Masters in Literary Studies: Dissertation

Student: Merna Wells

Supervisor: Andre Brink

Date: 4.10.93

Title. "Post-Environmentalism, the Deep Ecology/ Ecofeminist Debate, and Surfacing: Rereading Environmental Theory."

"Post-Environmentalism, the Deep Ecology/Ecofeminist Debate, and Surfacing: Rereading Environmental Theory."

Merna Wells

I have taken my notion of `Post-Environmentalism' from John Young's book of the same name which seemed to me to provide an eclectic and essentially deconstructive approach to the debate surrounding `the environmentalist crisis'. As the term suggests, the debate is one subject to essentialist thinking which constitutes it as simple and singular. In particular I am interested in the ways in which that logic is one of specularity, forwarded by a scientific privileging of ocular epistemology. I therefore use the strategy of `Post-Environmentalism' in so far as it provides a way of making use of the historical and political importance of all the discourses involved, in particular Deep-Ecology and Ecofeminism, without privileging one over another. However, I also point out ways in which this mapping project is subject to the same specular logic. In so far as Surfacing is a postmodernist text which constantly relativizes the discourses of, in particular but not exclusively, ecofeminism and science, it functions like `Post-Environmentalism' to deconstruct the specific problems of each. In particular I look at the way in which the narrator uses metaphor to deconstruct rational masculinist thought and create the possibility of an empowering subject position for women, nature and fiction as a marginalized genre.

There is an apparent transgression committed in linking science and literature. Something almost illicit or at best useless about tracing the ways in which Surfacing, a fiction text, traverses and is traversed by the non-fiction, factual discourse of environmental theory. Habitually the two are seen as disparate disciplines with little to offer each other. The only licit relationship lies in the use of scientific theory to read fiction, and the benefits are accordingly seen to proceed only in that direction. This is taken for granted, given, a fact, there for all to see.

Yet the assumed `obviousness' of this `fact' alerts one immediately to the operations of an overdetermining ideology.

Precisely because it has been naturalized we ought to interrogate it, to withdraw our reverence and create, as it were, a scandal. To use Surfacing to deconstruct the political and philosophical presumptions of environmental theory. To suggest that fiction offers not only a more democratic but a more dynamic, more effective means of understanding the issues at stake in the environmental debate.

Let us begin, then, with the assumption that science and literature belong to different disciplines, that they have different objects of study, namely that science is objective and literature subjective.

Science and literature are clearly not as disparate as it is assumed. In practice science acknowledges the effects of subjective involvement. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle states, for example, that the act of

observation influences the object observed. Stephen Hawking explains it in more detail:

> In order to predict the future position and velocity of a particle, one has to be able to measure its present position and velocity accurately. The obvious way to do this is to shine light on the particle. Some of the waves of light will be scattered by the particle and this will indicate its position. However, one will not be able to determine the position of the particle more accurately than the distance between the wave crests of light, so one needs to use light of a short wavelength in order to measure the position of the particle precisely. Now by Planck's quantum hypothesis, one cannot use an arbitrarily small amount of light; one has to use at least one quantum. This quantum will disturb the particle and change its velocity in a way that cannot be predicted.... Heisenberg showed that the uncertainty in the position of the particle times the uncertainty in its velocity times the mass of the particle can never be smaller than a certain quantity, which is known as Planck's constant. Moreover, this limit does not depend on the way in which one tries to measure the position or velocity of the particle, or on the type of particle: Heisenberg's uncertainty principle is a fundamental, inescapable property of the world' (My emphasis).[1]

---

[1] Stephen Hawking, A Brief History of Time, p.55.

What is fascinating to me about this description is the way in which it uses, or `abuses' (a definition of which we will come to later) language. This abuse has, I think, a lot to do with the form of text we are dealing with. A Brief History of Time straddles the border between `factual' and `fiction' works. It is not strictly a `text book', nor however could it be classified fiction. Yet it contains elements of both. It deals with the `subject matter' of science but in a manner that the average reader can understand. It extends its readership beyond an elite scientific academe. The effect of this is to change the way in which certain words function, and to throw into doubt the accrued meaning of their habitual use. The `world' Hawking is describing, for example, is not an objectively independent and measurable one, rather it is dynamic and intimately relative. When he uses the phrase `property of the world', we no longer understand it as a world from which we are excluded. Subjectivity is the property of the world. We have begun to understand the words, `property of the world' differently. However, in so far as it begins to bridge the worlds of science and fiction, it remains an unusual text.

We may compare it, for example, to another popularized science text, John Boslough's Masters of Time. Here an image of `the world' as independent and objectively measurable still lingers in his descriptions of Heisenberg's Uncertainty principle.

`The limitations of the observer', he argues - rather defensively it seems - `did not result from limitations in experimental technique...Rather (they)

were imposed by the very nature of the subatomic world itself' (my emphasis).[2]

Although Boslough is resisting the semantic habits of history in suggesting that the `nature' of the subatomic world needs to be rethought, he nevertheless manages to suggest that this is a peculiarity of the subatomic world. Moreover, and with whatever apparent objectivity, Boslough still attempts to rescue `scientific technique' from fault. Here, I think, we have encountered what is perhaps the founding myth of science. Even at the moment it states Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, even at the moment it acknowledges the inadequacy of its own methodology it nevertheless insists on the infallibility of that method. And we see this again and again.

As Elizabeth Fee points out in `Women's Nature and Scientific Objectivity', `it is not the subjectivity of the scientist that is seen as producing knowledge so much as the objectivity of the scientific method.'[3] Thus it is the mechanism of scientific method that guarantees the `truth' of scientific knowledge. Or, to reiterate Fee's words, which are quite characteristic of the metaphors of science, the mechanism of scientific method ensures the `production' of the scientific `body of knowledge'. But what does this mean?

---

[2] John Boslough, Masters of Time, p.131.

[3] Elizabeth Fee, `Women's Nature and Scientific Objectivity', p.11.

