in New England, but the forest is home, in the sense that it provides the continuity in my life, the place I return to, humbly, time

and again. But insofar as I view the wild places of my life that way, *I am no different from generations of humans, environmental despoilers and conservationists alike, who see the nonhuman world in terms of its value or use for them* [emphasis added]. (p. 118)

This is an interesting passage, as Vance seems to pass judgment on particular individuals but as the audience continues to read, it becomes apparent that she takes responsibility for the mentality that has destroyed and degraded nature. Vance (1993) continues:

I may love and honor it, but try as I might, I slip continuously into the prevailing Western view of the forest, and nature, as separate, other, a place to go...*I don't live there (the forest), don't exist in a dialectical relationship with it. Instead, my experience of forest is mediated by literature, by religion, by history, by ethnicity, by science, by gender by class: by all the forces that interact at any given time to form my--or anyone's--conceptual framework* [emphasis added]. (p. 118)

Here, Vance alludes to the destruction of nature as directly resulting from individuals' conceptual frameworks, perpetuating the separation of the human world from the natural world. The discussion of contextual frameworks functions not only as a common ecofeminist theme but also operates as an invitational method. By including herself in the scenario, Vance potentially allows the audience to not feel completely alone and or guilty for the demise of nature. By not using a blaming tactic or stronger words to describe the current ecological condition Vance avoids insulting or belittling her

audience. Thus, Vance utilized the aspect of safety creating a free environment for which ideas can be shared and contemplated.

Vance's (1993) essay continues providing a small review of literature stating that: "A man- against nature theme resonates throughout the dominant white culture of this country, infusing fiction, poetry, art, and popular literature" (p. 119). Even nature writing, which is a rich literary tradition in the United States, has been male-dominated (Vance, 1993). The frameworks inherent in these male-based nature essays are partially responsible for how humans view nature today. Writers of nature essays have not typically included a wide cross section of people who actually represent the populace. Vance (1993) ends her discussion of environmental frameworks by stating, particularly for women, that: "For experience to become tradition, it has to be known, but women's lives have not been seen as important enough to be told." (p. 122) In order to exemplify how history has not recorded the lives and customs of women Vance (1993) states:

The ordinary stuff of men's lives is passed on to everyone through popular culture. I have never hunted for sustenance or pleasure, yet I know what it is like to kill animals I have never seen, because men's hunting tales are piled like old magazines in my memory.... I could tell you how a man trapped beaver in the mid-nineteenth century, but can do no more than speculate on what his wife, at home, used to catch her menstrual flow

(p. 122)

Vance (1993), through her use of example, contends that the stories of women and the Other have been left out of the historical dialogue from which humans frame meanings

derived from every-day life. Vance (1993) states: “Traditional histories, with their emphasis on great men and great wars, have *tended* to ignore the natural environment except as a site where the real drama took place” [italics added] (p. 127). Despite the overwhelming evidence that women and nature have been left out of historical accounts, the language Vance utilizes is not accusatory. Thus, an invitation to explore the past, present and future of Ecofeminist discourse is offered to the audience. Vance’s (1993) essay tells the audience some portions of the other side of the historical tale from the standpoint of the Other. The next portions of Vance’s essay critique the environmentalist movements that are still perpetuating the dominant Western mindset, leaving nature out of the dialogue.

It is not until the later portions of Vance’s (1993) essay that invitational aspects of are more clearly evident. Up until this point, the invitational aspects of the essay revolved around the criteria of sharing and offering a different view of history as well as creating an ideal of safety and freedom in the audience. Consistent with Starhawk’s (1989) essay, Vance (1993) again utilizes the pronoun “we” to include all women and Others. Vance (1993) states:

We [the Feminist movement] believed that women, however diverse, shared a common oppression--namely, that *we* were perceived as the known and shaped objects in a world where the knowers and shapers are men. This is precisely the oppression *we* share with the nonhuman world, and why as ecofeminists, *we* assert that the domination of women and the domination of nature go hand in hand [italics added]. (p. 133)

Vance (1993) tackles this difficult concept by illustrating the comparable aspects of women aligned with nature as being oppressed objects for use. Because she has already examined the dominance of the patriarchy through a depiction of history, the above idea becomes easier to comprehend.

