

# THE CHANGING NATURE OF ECO/FEMINISM

## TELLING STORIES FROM CLAYOQUOT SOUND

Niamh Moore



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# Contents

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- Preface: “She Goes On and On and On” / ix
- Acknowledgments / xvii
- 1 Rethinking Eco/Feminism through Clayoquot Sound / 3
- 2 Eco/Feminist Genealogies: Essentialism, Universalism, and Telling (Trans)National Histories / 34
- 3 Eco/Feminism and the Question of Nature / 60
- 4 Clayoquot Histories: Our Home and Native Land? / 91
- 5 “It Was Like a War Zone”: The Clayoquot Peace Camp and the Gendered Politics of (Non)Violence / 120
- 6 Mothers, Grandmothers, and Other Queers in Eco/Feminist Activism / 151
- 7 Romanticizing the (Gendered) Nature of Childhood? / 178
- 8 Unnatural Histories: Mother Nature, Family Trees, and Other Human-Nature Relationships / 201
- 9 Eco/Feminism and the Changing Nature of Feminism / 216

Appendix / 231

Notes / 233

References / 239

Index / 257

# 1

## Rethinking Eco/Feminism through Clayoquot Sound

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### **Eco/Feminism and Clayoquot Sound**

In the early 1990s, as accounts of the end of feminism proliferated and gathered pace, I encountered a vibrant eco/feminist politics and activism in Clayoquot Sound, on the west coast of Canada. In the summer of 1993, activists set up a peace camp at Clayoquot (pronounced “klak-wat”) to support the blockading of a road into an extensive area of temperate rainforest that was slated for clear-cut logging. Throughout the summer, more than eight hundred people were arrested for non-violent civil disobedience while blockading the logging road. The arrests were followed by the “Clayoquot mass trials,” where all defendants were found guilty of criminal contempt of court. Many served jail sentences or spent time on electronic monitoring; fines were commonly set at \$1,000. The protests brought international attention to a local environmental group – the Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS) – and to the clear-cutting of Canada’s temperate rainforest. Clayoquot has most visibly been a locus of environmental controversy, but to understand events there as being solely about environmental politics is to restrict oneself unnecessarily to a limited notion of the political, an impoverished notion of the environmental, and a narrow view of (the nature of) the “nature” that is always so bound up with environmental politics.<sup>1</sup> The Clayoquot Peace Camp was said to be based on feminist principles, which were sometimes explicitly identified as *eco/feminist*. Indeed, its success has often been attributed to this eco/feminist ethos. The paradox

for me was encountering this dynamic eco/feminist politics at a time when the end of feminism was widely being declared. I have puzzled over this apparent disjuncture ever since.

The importance of eco/feminist politics was picked up beyond the camp and sparked the popular imagination. The *Vancouver Sun* even published an article titled “Eco-Feminists Run ‘Peace Camp’ at Clayoquot Sound” (S. Bell 1993) – although the notion that they were “running” the camp somewhat misconstrued their eco/feminist practices. For many, the eco/feminist dimensions of the campaign were compellingly conveyed in the award-winning documentary film *Fury for the Sound: The Women at Clayoquot*, directed and produced by Shelley Wine (1997), who had spent time at the camp. Shown on Canadian television, *Fury for the Sound* brought many of the women involved in the Clayoquot campaign into the living rooms of those who never made it to the camp. Yet, although Clayoquot has garnered some attention in academic writing on environmental politics, the eco/feminist dimensions of the campaign remain largely unexplored, except for a few unpublished dissertations.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of sustained academic attention, some of those involved have produced their own accounts of the campaign. For example, Jean McLaren recorded life at the camp in *Spirits Rising: The Story of the Clayoquot Peace Camp* (1994); Betty Krawczyk, one of three grandmothers jailed on the first day of arrests for refusing to sign an undertaking not to return to the blockade, wrote autobiographically in *Clayoquot: The Sound of My Heart* (1996); and Chris Lowther’s *A Cabin in Clayoquot* (1997) recounted her daily life on the west coast as well her experiences of the summer of 1993 (published and distributed locally, the works by Krawczyk and Lowther had a considerable readership on Vancouver Island and in Vancouver). In “Women Out Front in Clayoquot Sound,” Valerie Langer and Jan Bate (1993) reflected on women’s activism in the campaign. In his fictionalized *The Garden Club and the Kumquat Campaign*, Des Kennedy (1996) wrote thoughtfully of women and feminism, as did Bob Bossin in “The Clayoquot Women” (1999).

None of these works offers an easy, or doctrinaire, definition of what it means to say that the camp was eco/feminist, or informed by eco/feminism. Describing the complexity of Clayoquot politics is no simple or straightforward task. Events in Clayoquot exceed normative understandings of both gender relations and feminist politics, *including* many feminist and eco/feminist theorizations of these. For many, deforestation was not obviously

a women's, or a feminist, issue, in the way that, say, childcare or reproductive justice might be, and though the camp was described as feminist and eco/feminist, it was not women-only. Neither can the campaign be reduced to common accounts of eco/feminism. It was not simply the case that women showed the strength of their commitment to caring for children, or even for the whole planet and its future, by risking arrest and spending time in jail. Neither was it quite the case that they exceeded traditional roles as wives and mothers by taking to protest and blockades – an explanation frequently offered for women's environmental activism, but one that risks constraining what is at stake in such campaigns. Rather, I suggest that gender relations and feminist politics at the camp and throughout the campaign were altogether more complex and entangled. Thus, the circulation of debates about feminism and the articulation by some of a specifically *eco/feminist* politics deserve further consideration, albeit this is a complicated task. Indeed, the slippage between the terms “feminism” and “*eco/feminism*” already suggests some of the latent, and not so latent, tensions that are the subject of this book.

I signal these tensions through my use of the term “*eco/feminism*” to gesture toward the sometimes fruitful, sometimes unproductive, relationship between *eco/feminism* and feminism. *Eco/feminism* is both “of feminism” and simultaneously offers a critique of it. This is not unusual, as feminism has often been defined by such tensions. There has been a proliferation of different feminisms as critiques have been made by lesbian feminists, black feminists, and the disability movement, to name a few of the most salient. I hold on to this label of *eco/feminism* as productive at this juncture in feminism, to signal a specific constellation of interests that cannot be assumed under the rubric of “feminism” alone (Moore 2004).

The Clayoquot Peace Camp and accompanying blockades emerged at a difficult moment for many feminists. Far-reaching questions about the possibility of feminist politics were being raised, and the category of “woman” as the very subject of feminism was being called into question. Certain foundational tenets of feminism, such as a reliance on women's experiences for theory building, were being exposed as implicated in exclusionary practices. These criticisms called into question attempts to ground feminist politics in the category of “woman” and to link women's experiences, of oppression or of activism and resistance, through any simplistic notion of global sisterhood. The proliferation of feminisms through the 1980s and 1990s, including *eco/feminism*, had the effect of creating a sense

of uncertainty about the future of feminism. However, the most damning accusations of essentialism and universalism were manifest in assertions that dominant accounts of feminism marginalized black and Third World feminisms, and lacked a thorough understanding of the implications of histories of colonialism and racism for feminism itself, thus demonstrating that feminism relied on its own exclusions. This painful realization of the non-innocence of feminism and the challenge of dealing with the reverberations of these trenchant critiques continue to echo through feminism today.