For it is quite clear that this method is mythological. Not only is there no one scientific method, the objectivity of `that method', as Heisenberg's uncertainty principle demonstrates, is simply untrue. An examination of this phrase will, I think, demonstrate that the insistence on the infallibility of scientific method, that is, the objectivity of science, represents not its `truth' but only its desire for power. As Emily Martin has pointed out in her article, `Science and Women's Bodies: Forms of Anthropological Knowledge', metaphors of production dominate scientific discourse. She cites, for example, the contrasting descriptions of menstruation and spermatogenesis - the names of which alone tell a story. `The construction of (menstruation) in terms of a purpose that has failed', she asserts,

> `is beautifully captured in a standard text for medical students (a text otherwise noteworthy for its extremely objective, factual descriptions) in which a discussion of the events... ends with the statement: "When fertilisation fails to occur, the endometrium is shed and a new cycle starts. This is why it used to be taught that `menstruation is the uterus crying for lack of a baby".'[4]

Not only here but in other standard texts menstruation gets described in the same value-laden negative terms as: `Degenerate', `decline' , `withdrawn', `spasms,', `lack', `weakened', `leak', and `deteriorate'. By contrast, male sperm production, gets described as `remarkable' and

---

[4] Emily Martin, `Science and Women's Bodies', p.75.

`amazing' in its `sheer magnitude'.[5]

Just as we may understand Freud's reading of hysteria as a symptom of his own hysterical reaction to the castration complex, we can, I would argue, begin to consider how the metaphors of production in scientific discourse represent an attempt to appropriate and abrogate female reproduction.[6] Such a reading fits in with the way in which science represses all those `feminized' aspects of scientific practice: non-rationality, pluralism, subjectivity. One would like to say, all its literary aspects. For as Roland Barthes has pointed out, science only becomes science through a repression of its own construction in language.

> `Literature,' he asserts in `From Science to Literature', has all the secondary characteristics of science... Its contents are precisely those of science... it is methodological.. (but one last feature divides science and literature). For Science language is merely an instrument which it chooses to make as transparent, as neutral as possible, subjugated to scientific matters (operations, Hypotheses, results), which are said to

---

[5] Martin, pp.75-76.

[6] Freud's `First Lecture' in `Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis' is a good example of this, his reading of Anna's symptoms being no more than a guise under which to demonstrate his own virility. Specifically she is turned into an object of exchange between Freud and Breuer, appropriated in a manner symptomatic of his own castration complex.

exist outside it and to precede it'.[7]

Thus we can begin to read the monologism of science: its setting itself up as an overarching metalanguage, its repression of its variousness, its subjectivity, the sacrosanctity of its method as a symptom, inscribing on the body of science it's own fear of loss of power, of castration. This is supported by an examination of the work of women scientists, who have little problem admitting the literary aspects of science because they, as it were, have nothing to lose. `It always seemed to me', Ruth Wallsgrove says in her article ` The Masculine Face of Science',

> no great problem to admit that science is not all logical; that it proceeds by intuition and analogy, in fits and starts... and that scientists are emotionally involved with their work. Scientists have to work on hunches, and gamble on the best line to follow on the basis of things `feeling right', or fitting in with other things, or even looking nice! If they don't bet on their hunches, they won't get anywhere; if they never admit it's anything but logic guiding them, they will find themselves having to defend everything they've ever said'.[8]

---

[7] Roland Barthes, The Rustle of Language, pp.3-4.

[8] Ruth Wallsgrove, `The Masculine Face of Science', p.235.

Yet even in her work we witness an indebtedness to scientific methodology that doesn't allow it to say too much. Even though she identifies the hysteria of scientific discourse she is still trapped within it. From her `objective' style to her conciliatory, half joking, even maternal tone, Wallsgrove is very careful to phrase her criticisms of science in a way which is not too disruptive. Moreover, her anxiety about criticizing the establishment is underpinned by the far more insidious fact that there is a lack of language in which to do so. Even at the moment she criticizes masculine appropriation of science she is unable quite to reject it or escape admiration for it because there are no words with which to do so. Just as I find myself constantly lapsing back into the rhetoric of scientific discourse, so too does Wallsgrove

> `I don't find this easy to think about because I was brought up in the scientific, rationalist tradition that teaches that science is the triumph of truth over ignorance and superstition. Philosophies are not things you throw of easily. When I think of the possibility that science isn't plainly and simply true, I get nervous, no matter how much I learn about other ways of looking at the world, even though I can see from history that whatever scientists believe now may well be proved wrong or irrelevant, or true only to a limited extent by others in the future. I know that scientists are not value free - they are imbued with the values and ideas of the society

> around them, like everyone else, and carry them into the lab with them. Of course the scientific body of knowledge can only be approximately and limitedly `true' and will tend to reflect how society in general looks at the world. But a nagging question remains: isn't the scientific way of thinking still the clearest way of thinking?" [9]

As Emily Martin points out, part of the problem seems to be the dominance of the visual or, to use another term which I will discuss more fully later, the specular, as a privileged means of knowing. `To know, to be able to see how things work and therefore how to control them, contains as it were the metaphor of `mapping', `diagramming and charting', and the underlying assumption that to be able to do so is to understand something'.[10] Hence Wallsgrove cannot `throw off' the protective and clarifying philosophy of science as one might a coat or a pair of spectacles. She can `see' from history that science is partial, she still thinks of science as a `body of knowledge' and believes that the scientific way of thinking must still be the `clearest': her own doubt of science remains a `nagging' feminine doubt. The only ways she can see to approach this question is thus to `sneak up on it' `unseen' herself. Hence she abrogates herself as a subject within that discourse. This is the logical

---

[9] Wallsgrove, p.23.

[10] Emily Martin, pp.69-70.

conclusion of her acceptance of scientific thinking.

For Wallsgrove guilt, her inability to see another way of thinking, is a direct result of the specular logic of science which provides only one of two positions for her to occupy. Either she agrees with science and subordinates her judgement to it, or she repudiates it and joins the category of marginalized `women writers'. There is no possibility of a middle ground, of practising science with a more subjective approach. Wallsgrove is aware of this but identifies the problem as one of scientific method. `Basically', she laments,

> `science is analysis, that is, it isolates individual factors in situations that inevitably involve the interactions of several, or many factors.... Science, in other words, can isolate factors, but it can't necessarily put them back together'. Science is geared towards finding out about one, two, or maybe at the most three variables, but can never possibly hope to take into account all possible variables. Hence science operates on the hope that everything can be reduced to a small number of factors that matter!'[11]

But is this hope enough for us to base a power structure on? If science can method of procedure is it? How valid as a way of knowing, and how

---

[11] Ruth Wallsgrove, pp.238-9.

can we possibly base an entire epistemology on it? If science can go on finding out more about individual factors but can probably never understand a whole system, then we've not only got to `find other ways of looking at the world' as Wallsgrove says, but to find entirely new conceptual paradigms with which to comprehend that world.