Continuing, Vance (1993) discusses what it means to be an Ecofeminist. Vance (1993) states: “So how does one ‘do’ ecofeminism? Does it mean *we* all go hang out in the wilderness? No: ecofeminism is essentially a conceptual framework that *can suggest* a number of courses of action” (p. 134). In this passage rather than claim to know exactly the right way to enact ecofeminist theory, Vance (1993) states that it suggests courses of action. As Vance (1993) proceeds, she offers her ideas on what it means to be an ecofeminist. Vance (1993) states that an element of ecofeminism should include the following:

A process that *respects difference and encourages discussion, and that embraces a range of praxis. Diversity of experience and expression, like diversity of life forms, is a necessary goal of ecofeminism. There can be no single set of answers, no one portal through which to enter.* To insist a single ideology, or a single praxis, is to deny the tremendous complexity of the problems that centuries of patriarchy have created [emphasis added]. (p. 135)

The italicized portions of this passage highlight the invitational ideal that individuals foster different ideas, each encompassing intrinsic worth. No one idea or single way is the best way to achieve the goal. Additionally, invitational rhetoric values the diversity of an individual and utilizes these aspects towards furthering more egalitarian

approaches for solving problems. “The condition of value is the acknowledgment that audience members have intrinsic or immanent worth” (Foss and Griffin, 1995, p. 11). Vance’s call for diversity of thinking to create ecofeminist practices reflects the ideal of immanent worth. This call for diversity could be compared with Starhawk’s call to let each individual choose her or his own spiritual path. Both authors exemplify their value for diversity evidenced by these passages.

Maintaining the ideal of appreciating each being’s immanence, ecofeminists attempt to create insight for the environmental cause by utilizing empathy. Vance (1993) directly calls for empathetic attitudes towards the interconnectedness of people and animals alike. Vance (1993) comments:

Meat-eaters might be less sanguine about consuming parts of dead animals if they had to ask someone to “pass me one of her ribs, please,” or “slice off one of her wings for me, would you?” For many of us, empathy toward the nonhuman world is the heart of our political stance.
(p. 136)

Drawing correlations between women and animals rests at the heart of the Ecofeminist movement. Vance does not disparage those who eat meat but simply reminds the reader that the animal has no sense of worth but to sustain the human population. Interestingly, of all the animals killed in food production, female animals fare the worst (Gruen, 1993). Vance’s argument suggests that in order to gain a more empathetic outlook regarding food production, it may be beneficial when referring to animals, to gender them feminine in order to give them deserving life-like qualities; in other words, to focus on the immanence inherent in every living Be-ing. Individuals need to recognize

the disassociation humans have with animals and the objectification necessary to eat them in order to create a kinship with them (Vance, 1993). Realizing how ingrained objectifying practices (such as meat eating) are in Western culture makes this topic difficult to introduce. Vance (1993) offers a different outlook that addresses how people casually view meat. It is particularly important to utilize offering rather than forcing a change with this subject because of the many people in Western society who eat meat regularly.

Lastly, Vance (1993) looks toward the future of Ecofeminism. Vance (1993) states:

Clearly ecofeminists cannot expect to initiate demographic transitions within our lifetimes, or, most likely, within the imaginable future. *What we can do, however, is make the need for responsible cooperation with the land known, and use our own lives to model the possibilities* [emphasis added]. (p. 137)

The direct call to action here is to *cooperate together* to pass on the message of ecofeminism to all individuals. Both Starhawk and Vance offer their solutions and direct courses of action for their audiences. Offering solutions for the environmental situation is beneficial as it leaves the audience with a sense of hope. Continuing, Vance brainstorms questions that need to be addressed so people can look to Ecofeminist ideology as a possible answer to the ecological crisis. For example, Vance (1993) states:

On the bioregional level, how could a community, a region, be organized to bring it into harmony? What would its borders be? What would it

produce to meet the needs of its inhabitants? What sort of relationships of production and reproduction would exist in it? What kind of human animal, plant associations could it sustain? (p. 138)