Attempts to comprehend the politics of Clayoquot founder for many reasons: the challenges of articulating eco/feminist politics; the tense state of feminist politics at that time and since; and specifically, the troubled place of essentialism and universalism in these debates. The identification of any political or theoretical position as essentialist has characterized many problematic struggles among feminists, and the label “essentialism” has often been applied to eco/feminism. In this context, eco/feminism is merely another item on a long list of conflicts over essentialism, which includes overlapping debates regarding maternalism, feminist peace politics, the “sex wars,” and the work of Carol Gilligan and Sara Ruddick. Eco/feminism has been particularly vulnerable to critique because it is so easily caricatured due to its explicit engagement with “women” and “nature.” It has been rendered suspect by concerns that it presents women as being closer to nature than men are and especially by claims that link this with women’s role as childbearers and childrearers, something that feminists had worked hard to undermine. In seeking to re-open the apparently closed question of women and nature, eco/feminists have had difficulty in convincing other feminists of their feminism, particularly given reservations about maternalist and universalizing discourses (see, for example, Sturgeon 1997, 167-68). Because “essentialism” has become such a pejorative term, eco/feminists have often found themselves in the frustrating position of seeing their arguments dismissed and of not being perceived as proper feminists themselves. Many eco/feminist academics responded to this with an insistent anti-essentialism, or in Noël Sturgeon’s case, an argument for strategic essentialism. Many have also engaged in a disavowal of apparently essentialist strands within eco/feminism itself.

Yet there was little evidence of essentialism at the Clayoquot camp. Indeed, essentialism seemed to offer a very limited way of understanding the politics of Clayoquot. As Sturgeon (*ibid.*) has argued, essentialism has been produced as one of the key concepts on which certain feminisms,

particularly activist eco/feminisms, are seen to founder. For me, Clayoquot offers an exemplary site where certain significant debates in feminism have been productively opened up; moreover, eco/feminism is a particularly useful focus because of its willingness to engage with feminism's abject other, "nature." The particular imbrications of feminist and environmental (and other) politics at Clayoquot render it a fascinating site for an examination of feminism. These intersections, of feminism and environmentalism, are particularly interesting because hegemonic notions of the "natural" underlie many of the justifications for women's exclusion from the public sphere, from politics and women's confinement to the home, to domesticity, to the private, to passivity. This book argues that this nexus of concerns is a fruitful site for the examination of political agency, activist subjectivities, academic theory, and the complex role of "nature" in these debates.

Clayoquot offered me a potent opportunity for exploring a whole range of issues of ongoing concern for feminists. In 1993, as I returned from Canada, I was excited by the vibrancy of the campaign, but at the same time I was challenged by the difficulty of bringing what was happening in Clayoquot into conversation with mainstream feminism. The sheer energy of eco/feminist politics at the camp appeared to confound dominant narratives – that the women's movement was dead, that feminist activism had waned throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, that feminist politics were no longer possible. There was a stark contrast between what I had experienced at Clayoquot and the prevailing narratives of the end – or death – of feminism.

One of my ongoing fascinations is, therefore, the paradox of the vitality of eco/feminist activism, with its insistence on transnational connections, from the Chipko Movement in India, to the Kenyan Greenbelt Movement, to Greenham Common in the United Kingdom, in contrast to the widely circulating accounts of the end of feminism and especially of global sisterhood, in the 1990s and since. Despite the pervasiveness of feminism's hegemonic narrative, others have also recognized this contradiction – for instance, Mary Hawkesworth (2004, 962) observed that "a strange phenomenon has accompanied the unprecedented growth of feminist activism around the globe: the recurrent pronouncement of feminism's death." Hawkesworth (*ibid.*, 983) pointedly noted that "with no corpse, no proof of demise, just vague hints of self-inflicted wounds and natural causes, feminism's death by report erases the social justice activism of women around the world while covering the traces of the erasure." In an effort to produce versions of feminism that are better than others, feminists have prematurely terminated a variety of feminisms, specifically eco/feminism and activist

feminisms. The grounds for termination are usually lack of theoretical sophistication and, in particular, manifestations of essentialism, charges of which activists are often found most guilty. Hawkesworth's (*ibid.*) suggestion that "feminists might want to target this cultural terrain [reports of the death of feminism/the proliferation of feminist activism] for intensive action" is a challenge that this book takes up, offering one such engagement with debates about the death of feminism and the erasure of feminist activism, specifically of eco/feminist activism.

Although an eco/feminist peace camp may seem an archetypal site for the reinscription and repetition of essentialism, I suggest that without returning to such sites, we cannot productively work through feminist dilemmas about the nature of nature. This book turns to Clayoquot, to activism in the early 1990s, as an exemplary site through which to engage with key conversations in eco/feminism and its recent history. Through a skeptical reading of accounts of essentialism, I have come to understand this late-twentieth-century peace camp, not as a quaint throwback to the disavowed activism of the 1970s and 1980s, but as a site through which the future of eco/feminist politics was, and can be, (re)imagined.

Although the peace camp and blockades transformed the terrain of environmental and particularly forest politics in Canada and beyond, and Clayoquot retains a prominent place in Canadian and international *environmental* political histories, Clayoquot does not – yet – occupy an analogous place in national or international feminist or eco/feminist imaginaries. In fact, the same can be said of eco/feminism itself, which does not often figure in overviews of feminism or in the recently proliferating histories of it. To understand the curious state of affairs whereby (some) academics have bemoaned the dearth of feminist action even as eco/feminist activists were busily engaged in campaigning across the world, it is first necessary to understand how and why essentialism has come to dominate, and constrain, discussions of eco/feminism. I begin this exploration by focusing on its two most commonly identified manifestations: maternalism and the universalizing implications of linking women and nature.

### **The Challenge of Essentialism: Maternalism and Universalism**

Although the term "essentialism" may have little meaning for activists, it is redolent with significance for feminist academics. Challenging essentialism, and especially biological determinism, has long been a central project of feminism and a focus of much feminist theory. A founding tenet of second-wave feminism was to dispute arguments that women's nature

was to nurture. Such claims were held to be essentialist, defined by Diane Fuss (1989, xi) as “a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the ‘whatness’ of a given entity.” For many feminists, the reliance on biology to establish women’s essence has been a focus of critique. The biological qualities usually attributed to women justified their confinement and innate suitability for the private, domestic sphere, as well as their exclusion from education and politics. Thus, undermining associations between women and nature became a key project for feminists, who drew on Simone de Beauvoir’s (1953, 249) famous dictum that “one is not born, but becomes a woman” to challenge biological determinism. Distinguishing between sex and gender, feminists argued that though sex was biological, gender and gender roles were socially constructed.

The distinction between sex and gender, the biological and the social, was crucial in suggesting the possibility of change. Whereas biology and nature were perceived as fixed and unalterable, the social was felt to be mutable – hence the importance of the term “gender” for feminists in holding out the prospect of social transformation. Challenging assumptions about the nature of women and insisting that women’s oppression was a political issue were crucial steps for feminists. Countering biological determinism and other essentialisms subsequently became an important political strategy for feminists. Thus, Christine Delphy (1984, 144) summed this up as

people do not revolt against what is natural, therefore inevitable; or inevitable therefore natural. Since what is resistible is not inevitable; what is not inevitable could be otherwise – it is arbitrary therefore social. The logical and necessary implication of women’s revolt, like all revolts, is that the situation can be changed. Belief in the possibility of change implies belief in the social origins of the situation.

However, though accounts of the possibility of change relied on the notion of gender as a social construct, they equally depended on an assumption of the fixity of nature and of the biological (I return to the significance of this in Chapter 9).

The rejection of essentialism has been key for feminism, but arguably essentialism ultimately threatened to undermine feminist politics. Although the critique of essentialism initially defined the “outside” of feminism, the non-feminist, the anti-feminist, and patriarchy as such, it was eventually

applied “within” feminism itself. Hence its very pejorative tone and the implication that eco/feminists were not proper feminists at all. Furthermore, there is only a short slide from “not a proper feminist” to non-feminist or anti-feminist, and attempts were made to resolve the dilemma of essentialist feminisms by relegating them to a naive past. Perhaps more precisely, the recognition that essentialism existed within feminism revealed the fiction of the distinction between “inside” and “outside,” between a feminism separate and apart from the non-feminist (see, for example, de Lauretis 1990, 268n7).