That other possibilites exist has been demonstrated by the Nobel prize-winning geneticist, Barbara McClintock. As Evelyn Fox Keller demonstrates in her biography , `McClintock merges subject and object in her feeling for the organism, her work imbued with a holistic understanding of, and reverence for nature'. According to Keller, her work provides us with `a glimpse of what a gender free science might look like', but combining masculine and feminine characteristics'.[12] Whether such a practice should retain the label of `science' with all its ideological overtones and limitations remains questionable. However it is ground breaking in so far as it admits the possiblity of such a practice. In particular Emily Martin suggests that such a practice is indebted to and should make further use of a specifically discursive epistemological paradigm, which she says `may provide a better starting point for a dialectical concept of communication' than the visual, essentially monologic one of scientific method.[13]

One of the advantages of adopting a discursive paradigm with which to

---

[12] Judy Wajcman, `Feminist Critiques of Science and literature', p.7.

[13] Emily Martin, p.70.

practise science, is that it demonstrates that as a discourse, science is no more privileged in its relation to reality than any other form of description. In other words it foregrounds precisely the literariness of science which has formerly been repressed. It is precisely for this reason that the doubly marginalized and inherently endemic scientific `other' of women's fictions seems to offer a space in which science might find the possiblity of dialogic transformation. For as Mikhail Bakhtin has argued in Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics,

> `The possibility of employing on the plane of a single work discourse of various types, with all their expressive capacities intact, without reducing them to a single common denominator - this is one of the most fundamental characteristics of prose. Herein lies the profound distinction between prose style and poetic style.... For the prose artist the world is full of other people's words, among which he must orient himself and whose speech characteristics he must be able to perceive with a very keen ear.'[14]

Although Bakhtin makes the distinction specifically from the poetic form, I would argue that the prose form of Surfacing, not only as a novel, but a postmodern novel, deconstructs the essential monologism which environmental/scientific theory shares with poetic discourse. In particular I

---

[14] Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics, pp. 200-201

would suggest this is a deconstruction which takes place also in the absence of the dominant specular metaphor of scientific language. It is precisely because the novel is understood in aural and oral terms rather than visual ones that it allows the possibility of plural discourses.

In order to demonstrate the ways in which Bakhtin's use of a discursive paradigm in place of a specular one fosters a more liberating epistemology, I would like to think of reading Surfacing as a `defamiliarization' of environmental theory. However, in examining this formalist technique, I hope to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the specular scientific methodology and suggest specifically the kind of pitfalls one has to beware of when attempting to merge scientific theory with fiction.

Itself a defamiliarized articulation of those familiar concepts `demystification' and `disenchantment', in its orientation to realism Victor Shlovsky's term `defamiliarization' (ostraneiye) describes a technique that focuses on the more broadly political function of art than do these other concepts. It does this by foregrounding the process of representation itself as a type of `vision'.

`Habitualization', Shlovsky asserts,

> `devours work clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war.... And Art exists that one may recover the sensation of

> life, it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects `unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged, Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important'. (I quote Lodge's footnote: `The translation of this crucial and often quoted sentence by Lemon and Reis has been criticized by Robert Scholes who offers his own version: "In art, it is our experience of the process of construction that counts, not the finished product"'.)[15]

As this footnote reminds us, one must not be misled by the translation into thinking that Shlovsky is suggesting that we are able to know the world in itself, independently of language. On the contrary, Shlovsky's point is that all we have is representation and that the `isness' of the world, the stoniness of the stone is unknowable, and indeed, irrelevant to us. We are interested only in the human semantics of that world as it is constructed through language, and therefore continually open to reconstruction in language. `An image', he says,

---

[15] Victor Shlovsky, `Art as Technique' in Lodge, p.20.

> `is not a permanent referent for those mutable complexities of life which are revealed through it; its purposes is not to make us perceive meaning, but to create a special perception of the object - it creates a `vision' of the object instead of serving as a means for knowing it'.[16]

As Wittgenstein argued, we never see the world directly, we only ever see things as, that is, according to some concept: `We see it as we interpret it'.[17] Like Wittgenstein, Shlovsky's problematization of perception as a means of knowing is invaluable then not only because it alerts us to the process of representation as such, and hence its ideological determinants, but also because it makes us aware that perception specifically has been naturalized as the privileged means of knowing.

If I point out this consensus between the two thinkers, it is to locate Shlovsky in the well known critique of Western metaphysics; Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray (following Lacan) are also of interest to me. Their critique of western metaphysics demonstrates the cultural and historical specificity of this epistemology. It is one based upon the logic of identity or essentialism which Irigaray terms specular logic, which term I have used before to foreground its relation to the metaphor of vision which dominates scientific discourse. `Specularization', as Toril Moi explains,

---

[16] Shlovsky, p.25.

[17] Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, p.193.

> hints at a basic assumption underlying all Western Philosophical discourse: the necessity of postulating a subject that is capable of reflecting on its own being. The Philosophical meta-discourse is only made possible through a process whereby the speculating subject contemplates himself: the philosopher's speculations are fundamentally narcissistic'.[18]

It foregrounds the way in which the dominant visual paradigm or ocular metaphor of western thinking has forwarded its ideological cause. I am interested in the ways in which Shlovsky's own privileging of the ocular through metaphor and methodology are thus symptomatic of this specular logic. Shlovsky's formalist methodology of structural analysis whereby one observes and identifies the paring down of variables that Wallsgrove described, not only participates in a privileging of visual knowledge at the moment he suggests it is inadequate, but prevents him from expressing a more dynamic understanding of art, such as, for example, Bakhtin's discursive model. Shlovsky's understanding thus tends to preclude the heteroglossia of the social contexts in which a work of art can be heard, even though he actively wants to include them. `In studying poetic speech in its phonetic and lexical structure', he asserts,

> as well as in its characteristic distribution of words and in the characteristic thought structures compounded from the words, we find... material obviously created to remove the

---

[18] Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics, p.132.