This vision strives to motivate the audience towards the creations of alternative non-patrilineal ways of functioning. Vance (1993) comments, “We know, because we have lived it, that men and women have been disparately treated within patriarchy and capitalism, with women receiving the worst treatment” (p. 139). Vance (1993), inclusive of both genders, simply states the need for a transformation of consciousness while realizing that this desire goes against every fiber of the Western mentality. By narrating the past, present, and future, Vance creates a solid ground for her belief that Western patrilineal thought has caused harm to the environment and all Others: “An ecofeminist future, then, requires us to be visionary and patient at the same time. We need to imagine far-reaching change, and move slowly, step by step” (Vance, 1993, p. 140). Especially during these last passages, Vance’s use of inclusive language is tremendous. Even though she seems to be primarily speaking to the female population she is not discriminatory or forceful about her opinions, thus applying a more invitational style of rhetoric.

Discussion

Clearly, both of these authors are struggling with conventional methods of persuasion. How can ecofeminist authors transform Western thought when traditional methods governing how to persuade are designed by the very order they seek to change? Thus, ecofeminist discourse could not operate from a traditional patriarchal

methodology. It must survive within a non-traditional theory that values and treats each person as having immanent worth. Invitational rhetoric functions with this style and offers ecofeminist rhetors a way to inform and alter individual perceptions by offering new ideologies and herstories to the audience. Foss and Griffin (1995) state: "In invitational rhetoric, change occurs in the audience or rhetor both as a result of new understanding and insights gained in the exchange of ideas" (p. 6). It is clear based on the previous analysis that both authors sought to offer new insights in hopes of the audience changing its ideology. Foss and Griffin (1995) also state:

Invitational rhetoric offers an invitation to understanding--to enter another's world to better understand an issue and the individual who holds a particular perspective on it. Ultimately, its purpose is to provide the basis for the creation and maintenance of relationships of equality.

(p. 13)

It is indisputable that these authors wish for a change in ideology but do not try to force change by practicing traditional persuasive form. Thus, they do not seek to dominate the audience or force an immediate change in belief. Particularly in Vance's essay, there is a direct call to better understand how history has framed the positions of nature, women and animals. Additionally, maintaining relationships of equality is reflected throughout Starhawk and Vance's writing. Both authors attempt to offer a new way and method for examining nature and how it relates to the larger problem facing society: ecological destruction.

In addition, Starhawk and Vance both employ aspects of "effeminate style" in their discourse. "Effeminate style" is apparent as they reject typical "manly style of

speech insofar as it views overcoming its audience as its end” (Jamieson, 1988, p. 80). Both authors exemplify “effeminate style” indicated by their ability to disclose some sense of private self. Furthering a feeling of cooperation and intimacy with their audiences both authors utilize “Effeminate style.” Consistent with invitational rhetoric, they articulated and disclosed personal beliefs in an effort to reach their audience not to dominate over them. The practice of “effeminate style” works towards a goal of generating intimacy between rhetor and audience.

Furthermore, both Starhawk and Vance apply aspects of invitational rhetoric. The promotion of immanent worth, value, offering and sharing of ideas is inherent in each essay. However, it appears clear that Starhawk’s essay is more inclusive of invitational theory than Vance’s. While both exemplify invitational rhetoric, Vance’s tone is stronger and less inclusive of all individuals. Yet, it appears that Vance is speaking more towards an audience composed only of women. Mainly directing her essay towards women should not to be mistaken as a sign that Vance’s essay is not invitational but rather an indication that it is less focused on informing/offering to all individuals during this specific essay. Vance’s invitational style is evidenced by her final passages discussing how women should be intensely motivated to spread the message of ecofeminism to all people. Yet, as mentioned earlier Vance still remains invitational by not degrading or insulting those readers other than women.

Neither rhetor imposes her beliefs on the reader or claims that her experiences or perspective are superior to others. On the contrary, both authors go out of their way to insist that individuals find their own path and make up their own mind concerning ecofeminist ideologies.