In explaining the predominance of women in environmental activism, Elizabeth May, former Sierra Club of Canada director and current leader of the Green Party of Canada, voiced the kind of argument that is commonly read as essentialist:

Everyone had their own, different answers ... And then there was my answer for which I was roundly criticized by politically correct feminists. My answer was and still remains that women are essentially different than men. We operate more from an intuitive thought process. We are biologically and spiritually connected to the cosmos, its planetary shifts, the earth's tides and phases of the moon. We are more nurturing, more concerned with the flow and flux of life-people, plants, animals, even seas. Consciously or not we find ourselves part of the Gaia, part of the living planetary whole. (quoted in Felesky 2001)

Such accounts have proved contentious. Canadian eco/feminist Catriona Sandilands curtly summed them up in *The Good-Natured Feminist: Eco-feminism and the Quest for Democracy* (1999, 5): “The fact of being a woman is understood to lie at the base of one’s experience of ecological degradation; of one’s interests in ecological protection, preservation, reconstruction; and of one’s special ecological consciousness.” Thus, many eco/feminists distanced themselves from essentialism, as I explore in Chapter 2, insisting on eco/feminism’s potential to challenge and problematize, rather than reify, maternalist and other essentialist representations of women and nature. Sandilands (*ibid.*, xiii), for instance, opened her book with a sense of alarm about current portrayals of women’s environmentalism: “Women’s concerns about nature, even if they have eventual public appearance and impact, boil down to an obvious manifestation of natural protective instincts towards home and family.” As Sandilands (*ibid.*, iii) put

it, “The neoconservative aroma of this discourse should be quite noticeable: a return to patriarchal and heterosexual ‘family values’ will restore not only a healthy (natural) family but a healthy (natural) planet.”

An equally challenging critique of eco/feminism’s political credibility has been that it universalizes women-nature connections and homogenizes differences between women. The Chipko Movement, in which women campaigned to prevent deforestation in India by hugging trees (“chipko” means to hug or embrace), has proved a powerful image for eco/feminists. The ritual citation of Chipko as the iconic instance of eco/feminist activism was particularly prevalent throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, when eco/feminists linked diverse activisms across the world under the banner of eco/feminism, from Chipko to the Kenyan Greenbelt Movement to Greenham Common. Yet this attempt to connect diverse movements has been seen as redolent of eco/feminism’s ongoing struggle, and failure, to negotiate the challenges of race and difference. The lack of substantive accounts of what it meant to name Chipko as eco/feminist has left eco/feminism open to criticisms of reproducing stereotypes of Indian women as either victims or saviours of the world, and of universalizing and essentializing relationships between women and nature. This was picked up in particular by those in the field of development studies who had conducted extensive in-depth ethnographic fieldwork, which presented nuanced and situated accounts of women’s relationships with nature. Such writers identified eco/feminism as a Western phenomenon that could not easily be translated to, or imposed on, non-Western contexts, and they resisted reading Chipko as an instance of eco/feminist activism, preferring to understand it in the context of a history of peasant resistance in the Garwhal Himalayas. The elision of difference by (Western/Northern) eco/feminists was seen by many as a universalizing strategy and yet another manifestation of essentialism; hence, it provided ample justification for dismissing eco/feminism.

Given these critiques, which lie at the centre of some of feminism’s most fraught debates, it is not surprising that eco/feminism may appear anachronistic. Yet despite these trenchant criticisms, one of my aims in this book is to articulate why eco/feminism remains a crucial intervention in particular feminist debates. Many eco/feminist theorists have responded to criticisms of essentialism by producing sophisticated accounts of eco/feminism’s anti-essentialism, but it is not clear that this strategy has succeeded. In my view, the anxiety over essentialism has placed eco/feminism in an unnecessary stranglehold from which it has struggled to

escape. My project differs in that it ambitiously seeks a route out of the tripartite bind of essentialism, anti-essentialism, and strategic essentialism.

### **From the Chipko Movement to Clayoquot Sound**

Misha Kavka (2001, xii, emphasis in original) wrote, “If ‘feminism,’ then, begs definition and yet refuses to be singly defined, one approach is to take stock of where (rather than *what*) ‘feminism’ is by looking back over where it has been – to consider, in other words, the work of today as the consequences of the histories accruing in the last thirty years in the name of feminism.” In my attention to a manifestation of eco/feminist politics in a particular place and time – Clayoquot in 1993 – I may appear to take this *where* rather more literally than Kavka intended. My intent in doing so is to counter the tendency of some feminists to reiterate the importance of a politics of location and situated knowledges while glossing over troubling questions of (colonial) histories, geographies, and ecologies, and the complex travels and translations of feminism. My turn from the Chipko Movement and other instances of eco/feminist activism in the South to examine women’s environmentalism in the North is intentional. Central to my reading of women’s environmental activism is attention to the specificities of its histories, to the particularity of nature in specific contexts (including national ones), as well as to exploring practices of mothering and the invocation of maternalist discourses, and to unpacking eco/feminism’s claims of international grassroots activism. All of this is necessary in any effort to recuperate eco/feminism in the fraught climate created by critiques of essentialism.

The temperate rainforest of Clayoquot, which constitutes “nature” in the Canadian context, carries an extraordinary symbolic power. The conflict was most visibly fought over the impact of clear-cut logging, and it gained public currency as a struggle over jobs versus the environment, but it also touched on issues fundamental to many articulations of Canadian identity: nature, particularly nature as wilderness. In protesting clear-cutting, activists were also engaging in a tense contestation over the meaning of being Canadian, which had the effect of bringing them into conflict with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the courts. Whereas Canada is highly invested in the idea of its forests, many of its politicians and business people are committed to logging and the economic expansion that it facilitates. Ironically, the activists who tried to protect the forests from clear-cutting were often perceived as traitors.

For me, stories from Clayoquot provide a salutary contrast to dominant narratives of nature as wilderness. In *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*, Margaret Atwood's (1972) classic effort to define a national literature, nature and wilderness were overwhelming and threatening places for humans. For Atwood (*ibid.*, 33), Canadian stories were accounts of "hanging on" or "staying alive," of those who "made it back from the awful experience – the North, the snowstorm, the sinking ship – that killed everyone else." She (*ibid.*, 35) wrote that "given a choice of the negative or positive aspects of any symbol – sea as life-giving Mother, sea as what your ship goes down in; tree as symbol of growth, tree as what falls on your head – Canadians show a marked preference for the negative." In *Survival*, Atwood was more explicitly concerned with the survival of humans than with that of nature. Later she (1995, 115-16) revisited and revised her survival thesis:

Next time you're in Pearson International airport in Toronto, wander through the souvenir shops and look at what is to be found there in the way of instant national identity. Chances are you will find a light-up Mountie or two, some maple leaves made out of maple sugar, many note-cards with birds, animals or landscapes on them, some Eskimo carvings, some smoked salmon in wooden boxes with Haida motifs, and a lot of mittens. You will also find many gift books with names like *Beautiful Canada*, and these will have a large supply of Northern scenes – scenes shown as vast, empty, untouched, luminous, numinous, pristine, and endless. Canadians have for long taken the North for granted, and we've invested a large percentage of our feelings about identity and belonging in it.

But the bad news is coming in: the North is not endless. It is not vast and strong, and capable of devouring and digesting all the human dirt thrown its way. The holes in the ozone layer are getting bigger every year; the forest, when you fly over it in a plane, shows enormous wastelands of stumps; erosion, pollution, and ruthless exploitation are taking their toll ...

The North will be neither female nor male, neither fearful nor health-giving, because it will be dead. The earth, like trees, dies from the top down. The things that are killing the North will kill, if left unchecked, everything else.

Although Atwood was talking specifically about how the North figures in Canadian imaginaries, her reflections resonate more widely with accounts

of wilderness as central to Canadian identity. In updating her original survival thesis with the recognition that wilderness itself may not endure, her ultimate theme remains one of human survival. The threat no longer comes from bears and winter storms, but from climate change and deforestation – from the environmental destruction wrought by “man’s” entry into nature/wilderness. Atwood’s survival thesis can be seen as flawed, as I have argued elsewhere (Moore 2003, 99):

The notion of the Canadian-ness of wilderness obscures the fact that the emergence of the Canadian nation was predicated on the exploitation of “natural resources,” on the colonisation of “empty” landscapes, and on genocide. At the same time as the Canadian government promotes the representation of “wilderness” in Canadian art and literature, and its consumption in National Parks, it customarily licenses its destruction.