> automatism of perception; the author's purpose is to create the vision which results from that de-automatized perception. A work is created `artistically' so that its perception is impeded and the greatest possible effect is produced through the slowness of the perception. As a result of this lingering, the object is perceived not in its extension in space, but, so to speak, in its continuity'.[19]

In order for an object to be `perceived' accurately, it needs to be perceived not only in its continuity in space but also time. The metaphor thus excludes history as well as simplifying the complexity of any given context at one time. Hence it produces a monologic context rather than a dialogic one.

This, I would argue, is the crucial distinction also between the novel and the theoretical form, and why Surfacing is able to present to us a much richer, more historically varied, and politically accurate interpretation of the environmental debate. For it does not assume itself to be a metadiscourse but engages constantly in its own deconstruction. I wish, then, to set up a dialogue between environmental theory and Surfacing, one which I hope will not only deconstruct the hierarchy set up between theory and fictive discourse, but will engage all the various discourses involved. To hear the echoes of each discourse in the other.

---

[19] Shlovsky, p.27.

In this manner we will begin to see how Surfacing employs various strategies to deconstruct dominant masculinist, rationalist discourse, without merely rejecting them but finding a way in which those discourses can simply each become one of many, useful also. One of the effects of this debate will be, I hope, to recuperate the value of literature in constituting that `real world' from which Science excludes it. To demonstrate that fiction like Surfacing in fact plays a more important role than theory in so far as it is more likely to be the popular choice and therefore has more chance to impact on the way society thinks than the average serious academic text. In order to demonstrate this I wish to examine the morphology of the environmental debate as it is presented in some theory texts, pointing out the problems as I go along.

That the debate surrounding `the environmental crisis' has split up into what seem to be self perpetuating binarisms, is indicative of its ossification within western specular thinking. It is the authoritative monologism of each school of thought in the environmental debate that proves also to be their Achilles heel. This is perhaps predictable in so far as they follow a scientific methodology and a specular logic. Although more transparent within the `scientist' and `technocentric' perspectives, it exists and needs to be recognized for its more insidious operation within the more sophisticated discourses of Eco-feminism and Deep Ecology.

The first texts of the modern environmental crusade, Paul

Ehrlich's The Population Bomb (1968) and Goldsmith's Blueprint for Survival (1972), demonstrate a scientific methodology in so far as they see `the solution' to `the environmental crisis' as simple and singular. Paul Ehrlich's book, for example, quoted some frightening statistics on population growth suggesting that population control at a government level together with available contraceptive alternatives would solve the problem.[20] The assumption that the problem is created only by ignorance and a lack of technology is predicated on a belief in the liberating power of empiric analytic knowledge. In other words, that it may be rationally analyzed and logically remedied. There is no questioning of the ideological overdetermination of this scientific myth. Not inappropriately then, this approach has come to be known as `scientism'.

The first criticisms to pick up a problem here were framed, however, not in political but moral terms. Barry Commoner's book The Closing Circle (1972) argued, for example, that scientists were making a `category mistake' in ignoring the basic difference of kind between the problem of the environment as a moral issue and those logistical, technological ones of science such as splitting the atom.[21] Where science and technology may be necessary to the solution of the former they are not sufficient, as Young argues, because the problem is essentially moral to begin with. The decision to make nuclear power available is not `value free' just as

---

[20] John Young, Post-Environmentalism, pp.4-5.

[21] Ibid., p.9.

economic decisions are not `value free' but derived from a particular world view.[22]

Indeed the insistence on a distinction between `pure and `applied' science as well as the growing impersonality of scientific discourse which occurred after the First World War only signified more clearly scientists' attempts to disclaim moral responsibility. For as Young documents, `Scientists stopped saying `I notice that', or even confessing moments of personal inspiration as they stood at traffic lights. Instead they said `It was noticed that', implicitly denying the relevance of time, place, social context and personal responsibility'. Nor, Young has argued, is this criticism an infringement of `academic freedom' since the direction scientific investigation takes is always already overdetermined by the interest of the affluence which funds it.[23]

What's more, as Italo Calvino points out in The Literature Machine, science cannot use its own theories to escape moral responsibility. `I do not think that modern science - and the theory of relativity in particular -', he argues, `

> provides us with any justification for moral relativity. On the contrary, our age is marked by a clear division between talk about science and talk about values. This means that moral responsibility cannot

---

[22] Young, p.10.

[23] Young, p.79-80.

hide behind self-interested justifications'.[24]

Although Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology recognize that the problem is social rather than purely scientific or technological, thus circumventing scientism's paradigmatic category mistake and raising the debate from the political inefficacy of that arena to a socio-moral one, the monologism of their discourses conflicts essentially with the pluralism of what is equally a political, economic and historical dilemma. Thus they make what I will call in terms of my distinction, a syntagmatic mistake and in so doing reduce the problem to equally disempowering terms.

As Young describes it,

> `Deep Ecology was so named by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess who first coined the term in an article written in 1973, to indicate its basic premise, that the human species was no more than a plain member of the biotic community and that it sought to justify and rationalise a non-anthropocentric approach to living. Naess and his followers seek to describe the views of conventional environmentalism however benign as human centred and therefore shallow'.[25]

---

[24] Italo Calvino, The Literature Machine, pp.35-6.

[25] Young, p.126.

On the other hand, and virtually in response to this, ecofeminism is that line of thought which has taken the historical/symbolic association of women with nature as demonstrating a special convergence of interests between feminism and ecology. The convergence is seen to arise, from the fact that patriarchal culture has located women somewhere between men and the rest of nature on a conceptual hierarchy of being (i.e.. God, Man, Woman, Nature). This has enabled ecofeminists to identify what they see as a similar logic of domination between the destruction of nonhuman nature and the oppression of women'.[26]

Across the board, universally and ahistorically in every society across the diversity of political organization, `Deep ecology' and `ecofeminism' see `the cause' of `the ecological crisis' as either `anthropocentricism' or `androcentricism'. Already the binary oppositional thinking is characteristic of metaphysical dualism. Not surprisingly then, deep ecology and ecofeminism tend to deconstruct each other. Against ecofeminism's claim that androcentricism or male centredness is responsible for the ecological crisis Deep ecology argues, quite legitimately, that one form of harmony does not follow logically from another and `a socially egalitarian society does not necessarily imply an ecologically benign society'.[27]

•

The tendency here is to assume that the dichotomies, Nature/Culture,

---

[26] Robyn Eckersley, Environmentalism and Political Theory, p.64.