The goal of these rhetors is to utilize written discourses to create an appreciation and an understanding of a new way of viewing the current patrilineal practices. Both Starhawk and Vance appear to operate from an invitational methodology.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It has been established in this thesis that ecofeminists believe that the practices of Western culture do not further environmental sustainability. Rather, Western mentality perpetuates a system of domination, of hierarchical ordering that has proven damaging to women, indigenous people and the environment. When humankind realizes the immanence of all Be-ings, a sustainable environment will become a reality. This chapter will weave together the findings, implications, limitations and prospectives for future research dealing with ecofeminism as invitational rhetoric.

Findings

This thesis has illustrated two important findings. First, ecofeminist rhetoric exposes individuals to messages inherent within the Goddess movement. The message of the Goddess is introduced in order to help the audience comprehend how the logic of domination operates in Western culture. Hence, the Goddess movement's messages are encompassed in ecofeminist discourse. Second, ecofeminist discourse responds as invitational rhetoric.

Why does the Goddess movement matter and why have individuals turned to the Goddess? As the environment continues to be ruined and die, more and more people are looking to embrace an ideology encompassing a web of life mentality. The Goddess invites a forum for discussion surrounding the reasons why the environment is

continually being destroyed. In short, the farther technology takes people away from nature, the more they strive to figure out how to return to what is natural (Rogers, 1998). The Goddess movement encompasses the vision of an egalitarian system of economic and social well being for all people: "In my vision of the emerging Age of Aquarius, women will unfold our deepest spiritual potential and create egalitarian systems of political, economic and social well being for all citizens of the world" (McKee, cited in Lopez-Corvo, 1997, p. 129). What is important about the Goddess movement is the continued consciousness perpetuating the ideal of immanence of all Be-ings. Adoption of the immanence of Be-ings rejects the instrumentalist ideology currently saturating Western thought. Understanding the relation of the Other (subordinated entities) and how their subordination affects environmental sustainability is crucial towards furthering the egalitarian way of the Goddess. As mentioned earlier, it is not important to *worship* the Goddess, what is important is that the ideal of the "time of the Goddess" be re-introduced-- furthering a cyclical mentality of the world.

A key point in the Goddess movement is the opportunity for individuals to examine how monotheistic faith functions within Western society. Discussion specifically regarding how Judeo-Christian faiths suggest the separation of humanity, divinity and nature proves insightful as people come to question the logic of domination of everyday life. It is the perception of separateness that commands a disassociation of humans from matter (Earth) thus leaving nature out of the dialogue. Additionally, separating spirit from matter subjects individuals to hierarchically ordering of their beliefs. Once again this separation of spirit from matter raises the question that if people were not waiting for an afterlife how might people's attitude towards the

environment change? It is neither my intention (nor the intention of ecofeminists) to condemn monotheistic beliefs but to point out that the separation of spirit from matter makes it easier for people rationalize the destruction of the Earth. If people are secure in their faith that there will be a “better” place to go when they pass on-- why should individuals need to protect and save the planet humans live on now?

Juxtaposing Judeo-Christian faith, Goddess mentality exemplifies the type of dialogue needed to invite nature back into humankind’s dialogue. Goddess ideology does not utilize domination or subordinate based on gender or worth. Goddess spirit values all entities as having immanent worth. In the eyes of the Goddess, gender is not relevant, only the web of life, inclusive of all Be-ings is relative. People not only come to be in the presence of an *undifferentiated* Be-ing but to listen to and experience nature--bringing it back into human dialogue.

The Goddess is the gateway towards ecofeminist thinking; the gateway towards a non-oppressive system of thought including nature becomes visible within the way of the Goddess. The non-traditional form of rhetoric, consciousness raising, entails offering shared experience to individuals. As consciousness is raised people begin to understand how subordinate entities are held in power-down positions by those in power-over positions. Those individuals supporting Goddess worship go against the status quo of Western society. Instead of following the rituals of monolithic deities, they support the cyclical way of the Goddess. Thus, people of Goddess spirituality are positioned as Other because of the spiritual ideal they represent. Consistent with the elements of consciousness raising, supporters of the Goddess mentality come together to discuss their identity as Other. These individuals are offered an arena via ecofeminist

discourse, to find a new meaning of spirituality without having to conform to “organized” religion.