This contradiction between the reification of wilderness and the destruction of nature and of those associated with it is a central tension at the heart of the Canadian state. What has been omitted from Atwood’s account is that the hacking out of Canadian identity from the backwoods and the very creation of the Canadian nation-state relied on the destruction of the trees and wilderness creatures, and crucially, of the First Nations, who do not figure in either her earlier or later accounts, except as Eskimos and Haida motifs. Atwood concluded by constructing “everything else” – white Canadians? – as the potential victim of this “death of nature.” In a perverse circumlocution, she made a small shift from her original survival thesis, from Canadians as victims of nature’s overwhelming power to Canadians as victims of nature’s vulnerability. Notwithstanding her public support for Clayoquot, Atwood relied on glossing over how Canada, and Canadians, might be implicated in national and global environmental degradation through the logging industry, international trade, and domestic consumption practices.

Atwood’s lack of attention to unpacking “nature” is suggestive of a significant investment in liberal versions of the nation, which persisted even when she discussed the subject of women and wilderness. Recognizing that the dominant stories of Northern landscapes were those of “man” and wilderness, she asked what happened when women entered Northern landscapes that were traditionally occupied by men. Atwood (1995, 95–96, 101, emphasis in original) identified two waves of women settlers; the first consisted of the early nineteenth century settlers who came with their

husbands. The second wave, in the twentieth century, came for different reasons:

Instead of going off into the woods to be with a man, they start going off into the woods to be by themselves. And sometimes they are even doing it to get *away* from a man. A good many women's novels have been written in response to the theoretical question *Where did Nora go when she walked out of the doll's house?* but the solutions have varied according to locale ... But one of the answers that has frequently presented itself to Canadian women writers has been "off to the woods," or, at the very least, "off to the summer cottage."

So, in Atwood's world, women don't storm off to the North; they go to the woods or to the summer cottage, suggestive of altogether gentler landscapes. Atwood did not go so far as to explicitly suggest that *women's survival* may be predicated on the existence of woods to which they can escape and that would result in a rather different survival thesis. Neither did she pursue the question of what women did once they stomped off to the woods. Marnie Andersen began to answer this question in *Women of the West Coast: Then and Now* (1993), although, like Atwood, she did not explore the stories of women who lived in Clayoquot before "pioneers" and "settlers" arrived. Initially, she intended to write about women pioneers, settlers, and homesteaders, but her focus shifted to environmentalism and women environmentalists. Andersen (*ibid.*, x) reflected,

My older friends took me – in my imagination – back to the earlier, gentler, but no less challenging days of settling the west coast. When the biggest excitement of their lives was, depending on their age (and marital status), the arrival of the *Princess Maquinna* – their only link with the outside world – or the weekly dance in the community hall. When an outing to the general store meant a six hour hike (round trip) through dense rainforest, or a trip down the inside passage by rowboat.

Today the west coast woman often arrives by van. She is likely to be jolted by the west coast experience while paddling a kayak, hiking to the Meares Island nature trails, or observing whales feeding in the wild. However it happens – to any one of us – the experience is unforgettable, and often requires a complete change in lifestyle. Some go home, pack up their belongings, and migrate west, others simply reassess their values and priorities, while still others sit down and write about it.

And some come, and stay, and become environmental campaigners. So who were the women of Clayoquot who set up the Peace Camp and who came and were arrested, and what were they doing? Were they getting back to nature? Were they reproducing the heterosexual nuclear family while saving the planet? Were they reproducing colonial and imperial natures? Were they becoming earth mothers? Were they being essentialist or even strategically essentialist? Were they universalizing women-nature relationships?

This raises a series of other questions, which seem much more interesting and pertinent to me: How adequate, or even useful, are these questions for understanding the lives and actions of the women at Clayoquot and their relevance for feminist politics? How have they come to dominate the stories of eco/feminism? How has eco/feminism become so entangled in these stories? How might we ask other questions of eco/feminism, and of women and nature, and how might we – I – tell different stories of feminism, eco/feminism, and women and nature?

Approaching these questions through Clayoquot Sound and Vancouver Island is instructive. The history of Vancouver Island, which is also a history of colonialism, is but one salutary reminder that women have not always been associated with nature and that nature is not always seen as gentle. In colonial projects, bourgeois white women have often served as civilizing influences, sent to colonies to undertake teaching and mission work for both indigenous people and the white men who laboured in the mining and logging industries. In this instance, it was white men who were in danger of being too close to a savage nature, in the homosocial life of the logging camps or in going Native by entering into relationships with First Nations women (Ware 1992; McClintock 1995; Perry 2001). Though Vancouver Island was only briefly a colony (1849-71) before it entered Confederation, I take up Adele Perry's argument in *On the Edge of Empire* (2001, 6) that "this does not imply that the relationship of colonialism existed only within the tidy parameters of these dates, but simply indicates a specific moment in state formation." I follow Perry and others who understand British Columbian history (and Canadian history more generally) as colonial history. So, despite Andersen's invocation of "earlier, gentler" days, the colonization of the west coast was certainly not gentle for everyone, not, most obviously, for the First Nations who already lived in Clayoquot, for the animals who bore the brunt of the fur trade, or for what was then densely forested land.

Despite Atwood's account, not all the first-wave white women were accompanied by husbands. Some were sent from Britain on bride ships, fated

to become wives once they arrived. Sending respectable white brides from England to Victoria was just one of the reform efforts that endeavoured to transform island logging camps into a white settler colony and that followed the common path of considering bourgeois women as agents of empire (Ware 1992; McClintock 1995). As Perry (2001, 3) recorded, in BC, First Nations people significantly outnumbered whites for a considerable time, and men outnumbered women in the small European community. Thus, homosociality in backwoods logging camps and the phenomenon of white loggers establishing relationships with First Nations women threatened efforts to establish British Columbia as “an orderly, respectable white settler colony.” Between 1849 and 1871, four “assisted immigration projects” (bride ships) were promoted in Britain and supported by middle-class feminists who were seeking ways to promote women’s independence and to address popular opposition to women’s waged work. The Female Middle-Class Emigration Society, set up in London in 1862, aimed to address the problem of “surplus” women in Britain and presented assisted women’s emigration as a route to preserving middle-class respectability. Yet, as it became clear that colonial Victoria was not entirely suitable for middle-class women, the society ultimately focused on working-class women, and on young women, as potential wives for working men, as servants for the emerging middle classes, and as governesses for their children. Perry’s (2001, 166) careful history described “working class women’s failure to behave in ways consistent with colonial discourse,” as well as a persistent indigenous opposition to colonialism. Thus, Perry (*ibid.*, 4) found that “British Columbia’s colonial project was a fragile one that was constantly challenged both by First Nations resistance and by white unwillingness to conform to prevailing constructions of appropriate behaviour and identity.” It is useful to bear these histories in mind if we are to understand the women who came to Clayoquot much later, as well as the Clayoquot Peace Camp and its disruptive effects.