[27] Warwick Fox, The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate, p.15.

female/male apply universally and ahistorically. But as Judy Wajcman points out the idea of nature is itself culturally constructed and conceptions of it have changed radically throughout human history. Thus

> `no single meaning can in fact be given to nature or culture in Western thought: there is no consistent dichotomy, only a matrix of contrasts. Masculinity is not associated with culture in every society and femininity with nature. Indeed feminists argue that there is no behaviour or meaning which is universally and crossculturally associated with either masculinity or femininity. Postmodernists have thus argued that the problem with feminist-standpoint epistemologies is that they assume that there is a single privileged position from which science can be evaluated. Yet there is no woman to whose social experience the feminist empiricist and standpoint approaches can appeal, there are instead the fractured identities of women'.[28]

Similarly the corollary also holds true for deep ecology. As Young's example of ancient Egyptian society demonstrates, `it is possible for an ecologically benign human society to be extremely oppressive internally'.[29] However, the debate continues, a series of battles with both sides so busy scoring points off each other that neither is able to appreciate the specific

---

[28] Judy Wajcman, Feminism Confronts Technology, p.11.

[29] Young, p.133.

value of what the `other' side is saying nor the reductiveness of their own methodology. Moreover, this debate is typical of most of the skirmishes that go on within environmental theory, all proceeding along reductive, Manichean lines.

Murray Bookchin's `Social Ecology', for example, takes precisely ecofeminism's point above to target hierarchical organization as `the cause' of `the environmental crisis'. Alternatively `Ecosocialism', of which Raymond Williams is a proponent, has blamed capitalism, as has `Ecocommunism' although it also blames a misreading of Marx.[30] On the other hand Critical Theory, or the `Frankfurt school', led by Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse have challenged the Marxist notion of `progressive history' and called for a revision of the `negative dialectic' of rationalism,[31] while Jurgen Habermas has argued that rationalism is not taken far enough, and so on down the line as each discourse sets itself up along the axis of the same essentialist debate. [32]

If all these discourses seem only to proliferate the essentialist problem, however, this does not mean that they are all useless or that there is no solution at hand. On the contrary, as Robyn Eckersley's distinction between `anthropocentricism' and `ecocentricism' illustrates, while it

---

[30] See Eckersley, Young and Penny Kemp, Europe's Green Alternative.

[31] Robyn Eckersley, Environmentalism and Political Theory, p.97.

[32] Eckersley, pp. 97-117.

rhetorically takes the proliferation of these dualisms as evidence of the `centrality' of its own, it nevertheless describes something inherently liberating.[33]

Proceeding as a critique of humanist identity theory, ecocentric theory is concerned to `recognize the moral standing of the nonhuman world and seeks to ensure that it, too, may unfold in its many diverse ways'. Yet how useful is this distinction?

It is not that we are inescapably condemned to an anthropocentric perspective. On the contrary that conflation of ideology with biology is clearly as (ph)allacious as claiming that men cannot be feminists.[34] Moreover, as Eckersley herself points out, `whatever faculty we choose to underscore our own uniqueness or specialness as the basis of our moral superiority (eg. rationality, language or our tool-making capability)', which in itself is selectively defined by us and is therefore biased, `we will invariably find either that there are some humans who do not possess such a faculty or that there are some nonhumans who do'.[35] To use Wittgenstein's metaphor, once we have peeled off all the layers of the artichoke we discover there is no center because no single or `essential' feature makes us human. This despite the humanist `argument from

---

[33] Eckersley, p.26.

[34] Eckersely, p.55.

[35] Eckersley, p.50.

design', which goes back to the Greek stoics, which has tried to show most expediently that it is a single feature which enables us to dominate the nonhuman world. (`Man's ability to subdue nature', be it through rationality, language or his tool making capacity, `was evidence of his creation for that purpose'.)[36]

But if Eckersley realizes this then she must surely recognize that the purity of her `non-anthropocentric' position is useless because also impossible. The repudiation of the concept ~~anthropocentricism~~, a term which strictly speaking can only be used sous rature, simply, as Gayatri Spivak points out, perpetuates the metaphysical phallacy because:

> Metaphysics, defined as a system of opposites, can never be escaped, because to attempt to step outside metaphysics is to place oneself in opposition to metaphysics, that is, to repeat it.[37]

Although Eckersley goes on to divide `ecocentricism' neatly into two categories of `ecocommunalism'[38] and `Social Ecology' in a manner which seems to demonstrate precisely such a perpetuation of the fallacy, the complex of variously related strategies which she traces under the broad

---

[36] Young, p.56.

[37] Gayatri Spivak, quoted in E.McDowell, `"The Thematic Ancestor": Joseph Conrad, Patrick White and Margaret Atwood', p.395.

[38] Eckersley, p.145.

heading `ecoanarchism', more closely exhibit what Wittgenstein calls `family resemblances'. Just as we fail to find `ecocentric' theories `essentially' rather than diversely different from `anthropocentric' ones, we don't find `essentially' different theories within the `ecocentric' distinction either. Instead `we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail'.[39] In fact Eckersley herself asserts that ecocentric thought is `best understood as representing a spectrum of thought rather than a single ecopolitical theory'.[40]

Similarly, few of the protagonists in the environmental debate recognize that the controversy they are engaged in testifies, above all, that no single factor in a society is responsible for `the ecological crisis'. On the contrary it demonstrates how `varied the relationship between the internal organization of human society and their treatment of the nonhuman world can be'. And that `the crisis' is the outcome of various different configurations of different factors within different societies.[41]

Thus read in relation rather than opposition to each other, `ecocentric' and

---

[39] Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, p.32, remarks 66-7.

[40] Eckersley, p.26.

[41] For example, in modern America Young targets, `the unique combination of hierarchy, centralized power, industrialization, and the most universal acceptance of an economic philosophy which regards ethical considerations as beyond its scope', p.133.

`anthropocentric' theories, deep ecology and ecofeminism, can `transcend' the essentialist dilemma that befalls them. But only because such a reading, initiated from `inside' rather than `out', eschews the notion of transcendence altogether. The reading, in other words, demonstrates that there is no metatheoretical position from which to speak, one always speaks from within the debate hence opening each current position up to further deconstruction.