The second finding of this analysis is that ecofeminist discourses function as invitational rhetoric. Ecofeminist discourse exists outside of traditional theory requirements because ecofeminists reject all patriarchal practices. Thus, if ecofeminists utilized male-based traditional theory they could be considered hypocritical. Ecofeminist theory must survive in a non-traditional theory that values and treats each person as having immanent worth. The ideal of immanence is consistent with the ideologies of ecofeminists. Invitational rhetoric responds to this need and offers ecofeminists an alternative way to offer new ideologies to audiences.

Neither author examined in chapter five attempted to force change or to dominate over the reader. Both authors rejected “manly style” of speech furthering the “effeminate style” of discourse. As discussed within chapter two, male style of speech is consistent with traditional rhetorical style whereas female style is consisted with non-traditional style. Hence, ecofeminist discourse adopts the theory of invitational rhetoric that is grounded in feminist theory--a more feminine style of speech. Ecofeminist discourse shares experience and strives to raise the readers consciousness regarding ecofeminist ideals. They raise consciousness by offering their opinions and interpretations not by claiming to be the experts. Both authors promote the invitational ideals of immanent worth, value and offering. Starhawk and Vance go out of their way to suggest that each individual choose her/his own spiritual path.

Invitational rhetoric's primary goal is to create and maintain relationships of equality. Another primary purpose of invitational rhetoric is to invite individuals to enter another's world, inviting a transformation towards better understanding an issue (Foss and Griffin, 1995). Ecofeminists' main concern is the invitation to view the world differently. Ecofeminists strive to break down the existing patriarchal system in favor of an egalitarian system. In keeping with ecofeminist philosophies, ecofeminists need to accomplish this paradigm shift without tactics dominating over any person or living entity. It becomes evident that ecofeminist authors struggle with existing methods of persuasion in hopes of adapting audiences to their cause. Invitational rhetoric is one theory that has accomplished this desire by gathering the egalitarian ideals already held by ecofeminists. It is for this reason that ecofeminist discourse exists as invitational rhetoric.

Implications

The academic significance of this study implies the need for communication theory to be more inclusive of non-traditional styles of discourse. Traditional theory ignores huge portions of rhetorical discourse. There is a need to eliminate this bias in order to assure that communication scholars are able to examine the "whole picture." Traditional theory makes it difficult to study non-traditional types of rhetoric "effectively" because of a specific set of standards that *must* be met. Traditional theory operates from a mindset intent on judging the effectiveness of rhetoric. The male trajectory of theory is accepted as the universal standard for analyzing rhetorical discourse. Theory alone aligns with society, suggesting that certain people matter and

others don't. Thus, one may wonder if theories should be required at all within scholarly writing.

Does a theory function sufficiently if the method and language the scholar must practice operates from the same system of meaning they oppose? In order to rectify this bias communication theory and language must become more gender equal. Language must be altered because traditional theory generally operates from a male style of speaking, as established in chapter two. In short, I found myself struggling to write clearly without reverting to instrumentalist terminology. Words and phrases as basic as: *it stands to reason, effective, proven, examine, operate and incorporate all function* instrumentally by assigning an amount of worth to the topic. For example, the word "effective" implies that other methods are ineffective, thus hierarchically ordering importance. Words such as these imply use and reason as their foundation, not feeling and immanence. Hence, scholars may feel the need to discipline themselves, editing out the language that is too "emotional" in order to comply with the rigid standard set throughout academia. Feminine forms of communication are still devalued and considered less "effective" (Wood, 1997). In order to *produce acceptable* work, the scholar must conform in favor of supporting the male paradigm for writing and reporting research. Scholars (Blair, Brown, Baxter; 1994) have questioned this "disciplining of the feminine", commenting that it measures all discourse by a "yardstick" or standard set by a male paradigm (p. 389). If the language and style of both genders were included in theory, eventually it would evolve into a more egalitarian style of analysis.