These histories are key for understanding the importance of feminism, and eco/feminism specifically, in the Clayoquot campaign. This can be illustrated through two very different accounts of Clayoquot, which I use to demonstrate the importance of fully considering the critical difference that eco/feminism made in the campaign. In their collection *A Political Space*, Warren Magnusson and Karena Shaw (2003b) presented Clayoquot as offering a puzzle. For Magnusson “the puzzle of the political is especially apparent” in Clayoquot, which led him to pose the questions: “What forms does politics take? How are we to relate to it?” He reflected that “In

Clayoquot, the appropriate responses to such questions are unclear, and the answers we get from the conventions of political science are not very helpful" (Magnusson 2003, 1). A key aspect of the puzzle of Clayoquot is the challenge of locating Clayoquot. Magnusson and Shaw note that Clayoquot "appears to be at the *periphery* of contemporary power and authority and thus to be *marginal* to the study of politics" (Magnusson and Shaw 2003c, vii, emphasis in original). But they go on to argue that the apparent marginality of Clayoquot "is an effect of particular assumptions, assumptions that need to be challenged. Clayoquot is more usefully interpreted or 'read' as a center of interaction among the movements, powers, and authorities that produce the world in which we live" (Magnusson and Shaw 2003c, vii). In posing Clayoquot as a puzzle, they do not offer any particular theoretical framework to resolve it, but rather they propose a method which privileges the site itself, and that is "to read the global *through* the local," with the aim that "by exploring Clayoquot as a microcosm of global politics – we hope to disrupt the assumptions that constrain our political imagination" (Magnusson and Shaw 2003c, vii). The book is a thought-provoking collection of essays from a range of intense conversations at an International Workshop on the Politics of Clayoquot Sound, including academics, activists, locals, and visitors who came to Clayoquot and engaged with the site and with an extensive archive of documentation related to Clayoquot which they assembled for the workshop.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, Bruce Braun's *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture and Power on Canada's West Coast* (2002) had no problem locating Clayoquot. Braun offered a clear diagnosis of what was wrong with the campaign, and identified his own resolution to these problems. While Braun (2002, 2) insisted that he was sympathetic to protesters, whose passion and commitment deserved respect, he had concerns that "in the popular press, and in the rhetoric used by key actors, debate over the future of these forests was often cast in terms of a binary logic (pristine nature/destructive humanity)." For Braun this binary logic authorized "certain actors to speak for nature's defense or its management," and curiously to me anyway, resulted in him aligning environmentalists *with* transnational capital and the state, and *against* those he saw as marginalized – local communities, forest workers, and First Nations. In particular Braun took environmentalists to task for perpetuating the absence of First Nations in the media framing of the controversy as one of environmentalists versus loggers. His solution then was to call for a radical postcolonial environmentalism, which for him was a politics where "wilderness" is not reified

and where First Nations were made visible. Braun's method was to take a number of events, artefacts, or images, drawn if not always directly from the broad campaign, then from the broader production of natures on the west coast. His artefacts included photos of forests before and after clear-cutting and maps showing decreases in levels of old-growth forest over time. He also chose artefacts more loosely connected with what we might term a wilderness imaginary – from wilderness tourism to the art of Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun and Emily Carr. Braun's method of reading was to juxtapose artefacts, making “no attempt to resolve them into a totality” (2002, 23); although arguably he nonetheless produced a totalizing solution – radical postcolonial environmentalism – on the basis of his readings. And it is not clear that Braun's artefacts can bear the weight of his argument.

In teasing apart the difference in these two accounts, I find the work of Anna Tsing (2005) useful, not least because of its focus on the destruction of forests, in her case in Indonesia. In *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* one of Tsing's interests is collaborations between environmentalists and indigenous people, and obstructions to such collaboration. Her argument, therefore, diverged from those who read environmentalists' interest in indigenous knowledge “only as a repetition of indigenous fantasies and imperial histories.” She commented that such accounts “offer a historical metanarrative in which nothing good can happen – good or bad – but more of the same. Familiar heroes and villains are again arrayed on the same battlefield. It is difficult to see how new actors and arguments might ever emerge.” Tsing's (*ibid.*, 4) use of “friction” to signal not a repetition of a “clash of cultures,” but to gesture to “the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnections across difference” is a welcome contribution to efforts to rethink connection and solidarity. I too am interested in tracing situated knowledges and partial perspectives, and not repeating the same old stories about environmentalists and the reification of nature, or indigenous peoples – not least because, contra Braun, this seems to me precisely what the Friends of Clayoquot Sound were involved in. I don't want to deny that wilderness imaginaries of the kind that Braun had in mind did not emerge in and through the campaign. Indeed, it would be a surprise if they did not, given the dominance of understandings of forest as wilderness and its circulation as wilderness in industries such as tourism and even logging, as well as by provincial and national governments. Magnusson and Shaw (2003a, 272-73) note this too: “Clayoquot's image as pristine wilderness was used by environmentalists to mobilize support

outside the region. Insofar as environmental activism tended to set Clayoquot aside as a special place invested with cultural meanings derived from ‘nature’ or ‘wilderness,’ it remained complicit in some of the practices it sought to overcome.” Yet, as they clearly recognized, what makes Clayoquot so interesting is that there was so much more going on than a repetition of a desire for wilderness. Rather, what becomes relevant is the extent to which local activists “attempted to break out of this frame and re-pose the issues inclusively” (Magnusson and Shaw 2003, 271).

Whereas Magnusson and Shaw’s approach is to read the global through Clayoquot Sound, Braun’s (2002, 69) different reading sees environmentalists turning to the global. Rather than the political in Clayoquot offering a puzzle for Braun, this is proof that “the protest’s leaders were savvy political actors who knew that images travelled widely and instantaneously in late-twentieth century mediascapes, and that political identifications were not necessarily contained solely within the boundaries of place, or the nation state.” Or else he understands it as a displacement of local ecological issues into global arenas, facilitated by the circulation of the kinds of images he examines (*ibid.*, 304n7). In part, this may be because he relies more on the work of organizations such as Greenpeace and the Wilderness Committee than on that of the Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS), which is my focus, as well as that of Magnusson and Shaw.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout this book, I suggest that there was a lot more at stake in the turn to the international than the tactics of media-savvy protesters. For instance, William Chaloupka’s chapter in *A Political Space* (2003, 78) reflected that

when protesters talk to reporters, they are all values, justifications and pious outrage. This is as it should be; not everyone knows their reasons as well as they do and this is a way of reaching out. When they go back to camp, however, they talk little of those things ... In camp, there are strategic decisions to make, not to mention a thousand logistical details to be resolved.

Yet Braun paid curiously little attention to environmentalists’ *strategies*, to the role of the media in framing events, or to environmentalists’ dissatisfaction with media coverage. He appears to take media representations of the campaign for the campaign itself, or for the whole campaign. He also seems to imply that environmentalists had some control over the media and could have produced different framings of events in Clayoquot. At the

same time his accounts of artefacts appear curiously abstracted from the everyday life of campaigning, and from the fact that there was no one campaign but rather a range of groups involved, with different locations and strategies. The specificities of the varied approaches taken by the different groups is not clear in his account, which does not distinguish between environmental groups, their locations (metropolitan or local), and the impact these locations had on the actions in which the groups engaged.

In writing “that few First Nations joined protestors on the blockades is a topic that has still not received the attention that it has deserved,” Braun (2002, 8) seemed to imply that this was never discussed within the FOCS or at the camp, which, as Chaloupka recognized, was hardly the case. Braun’s argument also relied on the implied assumption that the First Nations *should* have been on the blockades. But making them visible was not in the power of environmentalists, given that they had limited influence and little control over the media framing of the controversy. Nor was it their intention to do so. In a situation where everyday life in Tofino brought encounters in the street with loggers and First Nations, turning the media spotlight on the local would have further stressed already complex relations that the FOCS (and others) was trying to hold together. Catapulted into the media spotlight, the FOCS understood only too clearly the limits of such exposure – and its pressures. But it is also true that the FOCS recognized that justice, not greater visibility, was the appropriate response to the absence of First Nations. Justice would not necessarily be served through bringing “the media” to bear on First Nations communities in Clayoquot. Rather, it might be better realized by trying to reduce the stress of the media glare in the region – but also by spectacularly making visible histories of colonialism and by calling the Canadian state to account for its role in global deforestation. The ready and rather hyperbolic denunciations of the FOCS and of those arrested at Clayoquot as traitors demonstrates only too clearly how their actions were perceived by others. At the same time, Braun’s arguments about the marginalization of First Nations were not entirely borne out in the aftermath of the campaign: First Nations were involved in the Interim Measures Agreement and its subsequent extensions, in the Central Regional Board, and in setting up Iisaak Forest Resources, a First Nations-led forest service company. Nonetheless, the limits of these developments also reveal the shortcomings of a politics of visibility or integration. These interventions hardly constitute appropriate or sufficient redress, and they also make clear that the First Nations cannot be understood as a homogeneous group.