Moreover, it is not theoretically corrupt to use `ecocentricism' to fight a particular battle because we are deconstructing the essentialist notion of theoretical purity itself, for, as Derrida argues, it is only by `inhabiting' the positions of essentialism that we can deconstruct them.[42] `You see', Spivak explains,

> you <u>are</u> committed to these concepts, whether you acknowledge it or not... it's absolutely on target not to be rhetorically committed to it, and I think it's absolutely on target to take a stand against the discourses of essentialism, universalism.... But strategically we cannot... the moment of essentialising, universalizing, saying yes to the onto-phenomenological question, is irreducible, let us at least situate it at the moment, let us become vigilant about our own practice and use it as much as we can rather than make the totally counter-productive gesture of repudiating it... because you are an essentialist from time to time.... You pick up the

---

[42] Jacques Derrida, <u>Of Grammatology</u>, p.24.

> universal that will give you the power to fight against the other side, and what you are throwing away by doing that is your theoretical purity.[43]

Thus Eckersley's `ecocentricism' may be read not as the defining opposite of `anthropocentricism' but its deconstructive complement which plays a very specific role in deconstructing the apparent metaphysic of the anthropocentric position. Likewise each of the positions within the environmental debate must be regarded as a polemical rather than an absolute position, from which to fight historical battles, and it is precisely by maintaining a dialogue between all the theories that such a dynamic is achieved.

The deep ecology-ecofeminist debate as it has evolved in the work of Warwick Fox, Michael Zimmerman and Patsy Hallen has come some way towards recognizing this. Fox points out that the ecofeminist criticism of deep ecology elides its failure to take issue with the equally significant social variables of socio-economic class, race and westernization because `to do so would detract from the priority that they wish to give their own concern with androcentricism' and, more significantly, because `these charges could also be applied with equal force to the ecofeminist focus on

---

[43] Gayatri Spivak, `Criticism, Feminism, and The Institution', pp.11-12.

androcentricism itself'.[44] While Hallen argues that `women can claim the past without being chained to it; we can recognize our past without being defined by it'.[45] And Zimmerman elucidates that `women's experience' of the world is in itself invaluable because it is precisely the repudiation of the caring `feminine' attitudes in the relationship which helps perpetrate the antagonism between humanity and nature.[46]

These insights suggest that ecofeminism has a specific historical role to play in revalorizing the abnegated `feminine' image. By inhabiting the putative essentialism of the women/nature association ecofeminism may recuperate and put to work what has been repressed and negated. Be this as it may, however, we need also to recognize the ways in which ecofeminism, although it identifies some crucial problems with a masculinist scientific world view, still itself remains trapped within that discourse.

Patsy Hallen's article, `Making Peace with the Environment: or why ecology needs feminism' is a good case in point. While recognizing the need to abandon the `mechanical world view' of science for a more

---

[44] Warwick Fox,`The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels', p.14.

[45] Patsy Hallen, Making Peace with the Environment, or why ecology needs Feminism, p.2.

[46] Michael Zimmerman, `Feminism, Deep Ecology and Environmental Ethics', p.21.

holistic, relational, caring one, she nevertheless `sees' feminism as `illuminating' [47] that discourse with a `vision' [48], (even though it is a `creative vision') [49], attempting to change the `perceptions' of women, and render what is currently `invisible', visible'. Gender remains a `tool' of analysis.[50] But this `invitation-to-look' approach, this `investigation' is symptomatic in that it remains tied within the dominant discourse.[51] Now I am not suggesting that we completely abandon metaphors of vision, but that we become more reflexive in our use of them. To speak thus involves constantly being on guard against one's own language, and it is this vigilance which I think Surfacing achieves. Only, however, because as a dialogic text it constantly relativizes the insights it takes from each of these discourses against others.

Read in relation to deep ecology, for example, ecofeminism would be prevented from imposing itself as a metatheory, and it is precisely this kind of tension that is required. Not a tension of opposites however, but of complements between each and every discourse, forming a web of conflicting and overlapping perspectives which allow individual battles to be fought without allowing the debate to crystallize into a fixed hierarchy.

---

[47] Hallen, p.5.

[48] Hallen, p.5.

[49] Hallen, p.9.

[50] Hallen, p.2.

[51] Hallen, p.2.

Such a strategy, it seems to me, is suggested in John Young's book of the same name: `Post-Environmentalism'. A `book of pilotage' which `logs' or `maps' the dialogic process of the debate, it demonstrates its affiliation with post-structuralism by evoking the distinction Murray Bookchin made between environmentalism as a `palliative' which works to `reform' the existing anthropocentric system, and Ecology which abrogates that system entirely.[52] The elision of the latter term suggests the theoretical and practical impossibilities of such a position, while the inhabitation of `environmentalism' involves a deconstruction of the notion of `reform'.

For as Derrida's work on Rousseau demonstrated, such a `pure state of nature' is a mythical state, `the ungraspable limit of the almost', in whose presence we could never know our own purity.[53] It is the `point' as it were of `differance' where representation begins. `Nature' as an irredeemable cultural concept disallows the possibility of the `naturally harmonious' position of ecology. Both the abrogation of anthropocentricism and a `return' to an environmental `golden age' are thus mythical and impossible. `Post-Environmentalism' thus participates metonymically within the deconstructions we have already seen. It demonstrates its own necessity.

> `The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor

---

[52] Young, p.131.

[53] Derrida, p.253.

> can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting these structures... in a certain way. (O)ne always inhabits..., operating necessarily from the inside, borrowing all the strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure, borrowing them structurally, that is to say without being able to isolate their elements and atoms, the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work'.[54]

By working from within the already existent positions, `Post-Environmentalism' seeks to translate theory into practice, to make the winning of each individual battle a possibility.

