

ECOFEMINISM

Dr. Stephanie Kaza, Professor
office hrs Mon/Wed 1-3pm, x64055 appts.
The Bittersweet, 153 S. Prospect
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T/Th 11:00-12:15
L/L B101

This class is an introduction to the developing field of ecofeminism, which is both an academic subfield of philosophy and environmental ethics and a type of activism. We will read some of the most influential writers in the field -- theorists, historians, activists, and spiritual revisionists -- and consider the implications of their ideas for environmental thought and analysis. We will also undertake hands-on action projects reflecting ecofeminist principles.

Course Purpose:

- 1) to bring an ecofeminist analysis and perspective to environmental issues;
- 2) to study ecofeminist scholars for their intellectual contributions to the field;
- 3) to articulate personal views of women & nature and patterns of environmental domination;
- 4) to appreciate the role of women and ecofeminist activists in global environmental change;
- 5) to consider ecofeminist revisions of and alternatives to major world religious traditions.

Course Texts:

- 1) GRIF Griffin, Susan. Woman and Nature. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978.
- 2) OZEKI Ozeki, Ruth. My Year of Meats, New York: Penguin, 1998.
- 3) EF Mies, Maria and Shiva, Vandana. Ecofeminism. London: Zed Books, 1993.
- 4) SACRED Adams, Carol, ed. Ecofeminism and the Sacred. NY: Continuum, 1993.
- 5) READER Additional articles from various sources, available from the Bittersweet.

Course Outline:

AUG 31 Tues

What is Ecofeminism?

Assignments:

Warren handout

SEPT 2 Thur

Roots and Forms of Ecofeminism

READER: Spretnak, Gaard and Gruen 1-11, Merchant, King

7 Tues

Woman and Nature Connections
(set up book groups)

READER: Rocheleau et al,
Warren, EF chap 1

9 Thur

Mechanism, Organicism, and the
Management of Nature

READER: Merchant, D'Souza

14 Tues

Women and Nature: book groups

GRIF part 1, OZEKI ch 1-5

16 Thur

Book groups cont'd

GRIF part 2, OZEKI ch 6-9

21 Tues

Ecofeminist Activism

READER: Seager, Nelson, Kelly
DUE: Response Paper #1

23 Thur

Book Groups cont'd

GRIF parts 3&4, OZEKI ch10-12 (plus reader's guide)

28 Tues

Arenas of Ecofeminist Activism
(set up activism groups)

READER: Gaard&Gruen 25-32,
Bellows, Salleh, Russell, LaDuke,
EF: ch16-17

	30	Thur	Book group sharing (a la Oprah)	(activism reading cont'd)
OCT	5	Tues	Ecofeminist Theory The Logic of Domination	<u>DUE</u> : Take-Home Exam #1 READER: Warren
	7	Thur	Critiquing the Master Model	READER: Plumwood ch1
	12	Tues	Dualisms and Colonization	READER: Plumwood ch2 <u>DUE</u> : Activism topics
	14	Thur	Gender Bias in Science & Technology	READER: Martin, Langston
	19	Tues	Gender Bias in Militarism Review activism projects	READER: Cohn, Seager
	21	Thur	International Ecofeminist Activism Global Environmental Impacts on Women	READER: Gaard&Gruen 11-24, Kettle, Hussein; EF: ch 5 <u>DUE</u> : Response Paper #2
	26	Tues	Women and Development: history and scope	READER: Sturgeon; EF: ch 4, 7, 8
	28	Thur	Issues in Development and Conservation	EF: ch 2, 16, 17; READER: Onimsimova
NOV	2	Tues	Issues in Population and Biotechnology <i>ELECTION DAY – GO VOTE!</i>	EF: ch 10, 12, 19 READER: Khanna
	4	Thur	Ecofeminist Spirituality Revival of the Goddess	READER: Starhawk SACRED: Spretnak p261 <u>DUE</u> : Take-Home Exam #2
	9	Tues	Native American Experiences	READER: Allen; Williams & Johnson; SACRED: Sanchez p207; Smith p168
	11	Thur	Ecofeminist Activism: Group Reports	<u>DUE</u> : Activism Projects
	16	Tues	Judeo-Christian Revisionists: new approaches to nature & the body	SACRED: Reuther p13, Keller p30, Adams p295
	18	Thur	Judeo-Christians cont'd new models of God	SACRED: McFague p84; Plaskow p70; READER: Ress
	23-25		no class, Thanksgiving break	
	30	Tues	Eco-Womanist Insights	SACRED: Williams p24; Riley p191
DEC	2	Thur	Eastern Perspectives	SACRED: Kaza p50, Gupta p99
	7	Tues	Closing	<u>DUE</u> : Response Paper #3 (double)

Course Methods

The course will be held in seminar style, with a focus on discussion much of the time, depending on the subject matter. More challenging theoretical material will be presented in lecture format. Group projects and presentations will also be part of the course. Students are expected to attend all classes and read the assigned articles before class. If you miss a class, please ask another student for assistance in catching up on the material. As often only one class is designated per topic, the course moves along at a regular clip. Please make every effort to attend all classes, both for yourself and for your peers.