Thus in pointing out that the turn to the global had rather other implications, I am also suggesting that this was less a puzzle than Magnusson and Shaw propose. I see their approach, reading Clayoquot through the global, as echoing the strategies of the FOCS, a direction which makes some sense when paying attention to the role of eco/feminism in the campaign. I suggest that it is not incidental that many people who joined the FOCS in the late 1980s and early 1990s were feminists. Although clearly not every FOCS member in the late 1980s explicitly identified as a feminist or eco/feminist, feminism was a shared concern for many, and it informed key decisions about how the camp and the campaign were organized. These feminists also came with a strong sense of contemporaneous feminist debates – an awareness of the limits of easy claims to global or even local sisterhood, an attention to the politics of location, situated knowledges, and the critiques of black and Third World feminists, and an understanding of their impact on white feminists. In particular I suggest they were well aware of the limits – that is, *dangers* – of a politics of visibility, or of giving voice. At the same time I would argue that eco/feminists insisted on continuing to articulate a politics of global connection at a time when many feminists were disengaging from such politics. During the 1980s and 1990s, even as white feminists were confronting the challenges of black and Third World activists and theorists, environmentalists were successfully questioning the relevance of national boundaries for containing environmental problems and were insisting that solutions to such problems also required international mediations. Similarly, they recognized the need for activism that transcended national boundaries. Though aware that they were implicated in histories of colonialism, many shared a profound sense of a feminist politics of the limits of home, which corresponds with what the late Val Plumwood (2008, 141) called an ethics of place. Unlike the reified sense of place of some environmental writing, Plumwood's ecofeminist ethic of place makes visible, not people in the Third World or indigenous peoples, but "north/south place *relationships*, where the north/south pole operates as a correlate of (various kinds of) privilege." This is the kind of work in which the FOCS has been engaged, work which began not with abstracted notions of wilderness or rainforest, but with Clayoquot, with attention to the specificities of the politics of location and situated knowledges.

### **Re-Vision as Eco/Feminist Genealogy**

I have had many guides in providing an account of the eco/feminist politics of Clayoquot, and in seeking ways around the constraints of essentialism.

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In particular, I mobilize a wonderfully generative tool – genealogy – to multiple ends, working genealogy against itself, as it properly demands. For many, “genealogy” will undoubtedly bring Foucault (1984) to mind, but my version of genealogy is more explicitly informed by feminist, queer, environmental, and postcolonial theorists and essayists (see also Tamboukou 2003). Genealogy is a much more productively promiscuous tool than Foucault allows, turning up in diverse locations and often undoing lines of supposed purity. It is particularly useful in a site where the influences of pioneering settlers/colonizers and earth mothers are supposed to abound. In weaving together its many sites and possibilities, I aim to develop the potential of genealogy as a generative method in telling stories of Clayoquot.

My formulation of genealogy draws on the work of postcolonial and anti-racist theorists such as M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Mohanty, Julia Emberley, Ann McClintonck, Catherine Nash, Adele Perry, Mary Louise Pratt, Alice Walker, and Vron Ware. The scholarship of environmentalists such as Éric Darier, Paul Rutherford, Anna Tsing, and Terry Tempest Williams is also useful, as is that of Bruce Braun and Jocelyn Thorpe, who work specifically on Canada. Eco/feminists, feminists, lesbians, and queer theorists Judith Butler, Teresa de Lauretis, Sarah Franklin, Clare Hemmings, Alison Stone, Noël Sturgeon, and Maria Tamboukou have also influenced me, as have Susan Griffin, Donna Haraway, Adrienne Rich, Vandana Shiva, and Starhawk (though the latter do not explicitly use the term “genealogy”). Yet, creating a typology of genealogies would be inappropriate because genealogy is a much more tangled, knotted approach than this would imply; we would be better served to trace – that is, to construct – genealogy’s own genealogy.

A key inspiration for me is the essay “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision (1971),” by the late Adrienne Rich (1979, 35). Clearly aware of the constitutive power of histories and the (re)writing of these histories, she stated,

Re-vision – the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction – is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for women, is more than a search for identity: it is part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society. A radical critique of literature, feminist in its impulse, would take the work first of all as a clue to how we live, how we have been living, how

we have been led to imagine ourselves, how our language has trapped as well as liberated us, how the very act of naming has been till now a male prerogative, and how we can begin to see and name – and therefore live – afresh. A change in the concept of sexual identity is essential if we are not going to see the old political order reassert itself in every new revolution. We need to know the writing of the past, and know it differently than we have ever known it; not to pass on a tradition but to break its hold over us.

Notably, Rich's essay was first published in 1971, the same year that Foucault's "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" appeared. Tracing genealogy's own genealogy through feminism, rather than exclusively through the patrilineage of Foucault and Nietzsche, is of course precisely genealogical. As Julia Emberley (2007, 239) noted of Foucault,

naming his oppositional strategy a genealogy is, of course, somewhat ironic, especially when considered in relation to the filiative legacies drawn up in such histories of "mankind" as the Judeo-Christian Bible. The patrilineal accounts of father/son inheritances are seemingly endless and, in their exclusion of mothers, daughters, and sisters, function as a standard bearer of the autochthonous "search for origins."

In invoking Nietzsche, Foucault instigated his own genealogy, demonstrating the links between it and patrilineal knowledge practices. Thus, genealogy does not always undo the naturalization of knowledge practices. Emberley (*ibid.*) identified Foucault's own exclusions: "For to erect a patrilineal genealogy of pure descent is to assume that what has been excluded – the female reproductive body – is its natural, as in taken for granted, correlative, and, therefore, *a priori* excluded from the domain of culture and society." As I suggest later, eco/feminist matrilineages might properly be understood as genealogical – as a critique of patrilineage, as the construction of feminist knowledge practices, and as the intentional building of a matrilineal community of feminism/feminists that refuses kinship based solely on blood. A feminist genealogy reminds us that personal and political histories are entwined. Here Emberley's conjoining of patrilineal knowledge practices with recognition of the complicity of the patriarchal nuclear family in colonial and imperial projects is key.

Rich's method of re-visioning and her attention to "when we dead awaken" have a renewed relevance in the context of the rhetoric about the death of feminism and the related attention to writing histories and genealogies of

the recent feminist past. I am also guided by Katie King's work, even if I cannot rise to the challenge of her careful, creative storytelling and capacity to (re)imagine both the world and writing differently. Her work on rethinking the terrain of cultural feminism is certainly useful for eco/feminists, given that both have been charged with essentialism (Alcoff 1988; Echols 1989; cf. Sturgeon 1997, who links cultural feminism and eco/feminism). In seeking to advocate for the term "cultural feminism," King (1994, 92) described her approach modestly: "I do not do this by answering Echols or other critics of cultural feminism and thus remaining in the epistemological paradigms she's constructed, borrowed, and exemplifies, allowing their hegemony, but rather by mapping an altogether different terrain," which she calls "the apparatus for the production of feminist culture." My account of eco/feminism is much more bound up with essentialism and related epistemological paradigms than I would wish, thus not quite undoing their hegemony. At the same time, I hold on to King's emphasis on the conversations and travels of feminist theory and the multiple sites where it might be enacted, in the hope of releasing essentialism's deadly grip on eco/feminism. To my practice of genealogy, I also bring King's focus on what she terms "pastpresents." As genealogy examines the history of the present, pastpresents pay attention to the persistence of the past in the present. These complicated entanglements of time are useful for telling stories of Clayoquot and of eco/feminism, not least because King (2010, emphasis in original) tied her pastpresents to Donna Haraway's work: "Postulating that pastpresents are a species of naturecultures, it offers many linked, or ... *knotted*, examples of how the past and the present continually converge, collapse and co-invent each other." Aware that "the past and present cannot be purified each from the other – they confront me with interruptions, obstacles, new/old forms of organization bridges, shifts in direction, spinning dynamics," King (*ibid.*) wanted to find ways to tell stories that do not rely on such purification. Her commitment to pastpresents, and to history as re-enactment, echoes Anna Tsing's commitment to friction and evokes Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* (1990). As Marlatt explained about her novel,