The majority of communication theory is linear and enforces stylistic measures enabling the critic to *judge* the rhetoric. For example, one of my biggest causes for dis-ease during the course of this project was how to *prove* linearly--according to traditional methods, that ecofeminist discourse was invitational. After reading countless pieces of ecofeminist discourse it became evident to me that ecofeminist writing was invitational. I never felt forced into a belief or recognized any stylistic tactics meant to prove that the ecofeminist path was the only way to attain environmental sustainability, thus ecofeminist discourse is invitational. My frustration was how to *prove* this via the *measures* of traditional theory. Invitational rhetoric takes the bias of traditional theory into account and includes what I feel are more egalitarian ideals to be applied to a discourse. Thus, allowing greater freedom of analysis that is not traditionally linear. This is precisely why the Ecofeminist and Goddess movements are so important. It is not just the content included in these discourses but the evolving way that people are beginning to relate to each other that establishes it as worthwhile rhetorical discourse.

Lastly, I feel this analysis implies that communication scholars have a responsibility to include nature in dialogue. As scholars, who are we *inviting* into our communication dialogues? According to Rogers (1989), "Developing theories of communication which account for human immersion in the natural world, while simultaneously avoiding determinism, requires conceptualizing a transhuman dialogue" (p.244). This type of theory rejects the legitimizing of oppressive social frameworks because it seeks to include a theory that values life--immanence in all Be-ings. This analysis illustrated the idea that the environment has been gendered feminine. Hence, by including nature in dialogue scholars can begin to include feminine archetypes as

well. Rogers (1998) continues, "I articulate an alternative imperative, one that values life, that works to listen to 'nature,' 'matter,' and 'the feminine,' and that approaches them as participants in a dialogue" (p.246). By including nature within theory, a more invitational style of reviewing discourse may evolve because it will value immanence over dominance. The most important reason for including nature in communication dialogues is evidenced by Heisenbers's uncertainty principle, but in reverse. Thus, "the observer not only affects the observed, but the observed (nature) affects the observer (humans) as well" (Rogers, p. 246). If an individual's "reality" is altered based on their view of nature, theory not inclusive of this aspect will undoubtedly not depict all aspects of the rhetorical situation.

Limitations

One significant limitation to this study was the ability to summarize only two pieces of ecofeminist discourse. Ideally, the ability to study both written and spoken dialogue would best demonstrate ecofeminist discourse as invitational rhetoric. As with any study, parameters must be set in order to produce within a set period of time. For this reason I feel this study was limited and would benefit from the inclusion of spoken ecofeminist dialogue. On the other hand, written discourse tends to allow the reviewer more time to thoroughly study the themes encompassed in ecofeminist rhetoric as invitational ideas, whereas spoken discourse may have more clearly exemplified the aspects of invitational rhetoric implicit in the theory.

Future Study

I am entranced by the possibilities for future study of ecofeminist discourse. To begin with, I truly feel the Ecofeminist movement would benefit from looking at the movement from a male standpoint. Specifically, as women continue to focus on their ties to nature and men continue to be left out of this special relationship, how does this effect the movement's ideology? Should ecofeminist discourse strive to reach men in a more profound and direct way? Or should individuals, men, be left to find this path on their own? Spoken discourse may be able to invite and reach men to listen to their message. Depending on the promotion and presentation of a speaking engagement, men may feel included or exonerated towards furthering the ecofeminist cause. In short, while a man may not be inclined to pick up a book on the Ecofeminist movement, he may be more willing to attend a seminar dealing with the oppression of indigenous peoples that subtly introduces the concepts inherent within ecofeminism. In this way I feel surveys and study likening male responses to such presentations would be insightful for the Ecofeminist movement. This type of study would begin an exchange dealing with how not to ostracize men from the movement but furthering practices bringing women and men together, creating a more sustainable living environment. In anticipation of the backlash associated with the word feminist--the concept of ecofeminism may not appeal to many men who already feel threatened and not included in feminine dialogue. Mother imagery may encourage men to ignore the environmental crisis, continuing to feel less and less connectives to the Earth. Studying ecofeminist discourse and its inclusion or exclusion of men is pertinent to the movement's "success" or "failure."

