a new mode for being
with the earth and ourselves

Ecofeminism

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Critical Thinking

Teaching Strategies Today Must Emphasize
- reasoning skills
- thinking skills
- teach students that there is something to figure out
- teach them to figure it out

Students need to be taught to
- listen critically
- read critically
- write critically
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Our Teaching Needs to Awaken the Senses

- we need to teach LESS so that students learn MORE
- we need to teach about CONNECTIONS to
  - the natural world
  - to each other
  - to ourselves
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Ecofeminism

Modern beginnings
- In the 1970s, efforts to recognise women’s contributions to the environmental movement began
- Feminisms in the West were transforming

Recognition of
- the devaluing of natural processes and anything labelled as “other”
  - a product of the patriarchal culture
  - denigration and manipulation of nature, women, lesser developed cultures
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This denigration takes many forms

and women are often the first to notice the effects

in the West

spraying of toxic chemicals on our food
improper disposal of toxic wastes
connections to women are less apparent although there are many examples of women leading the fights

in the lesser developed countries

where women gather food, water, fuel, fodder
they see the effects of technological devastation first
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Women have traditionally been closer to the Earth
- healers with knowledge of medicinal plants and cycles of the Earth
- midwives, food gatherers, child bearers

Women’s bodies are “sites for environmental stress”
- on planetary, regional, and local levels
- birth defects, caretaking, nutrition, community stress, stress-induced miscarriages
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Issues of Patriarchy’s Treatment of Nature
  ➕ Language of Objectification and Domination
  ➕ “enter virgin territory”
  ➕ “rape the land”
  ➕ said Francis Bacon
  ➕ nature had to be:
    ➕ “hounded in her wanderings”
    ➕ “bound into service” and made a “slave”
    ➕ she was to be “put in constraint”
    ➕ the job of the scientist was to “torture nature’s secrets from her”

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Ecofeminist Principles

- reject “woman-nature/man-culture” idea
- create new cultures that embrace and honor caretaking and nurturing
- not “nature over culture”
- acknowledge the interconnectedness and embeddedness in the multiple webs and cycles of life
- live with the Earth
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Ecofeminism embraces

- women of all cultures
- men of all cultures
- plants
- animals
- ecological interconnectedness
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Ecofeminist Politics

Inspirations for Action

- myths and symbols of the ancient Goddess traditions
- Native American traditions toward future generations
- tree planting
- alternative healing communities
- food co-ops
- performance art
- witchcraft
- poetry
- ritual
- social activism
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Concept of Power
- not monolithic
- not homogeneous
- not anthropocentric
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- Recognition that there is no single solution to our problems
  - population
  - “doomsday”
  - new methods
    - life affirming
    - consensual
    - non-violent
  - create new cultures that honor the Earth
  - create new images for living with the Earth

What is our place in nature?