I like rubbing the edges of document and memory/fiction against one another. I like the friction that is produced between the stark reporting of document, the pseudo-factual language of journalism, and the more emotional, even poetic, language of memory. That's why I used such a hodge-podge of sources in *Ana Historic*: a little nineteenth-century and very local

journalism that sounds like a gossip column, a 1906 school textbook, various historical accounts, some contemporary feminist theory, and a school teacher's diary from 1873 that was completely fictitious. (quoted in Kossew 2003, 56)

In this way, Marlatt reminds us of the stitched-together nature of history, of the craft involved in bringing different sources meaningfully together, and the necessary and productive f(r)ictions of re-visioning history in order to reimagine futures.

### **Eco/Feminist Genealogies: Denaturalizing Essentialisms**

One of the challenges of articulating “nature” is the double meaning of the word: it refers apparently paradoxically to what is not human but can also denote that which is precisely human, as in human nature – and women’s nature. Moreover, there is often a slippage between the two meanings. Thus, arguments about women’s nature have commonly been used to restrict their lives and have led some feminists to insist on distance from nature, as opposed to a re-examination of both women and nature. Consequently, eco/feminist insistence on thinking about women and nature, and feminism and nature has not always been seen as being truly feminist. Rather, it has been thought to undermine feminism because its attention to nature is perceived as essentialist. Teresa de Lauretis (1989, 3) offers a useful account of feminist theory that helps to elucidate some of eco/feminism’s challenges: “Feminist theory is all about an essential difference, an irreducible difference, though not a difference between man and woman, nor a difference inherent in ‘woman’s nature’ (in woman as nature) but a difference in the feminist conception of woman, women and the world.” By understanding eco/feminism as a reworking of feminism, where the world that de Lauretis mentions is taken up quite literally as planet earth, we can see that eco/feminism properly understands itself as both “of feminism” and a critique of it. Thus, one of the arguments I make throughout is that issues in eco/feminism are often feminist dilemmas writ large, intensified because of the doubling of the “natures” at stake; and it is the attention to the multiplicity of nature that renders eco/feminism particularly fruitful in examining developments in feminism.

In her account of eco/feminism, Jenneth Parker (2001) suggests that naturalism, not essentialism, is the issue that requires scrutiny and that concentrating on this would achieve what feminists and eco/feminists desire. What Parker has pointed to is that nature is taken up in particular

ways at certain times, as is the case for essentialism and its variants such as biological determinism and universalism. As a result, essentialism rather than naturalization becomes the focus. This point is vital in my use of genealogy as a methodological approach which works at denaturalization. So, rather than going “essentialist hunting,” as Stengers (2008) usefully puts it, alluding to the witch hunts, I trace processes and moments of denaturalization. In doing so, I invoke an eco/feminist genealogical practice to explore how we can undermine the critique of essentialism and how we can learn to ask the question of nature anew.

Turning to the specific, to Clayoquot, makes recourse to abstractions difficult. The particular enables the refusal of essentialisms. Ultimately, we do little justice to eco/feminism by thinking in terms of essentialisms or of closeness to nature. There are, and have been, other ways of thinking about eco/feminism, one of which is as an anti-dualistic politics of interconnection, though curiously, this understanding is often forgotten. Barbara Gates (1998, 20), to cite just one example here, noted simply that “inherent in ecofeminism is a belief in the interconnection of all living things. Since all life is nature, no part of it can be closer than another to ‘nature.’” Hence, it makes little sense to talk of eco/feminism in terms of women’s closeness to nature. That is not to say that we cannot acknowledge the circulation of discourses of women as being closer to nature. Rather, this does not produce a useful account of eco/feminism. Nonetheless, we might take the strength and persistence of such accounts as something important to explore.

Throughout this book, I use genealogy to undo essentialisms and to produce alternative stories of eco/feminism. I begin to trace the implications of a genealogical approach in Chapter 2, taking up Noël Sturgeon’s effort to unpick typologies of eco/feminism. I also extend Sturgeon’s genealogy, revisiting accounts of eco/feminism that proliferated *before* the reductive turn to typologies. In particular, I highlight the rather different places occupied in the eco/feminist literature by the Indian eco/feminist Vandana Shiva and the Chipko Movement, and the reported naming of eco/feminism by French feminist Françoise d’Eaubonne. I juxtapose these different trans/national stories with a reflection on Shiva’s appearance at a conference on Vancouver Island and histories of H.R. MacMillan’s travels from British Columbia to India to find a market for timber a hundred years ago. In tracing the increasing marginalization of activism, I seek to address *how* and *why* theories of essentialism came to dominate questions about women and nature.

Questions such as whether women are closer to nature than men are explicitly rejected in Chapter 3. Instead of asking what should our relationship with (an external) nature be, I ask what is our relationship with ourselves? Turning to oral history interviews with Clayoquot activists as a site of eco/feminist theorizing, I use the possibilities of narrative for disrupting essentialisms and lay the groundwork for my argument for understanding these stories as “unnatural histories,” as more-than-human genealogies of the self, which insist on kinship with the earth. Through the intentional construction of eco/feminist genealogies, I recuperate the practice of tracing eco/feminist foremothers, which is dismissed by others as a vestige of matrilineal and reproductive thought. In this way, I also take up genealogy’s “other” life as family history, linking such histories with genealogical knowledge practices. This approach is in keeping with my interest in complicating genealogy as a critical practice of knowledge production and my refusal to separate out the making of family, and family histories, from “global”/universal metahistory – and indeed from natural, and naturalized, history.

Chapter 4 turns to a genealogical approach to Clayoquot, exploring the emergence of the campaign in the context of local and regional histories of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, including fictional accounts. I argue that one of the accomplishments of the Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS) is its challenge to patrilineal histories of the forest industry and forest science, and colonial histories of Clayoquot, and its production of alternative histories, which point to possible different futures. In doing so, I point to the *cultural*, as well as environmental, work of the FOCS. The FOCS highlights culture as an important domain of politics, that not all politics is fought on blockades, or through ballot boxes, but that some of the most important political work is the transformation of the Canadian imaginary.

Chapter 5 turns to the summer of 1993, to the Clayoquot Peace Camp and the blockades in which over eight hundred people were arrested. This chapter addresses one of the paradigmatic examples of essentialism, that of non-violence, through exploring the eco/feminist politics and the gendered politics of everyday life at the camp. The camp was a moment when eco/feminist politics came sharply into focus in the campaign, where eco/feminism emerged, was contested and perhaps temporarily disappeared. Although the camp was said to be based on “eco/feminist principles,” links between feminism, non-violence, and consensus were not always transparent to participants. The chapter addresses how meanings of eco/feminism

were articulated and defined through attention to process and practice, rather than as an identity politics. Contests over the practice of eco/feminist politics are addressed by narrating the events of the summer through the prism of conflicts over gender and eco/feminism, by raising questions about constructions of masculinity in the environmental movement, gendered conflict, tensions around the practice of consensus and non-violence, and the meanings of safety and security at an eco/feminist camp.