Additionally an ethnographic study of actual Goddess temple ritual from a communication standpoint would be insightful. Viewing temple rituals and interactions could potentially illustrate ecofeminist or Goddess mentality as invitational. How is the interaction at the temple different from monotheistic ritual experience? I discussed how the re-emergence of the Goddess acted as a form of consciousness raising. Hence, what topics are discussed before, during and after the ritual that might raise men and women's consciousness? Personal experience has led me to believe that the temple of the Goddess is a place for women and men to come together, not only reclaim some of the lost herstory of the Goddess and cyclical times, but to raise awareness about environmental issues and suppression of the Other. In addition, individuals at the temple come to *listen* to nature and are free to express themselves in a spiritual way without having to conform to political organized religions. The temple of the Goddess appears to be a place of human interaction where a web of life mentality is re-introduced. Understanding how this transpires would make an interesting ethnography offering a study detailing how the Goddess invites a change of paradigm.

Lastly, a rhetorical study of both the Ecofeminist and Goddess movements would present the scholar with an insightful look at social movement discourse. Difficulties may arise regarding constitutive theories with which to pursue such a study. Namely, the theory I have come across thus far for analyzing social movement centers on groups' linear accomplishments. For example, social movement theory tends to *measure* a "legitimate" movement by written manifestos, group domination over the status quo and how a group assembles within the Western paradigm to *enforce* change. As mentioned within this study, ecofeminist discourse and the movement can not

function in the established male-based paradigm. Because of theoretical restrictions, studying these particular movements is difficult as traditional social movement theory operates from this same system of meaning Goddess and Ecofeminist movements oppose. I propose these movements be studied as an impetus for generating less regimented social movement theories more inclusive of movements operating outside of the established paradigm.

This study has presented the path of the Goddess and illustrated the invitation ecofeminist discourse offers individuals. Where reason has failed to save the environment, new ideologies rooted within immanence and compassion may be humankind's best hope for ending the oppression of the "Other" and for reaching the path to environmental sustainability. Judith Plant's (1989) essay "The Circle is gathering..." provides encouragement for valuing life as immanent:

Hierarchy destroys. Based on power-over, it has no capacity for compassion. Given the hierarchical requisite to take, in order to gain, it cannot empathize with people's needs and feelings. Rather, there are rules, tenets, within which we must mold ourselves to fit—thus destroying so much of our human need to create. How, and on what basis can we move away from these death-dealing ways? *To consider human feelings as necessary information for intelligent decision-making is a much different stating point.* Working toward a framework for collective life based on people's needs, that is on who they really are, makes infinitely more "organic" sense. Since we know that the

hierarchical way won't create ecological community, we have nothing to lose by trying to put feelings up front [emphasis added]. (p. 251)

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VITA
Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Julie Ann Schutten