Assignments

1) Reading

This course is a seminar style course in which reading is central to the content. We will spend much of our time examining the reading in depth. You are expected to have read the reading **before** coming to class. I will provide guidelines on which readings to read in-depth and which to scan or browse. Reflections on the readings are central to both response papers and exams. If you have not done the reading for a particular class, please limit your participation in the discussion. However, do come to class and learn from others.

2) Writing

There are two take-home exams for the course and three response papers (the last one with two questions). For the exams, a set of questions and a short answer section will be handed out a week before the exam is due. You will select three essays to write, each 3-4 thorough paragraphs in length, plus a selection of five short answer paragraphs. All written work should be completed on a word processing program and handed in as a printed paper. Do not hand in disks or handwritten papers. [I will not read these submissions]. Double-space your papers, allowing normal 1.25" margins for comments. Number your pages, and staple all pages together for safety. Check for computer errors, broken lines or unformatted paragraphs, and strange hyphenation. Spellcheck and proofread your work before handing it in. Use inclusive language; i.e. be conscious of your use of gender pronouns and referents. Use "people" or "humankind" instead of "man", and "he or she" or "they" instead of simply "he". Especially because this is a feminist course, I expect you to be conscientious with language.

3) Response Papers (three short essays, 40 points each, last one double)

These are short papers, 3-4 double-spaced pages long, in response to the recent reading, assigned throughout the semester. I will offer suggested questions for a focus or you may substitute your own topic. Excellent responses will show both depth of personal reflection and thoughtful inquiry with accurate representation of the author's ideas and perspectives. The papers provide an opportunity to integrate new ideas and perspectives from class readings and discussion with your own life experiences with friends, family, work, and other classes. Please write the question you are working with at the top of the paper. Be specific and detailed wherever possible, whether describing a person, place, or emotion. If you would like, please include other modes of expression besides narrative writing that illuminate your experience -- drawings, poetry, song words, magazine cutouts, newspaper clippings.

4) Activist Project (20 pts individual reflection, 60 pts group poster and tabling)

Students will work in groups of 3 on a project emphasizing a critical ecofeminist issue or case study. Groups will choose a topic in early October, carry out the project during October and report on it to the class in early November. You will spend two hours tabling with your materials in a group display during the first week of November. An assignment sheet with specific guidelines will be provided.

5) Extra Credit (10 pts per review)

You may attend extracurricular events and speakers related to Ecofeminism topics or view one of the ecofeminist videos for extra credit. For event or video, write up a 1 1/2-2 page paper summarizing (a) what the event or video was about, and (b) your response/critique to it.

Course Policies

Absences

Attendance will be taken, and unexcused absences will factor into your final grade. Even if you are feeling a little under the weather, make an effort to come to class and keep up with the course rhythm, even if you don't feel like talking. Absences are not "excused" unless they are personally cleared with me by phone or email. I expect you to make it a commitment to attend every class, both for your own personal learning, and to contribute to the community of learners in the group.

Late work

Turn work in on time, i.e. at the beginning of class on the day the assignment is due. Late work is subject to penalties, the most important one being my lack of attention. Don't let your paper be the one buried in the pile! Your grade will drop a half grade each day the paper is late unless you have a medical excuse. If you need an extension due to illness or family emergency, please speak with me personally. I will do my best to read all the papers soon after they are turned in and try to return them to you within two weeks.

Plagiarism

I support UVM's commitment to academic honesty. This means your written words should be your own. If you draw on other sources, they should be cited properly to give adequate credit. If you work with other students to prepare for an exam, your written answers should be individually constructed, not copied from each other or shared notes. Work that appears to be plagiarized will be given no credit and students will be asked to meet with the instructor to explain the situation. Plagiarism at UVM is grounds for academic suspension; don't do it.

Grading

Your grade will be based on your written work, which will reflect both your understanding of the reading and your independent reflection, and on your oral participation in discussion and in the group project.

Take Home Exam #1	100 pts	Due October 5
Take-Home Exam #2	100	Due Nov 4
Activism Project	80	Due November 11
Response Papers	160	Due Sept 21, Oct 21, Dec 7
Class Participation	<u>60</u>	throughout
TOTAL	500 pts	

If you are having trouble in the course in any way (intellectually, emotionally, physically) or just want to discuss these topics further, please come in and talk to me after class or during office hours. You are always welcome, even if appointments are filled (just be prepared to wait a bit).

Cooperative Learning:

Almost all successful environmental work is done in cooperative teams and through joint efforts. I highly encourage you to work with others in the class on your assignments (even and especially the exams!), sharing resources and ideas and helping each other with direction, focus, and clarity. Please make an effort to get to know your colleagues. Much of the women's movement, including ecofeminism, has been built on collaborative networking, so you should take this opportunity to develop these skills now.