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### In the Shadow of 'I': Virginia Woolf and Ecofeminism

Michelle Gullickson

*University of Montana - Missoula*

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Michelle Gullickson  
University of Montana  
Department of English

### In the Shadow of 'I': Virginia Woolf and Ecofeminism

The term “Ecofeminism” was coined in 1974, decades after British Modernist Virginia Woolf was writing. This presentation will explore the connection between ecofeminism and Woolf’s work.

Ecofeminism (most broadly) makes various connections between women and nature, considering that both have been historically controlled through patriarchal society. While the connections are vast, Armbruster posits that, “an unproblematized focus on women’s connection with nature can actually reinforce dualism and hierarchy by constructing yet another dualism: an uncomplicated opposition between women’s perceived unity with nature and male-associated culture’s alienation from it” (Armbruster 199). Furthermore, too much emphasis of difference based on certain aspects of gender obscure spectrums of relationships and identities (Armbruster 199).

In this presentation I will use the lens of ecofeminism to look at a small sample of some of Woolf’s essays, novels, and short fiction, arguing that while ecofeminism as a philosophy may have some concerns, an ecofeminist perspective can tell us much about Woolf’s treatment of Nature in her work. My research in “Eco-Woolf,” is well-guided by a handful of book-length treatments on the topic. Even more exciting, most “Eco-Woolf” research emerges post 2010, which makes it a dynamic and evolving research topic.

Specifically, I investigate how Woolf’s work attempts to “de-colonize” certain views of women and Nature; Woolf constructs the dialogics of her novels (multiple perspectives, multiple voices) in order to construct narratives beyond and in opposition to a Patriarchal “I,” (term taken from Woolf’s essay *A Room of One’s Own*) or in other words, an authoritarian perspective. I am interested in Woolf’s strategies to open up “possibility” with her fiction and how that translates to the “real world” and also speaks to issues facing her time such as Imperialism.

When I present I will select a small aspect of my larger research, in consideration of time and of the multi-disciplinary goal of this conference. So, while this abstract provides a basic overview of larger research, I will present on a limited and specific aspect of Woolf’s work for the conference. In order to continue to keep my work at its sharpest, I will be selecting the specific topic/textual examples closer to the conference, but it will fall into this larger frame.