However, and here I must return to an earlier point, while post-environmentalism sets itself up not as a metatheory but as a strategy, one needs to be careful about the ways in which it formulates all the different discourses. It tends to suggest, as we saw with science, that they exist as disparate and simplistic entities when in reality they always already borrow from each other. I would suggest that the problem emerges not from Young's concept, which is useful in its inspiration, but finally in the form it is forced to take, namely as a learned theoretical treatise. It is constricted by what is a scientific, rationalist approach, a setting out of each of the discourses in relation to each other, tracing them, that is, mapping them in

---

[54] Derrida, p.24.

a linear manner, the way we saw formalism attempt to map the structure of the text. No matter what Young asserts, his remains a treatise, within the academic genre of theoretical texts which will probably never be read in any popular sort of way. It is for this reason that I think Surfacing ought to be recognized, in real currency also, for the power it has to impact social thought. As fiction it can reach a much wider readership, but more importantly in its novelistic, dialogic form, it will never end up asserting itself as a thesis, but more as a form of life, infinitely varied and dynamic, open always to new discourse, not to be thrown into the bin like the first environmental texts because it is outdated. In particular I shall examine the ways in which Atwood's use of metaphor makes this possible and this brings us to an apparent dilemma. For if we accept the metaphor of the map as belonging to specular logic how is it possible to claim, as I want to, that it enacts the deconstructive `mapping' strategy of post-environmentalism? I would like to suggest that the map remains a useful metaphor so long as it is not privileged. In tracing the ways it functions then, I place that metaphor in parenthesis. Indeed I would suggest that as a metaphor it is essentially traversed by the deconstructive vertices of the whole notion of submersion which runs through the text. However, let us begin with the map.

As Graham Huggans points out, the map is one of the most obvious metaphors in Surfacing, and I would argue it functions primarily to foreground the semiotic project of re-reading/ rewriting which constitutes

the narrative. Conversely, the semiotic project of mapping also foregrounds the function of metaphor, that is, it is itself a metaphor for metaphor within the text.

As not only a post-colonial but a woman `writer' writing within a language always already colonized by western patriarchal humanism, the narrator makes use of metaphor as a literary device whose capability of oscillating between two linguistic definitions marks a `deviation' from the linguistic norm.[55] Metaphor thus functions not in the `arrogant' relational sense of `dead metaphor' which claims `that one thing is another' but in Paul Ricoeur's `live' mediational sense in which two things are kept in suspense with each another. Rather than eliding the differences between the two objects compared, metaphor in Surfacing thus accentuates them. Things become related by their difference from one another.

The metaphor of cancer is probably the best example of this. A natural metaphor, it nevertheless complicates any simple understanding of the nature/culture equals good/bad equation. As Susan Sontag describes it in Illness as Metaphor, cancer has been symbolically feminized as a shameful diesease which is shrouded in mystery and silence, particularly in contrast to the popular heroic conception of tuberculosis, which has been romanticized as a disease of the higher orders. As Novalis defined it,

---

[55] Graham Huggans, `Resisting the Map as Metaphor: A Comparison of Margaret Atwood's Surfacing and Janet Frame's Scented Gardens for the Blind', p.5.

cancer was `full fledged parasites - (that) grow, are engendered, engender, have their structure, secrete, eat'.

`Cancer', Sontag concludes, `is demonic pregnancy. St. Jerome must have been thinking of a cancer when he wrote: `The one there with his swollen belly is pregnant with his own death'. [56] And of course the narrator's mother dies of cancer, cancer of the brain, a metaphor for the kind of invasion that she undergoes in hospital. She is turned into a guineapig, experimented on, kept alive `as long as they could with tubes and needles even though it was what they call terminal' (p.15). But how then do we reconcile these two images of cancer, firstly as feminized, and secondly as imperialistic, for it also has been represented in literature, as Sontag says, as `an evil, invincible predator', a `ruthless, secret invasion'.[57] An invasion of aliens, like the `disease' (unnamed but implicitly cancerous) that the narrator says is `spreading up from the south'(p.1). These two concepts of femininity and imperialism, quite different in connotation and usually unrelated, become related in the metaphor. We begin to see that the boundaries between what is designated `good' and `bad' are not quite so clear. Nature itself is capable of producing `evil'. There are no fixed relations between things, after all the difference between cancer and normal cell growth is one of degree, not kind. By comparison with the way in which scientific discourse uses, for example, the metaphor of production

---

[56] Susan Sontag, Illness as Metaphor, p.14.

[57] Sontag, p.14.

to fix meaning, the use of metaphor in Surfacing thus functions quite differently. But let us return to the metaphor of the map.

That the process of mapping occurs on two axes of the text, syntagmatically on the level of the metonymic narrative and paradigmatically through the vertices of metaphor, is clear from the beginning. The spatialization of time in the novel allows for a mapping out of the narrator's psycho/semiotic journey back `North', which `is to Canada what Africa is to...The Heart of Darkness', to the past/unconscious in search of both father and self.[58] Semiotic because it is the subversive rereading/writing of the constitutive `facts' of her father's received linear rational discourse which enables her to free herself from her disempowered `victim position', into responsibility for and power over her life.[59] These `facts', as Meera T. Clark points out, are thus more like the `graphic images' which pervade the text, to be read `like a painting or a drawing', or as suggested, like a map.[60] Inherently ambiguous and anomalous, the `otherness inscribed within them' testifies to the repressive, essentially mendacious nature of a language which is always based, as Pierre

---

[58] Diana Bryden, `"The Thematic Ancestor": Joseph Conrad, Patrick White and Margaret Atwood', p.389.

[59] Margaret Atwood, Survival, p.64.

[60] Meera T. Clark, `Margaret Atwood's Surfacing: Language, Logic and the Art of Fiction', p.5.

Macherey says, on what is not spoken.[61]

The narrator's attempts to `record' the landmarks of her past in the discourse of scientific or `naturalistic observation' are thus constantly disrupted by the language itself. If she `doesn't know the way any more' it is because, like the old road and land marks, they are ambiguous.[62] The inscribed otherness threatens. As Bartlett points out, although she claims to have had a happy childhood, that claim is based on the `fact' that she was `born too late to have known (even vicariously in Canada) the uncertainty, turmoil and horror of World War Two'. Yet the signs or graphic images she leaves to be deciphered suggest otherwise.

> `The drawings were of ornately decorated Easter eggs, singly and in groups. Some of them had people shaped rabbits climbing up them on rope ladders; apparently the rabbits lived inside the eggs, there were doors at the tops, they could pull the ladders up after them. Beside the larger eggs were smaller ones connected to them by bridges, the outhouses. Page after page of eggs and rabbits, grass and trees, normal and green, surrounding them, flowers blooming, sun in the upper right hand corner of each picture, moon symmetrically in the left. All the rabbits were smiling and some were

---

[61] Pierre Macheray, A Theory of Literary Production, p.85.