An engagement with the lives of women activists at the camp provides the basis of Chapters 6 to 8. Collectively, these chapters work to undermine many of the assumptions about eco/feminism – and especially about maternalism – and they point to the importance of empirical research in this context. In the Preface, I have already confessed that I was not initially that interested in trees. Now I add that I was not initially that interested in motherhood either. To be clear, at the same time I did not accept the story that eco/feminism was all about maternalism, and indeed the research was to a certain extent motivated by the assumption that something more/else was going on in women's environmental activism that could not be reduced to maternalism. Yet, though I did not think motherhood was enough, at the same time I did not think it was irrelevant, and eventually I realized that writing about women's efforts to renegotiate motherhood was indeed a key part of many women's stories, including those who did not have children.

Thus Chapter 6 takes up the thorny question of that supposedly paradigmatic manifestation of essentialism, maternalism. Here, I provide an altogether other account of motherhood in eco/feminist politics to any available thus far. In doing so, I demonstrate the value of an approach that does not persist in seeking essentialism, but rather pursues ways of listening attentively to women's stories of their lives. Rather than an essentialist over-determination of motherhood, I found a profoundly eco/feminist effort to rework meanings of motherhood, family, and home, which calls into question any simple reduction of eco/feminism to extending maternal concern about children to the planet, and also acts as a reminder of the importance of "a politics of location." That these stories are told by white women in Clayoquot Sound acts as a salutary reminder to me of the importance in reconfiguring meanings of family and home, and how this has always been key for feminists. As Emberley, Perry, and others remind us, we must not forget the role the reproduction of the white nuclear family has played in the making of empire, and paying attention to sites where the heterosexual patriarchal nuclear family is undone, and how any undoing of

empire and colonialism also requires the undoing of the bourgeois colonial family, remains a central feminist project.

In Chapter 7, I go on to juxtapose the overdetermination of motherhood in accounts of eco/feminism with a near complete lack of attention to childhood. This absence contrasts markedly with the reification and romanticization of childhood in the writings of deep ecologists. The chapter argues that, in order to reconceive motherhood, childhood also needs to be retheorized. In my recounting of women's recollections of childhood natures, I disrupt the tendencies of some deep ecologists to produce romantic origin stories of happy childhoods in nature as an origin story of adult activism. For many of the women with whom I spoke, no nostalgic return to childhood was possible. Adult activism offers a complicated working through of gendered childhood natures. Childhood, in particular for girls, is often a site of conflict, where nature is used to mark the boundaries between child and adult, girl and woman, and where nature is invoked by adults in gendering children. Girls learn to be girls through, for example, differential access to nature and the "outdoors," compared with boys. The chapter pays particular attention to the boundaries between home, "nature," and the social world, and the role of families in negotiating these boundaries.

Chapter 8 draws together the radical potential for eco/feminist activist narratives to reconfigure the meanings of motherhood, childhood, family, home, genealogy, and kinship. I suggest that in telling their life stories, women produce genealogies of a more-than-human self, breaching the boundaries of human and nature/planet. These narratives involve a fundamental re-creation of family and home. Genealogy is conventionally understood as the construction of a family tree, a way of mapping kinship, of blood relations and marriage ties. Yet, these women's stories can be understood as efforts to reconstruct familiar and familial genealogies. The stories provide unnatural histories of decidedly unfamiliar "family trees" (Williams 1991) and invoke relatives, friends, and mentors as part of a newly reconstructed family. For many of these women, working through relationships with home has also meant working through the meanings of being "at home" in Canada, and specifically in Clayoquot Sound. If Clayoquot is home, it is one that has had to be made and struggled for. Making home, for these women involves "home-work." The work of living in Clayoquot involved trying to resist being a settler, trying not to be implicated in the destruction of nature, but taking seriously the question of how to make a home in nature. The women of Clayoquot Sound were engaged in the work of the

co-construction of nature, which sometimes involved blockading logging roads and going to jail. For many, the campaign, the blockades, and subsequent court proceedings became a site of engagement with and contestation over national identity and belonging, over the meanings of being a Canadian citizen. Thus, the reworking of home demanded that women forge an ethical and ecological citizenship, a reconstructed Canadian identity.

The themes of motherhood and sexuality, childhood, meanings of family and home, including Canada as home and as national identity, which occupy Chapters 6-8 focus on aspects of women's lives that are frequently naturalized. Foucault (1984, 76) wrote that genealogy

must record the singularity of events outside of any monstrous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising of places, in what we tend to feel is without history – in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles.

Hence my return to what might appear to be the most unpromising of places – an eco/feminist peace camp, motherhood, and childhood, all utterly overdetermined parts of women's lives and troubling sites for eco/feminists. Together, the chapters on motherhood, childhood, families and home allow me to understand women's oral histories as a genealogical project, one where retelling family history and the refusal of a search for origins opens into a genealogy of a more-than-human self.

Following this journey of reconfiguring eco/feminism through Clayoquot, I return in the final chapter to reconsider some of the animating concerns of this book, including the contrast between the vitality of eco/feminist activism and the persistence of narratives of the end of feminism. I note that a vocal insistence on eco/feminism's anti-essentialism, or strategic essentialism, has not secured eco/feminists a place at the feminist table. My thinking on the "nature" of feminist history is provoked by Clare Hemmings's work on "telling feminist stories." Hemmings identified the dominant narratives of feminist history as progress narratives, or stories of decline or loss. Key to her analysis is attention to periodizations of feminist histories – how decades come to stand for particular issues. The nineties were a site of debate over difference and the seventies the proper time of essentialism. Yet eco/feminism as an explicit movement emerged in the

late 1980s and 1990s; and with its attention to women and nature, and assumed essentialism, eco/feminism emerges as out of step with dominant periodizations of feminism – as essentialist at the wrong time, at a time when all feminists should have known better than to reproduce essentialisms. This analysis begins to reveal why no amount of anti-essentialism, or even strategic essentialism, will lead to a place at the feminist table. Although the emergence of new feminisms, such as new feminist materialisms, appears to offer a (re)consideration of matter, I point to how they too appear complicit with Hemmings's narratives of linear displacement. Against such feminist histories, I call for knotted histories where contradictions might remain coeval, at the same time, where eco/feminism might yet be understood, not as a return to the essentialist seventies, but rather as a site of ongoing reflexivity over “women” and “nature.”

Genealogy, of course, also requires proper attention to limits. This is a more-than-human genealogy, but it is not a multi-species ethnography (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). I do not foreground the other species of Clayoquot or the other species in the lives of those I interviewed – nonetheless, I do try and hold other species in sight, in the frame, so animals are mentioned in the stories I tell. At the same time, neither do I want to leave the human – that is, the humanist, or human exceptionalism – unchallenged. In fact, one concern is that the broader turn to animal studies can leave human/(non-human) animal dualisms entirely intact. Here I am distinguishing this more recent turn to animal studies from the long eco/feminist commitment to animals (Adams 1991; Gaard 1993b, 2002; Kheel 2008), which has always had a more relational focus. I am interested in producing an account of the more-than-human where, contrary to general usage, the more-than-human does not collapse into the non-human, but rather draws our attention to how we might think the human otherwise, how the human might be reconfigured through the process of activism, dwelling, and telling stories. I am interested in how paying attention to stories and genealogies can produce entirely unnatural histories where invocations of Mother Nature, rather than being an utterly overdetermined figure, might be read as an effort to claim kinship with the earth.

This book is hardly the whole story of Clayoquot or even of the interviews I heard. The book draws on interviews with women who were involved in the campaign in various ways, many of whom were at the camp and were arrested. It also draws on a small number of interviews with men

involved, as well as a group interview. I did not interview anyone who explicitly identified as First Nations; nor did I interview anyone in the logging industry. Though I draw extensively on extended quotes, as everyone who attempts oral history discovers, there is no way to do justice to the material of people's lives. Any account is thus inevitably a kind of failure. In the meantime, this book is an attempt to tell a very particular story of Clayoquot, at a particular point in time – as Antoinette Burton (1992, 26) argued, "The history we are writing and the theory we are reading are themselves the products not just of our cultural milieux, but of the historical moments we are living in as well." There are still many stories to be told about Clayoquot, and I hope that I, and others, can find ways to continue to do this.