Local Address:
5141 Indian River Dr. Apt. 304
Las Vegas, NV 89103

Home Address:
1251 Wyncrest Court
Arden Hills, MN 55112

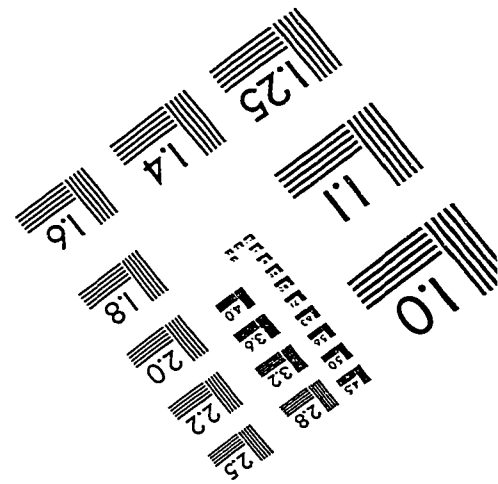
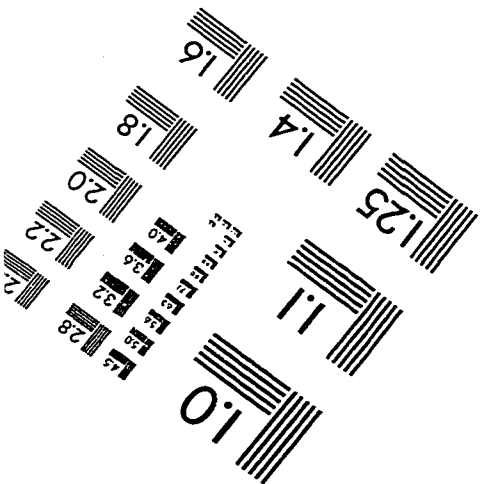
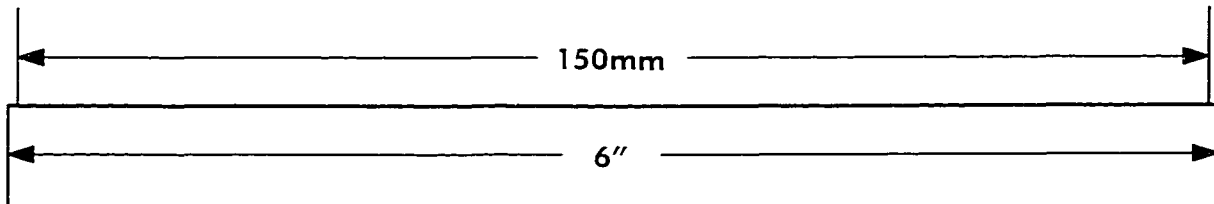
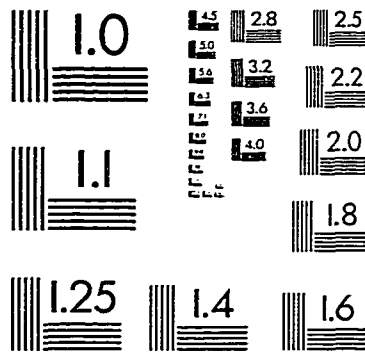
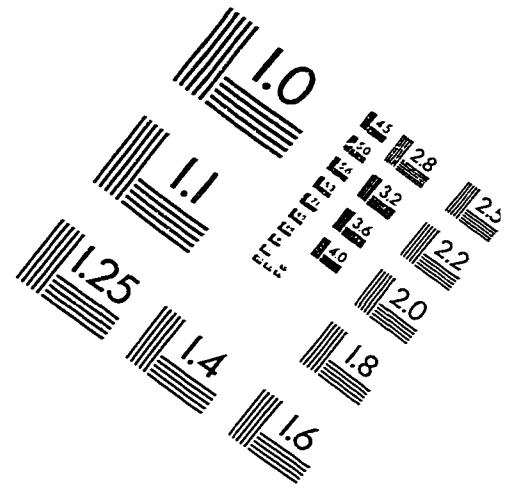
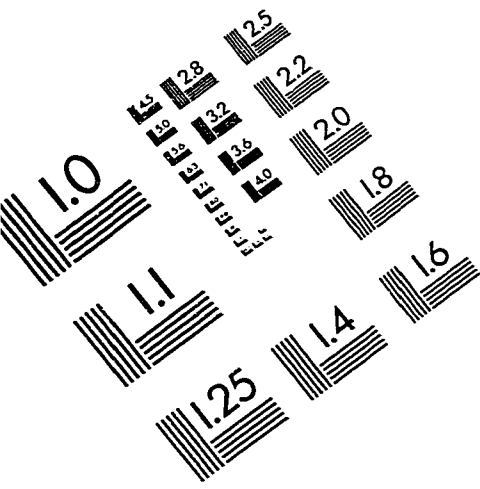
Degrees:
Bachelor of Arts, Speech Communication, 1997
Northern Arizona University

Special Honors and Awards:
Voted most outstanding Speech Communication student of the 1997 graduating
class by the Northern Arizona School of Communication Faculty.
Cum Laude

Thesis Title: Ecofeminism as Invitational Rhetoric: Envisioning the Shift in Western
Consciousness

Thesis Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Richard Jensen, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Larry Mullen, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Beth Semic, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Barbara Brents, Ph.D.

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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