[62] Clark, p.4.

> laughing hilariously; several were shown eating ice-cream cones from the safety of their egg-tops.... I couldn't remember ever having drawn these pictures. I was disappointed in myself: I must have been a hedonistic child, I thought, and quite stodgy also, interested in nothing but social welfare. Or perhaps it was a vision of Heaven' (p.85).

Coming even before the obviously acculturating images of glamorous women that pervade her later years (pp.36-7), the narrator has no memory of these drawings at all, suggesting that they have been repressed as representing a dangerously telling `compensatory activity; the objectifying of a yearning for security, stability and identity in her adult dominated world'.[63]

Nor can she acknowledge them now, still trapped within the rationalist discourse which evaluates such images as `hedonistic', and `stodgy'. Only the final unqualified statement marks a rent in that reading, but it is one she does not yet pursue: `perhaps it was a vision of heaven'.

It seems her childhood has been no less `scripted' by the rationalist masculine discourse than the war. As her identification with the rabbits suggest, she experiences her brother's `scientific experiments' on nature (p.125) and her father's `explanations' as an implicit threat to her own

---

[63] Donald Bartlett, `Fact and Form in Surfacing, p.22.

being. `Threading' a worm onto a hook a memory echoes.

> `It doesn't hurt them', my brother said, `they don't feel it'. `Then why do they squirm?' I said. He said it was nervous tension. (p.56.)

The explanation in rational language demonstrates the way, as Andree Collard puts it, scientific discourse `transmute(s) pain into a category of knowledge'. [64] `Thus detached from the subjective experience of the animal, pain can be observed and measured, for instance, the rate of contractions of a guinea pig intestine to a particular stimulus'.[65] The `nervous tension' of the worms to the `stimulus' of the hook.

`I feel a little sick', the narrator says after she's killed David's fish,

> `it's because I've killed something, made it dead, but I know that's irrational, killing certain things is all right, food and enemies, fish and mosquitoes; and wasps, pour boiling water down their tunnels.'(p.59.)

In fact there is no distance at all between her father's bizarre rationalization that `Killing was wrong...: only enemies and food could be killed' (p.124) (who defines `them'?), and that of the `Americans' who kill the heron `to

---

[64] Andree Collard, The Rape of the Wild, p.63.

[65] Collard, p.62.

prove they could do it, they had the power to kill. Otherwise it was valueless; beautiful from a distance but it couldn't be tamed or cooked or trained to talk, the only relation they could have to a thing like that was to destroy it' (p.110). Both involve a mystification in language. Just as history books used long words like `demarcation' and `sovereignty' to describe wars, her father speaks of `enemies' and the Americans of `hunting'. Both proceed rationally, the argument from design. Knowledge and ability convey power.

If she misreads the signs her father leaves her it is because she is interpreting them through a discourse of rationality in which the graphic images of the Indian paintings can only function as signs of the other: madness.(p.54) It is only when she realizes that they are not `originals', that they are signs inhabited by him for another purpose, that she begins to realize the subversive possibilities of semiotics.(p.97) Hence, the metaphors of mapping and of travel are ones which dissolve with her vertical dives which, as it were, transgress and throw into question the initial endeavour of mapping. It is only when she abandons the visual, logical mode of reading her fathers figures as maps that they begin to make sense. Only under water where her vision, as it were, is blurred and sound is a huge unifying medium that she begins to hear what is happening and to use signs in her own way. Unlike David's debilitating imitation of popular semiotics, however, her `key faked memory' is an empowering use of the putative economy, the bottled frogs of her brother's

fishing trips and scientific experiments, used to represent what the abortion has meant to her. (p.146)

> `That was wrong, I never saw it...The bottle had been logical, pure logic, remnant of the trapped and decaying animals, secreted by my head, enclosure, something to keep the death away from me... I couldn't accept it, that mutilation, ruin I'd made, I needed a different version. I pieced it together the best way I could, flattening it, scrapbook, collage, pasting over the wrong parts. A faked album, the memories fraudulent as passports; but a paper house was better than none and I could almost live in it, I'd lived in it until now'(p.137).

Concealed within the `memory' of her mother `fishing' her brother out of the water,a sacred and life-giving image not only in the grail legend that Sue Thomas traces in the text, but also in Freudian terms [66], her latent sense of maternal inadequacy veiled within that memory.[67] It is a metaphor, the way her x'ing out the samsonite that contains her career as illustrator/imitator, is a metaphor and the crosses on the map are metaphors to indicate, not what is (the paintings), but what can be, (`the

---

[66] Sue Thomas, `Mythic Reconception and the Mother/Daughter Relationship in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing', p.74.

[67] Thomas, p.76.

sacred places' of `true vision'). (p.139)

> `The map crosses and the drawings made sense now: at the beginning he must have been only locating the rock paintings, deducing them, tracing and photographing them... but then he found out about them. The Indians did not own salvation but they had once known where it lived and their signs marked the sacred places, the places where you could learn the truth. There was no painting at White Birch Lake and none here, because his later drawings weren't copied from things on the rocks. He had discovered new places, new oracles, they were things he was seeing the way I had seen, true vision; at the end, after the failure of logic' (p.139).

On a metaphorical level, this mapping process of deciphering her own memories and the constitutive facts of her rational discourse emerge as a deconstruction of its anthropocentric premises.

> I'm not sure when I began to suspect the truth, about myself and about them, what I was and what they were turning into. Part of it arrived swift as flags, as mushrooms, unfurling and sudden growth, but it was there in me, the evidence, only needing to be deciphered. (p.70.)

The image of colonization evoked by the `flags' is significantly linked with the natural image of mushrooms unfurling. The former has a negative

impact upon the latter which evokes that `other' image of `natural' colonization that pervades the text.

> `It doesn't matter what country they're from, my head said, they're still Americans, they're what's in store for us, what we are turning into. They spread themselves like a virus, they get into the brain and take over the cells and the cells change from inside and the ones that have the disease can't tell the difference' (p.123).

As I have pointed out previously, cancer as a `natural' metaphor for the `homogenizing' disease of American imperialism which `cannot tolerate difference', as well of course as the disease which killed her mother, foregrounds the narrator's deconstructive `inhabitation' of the patriarchal humanist discourse process of `othering'.[68]

At the level of the narrative this is clearly obvious, the `other' subject which is inhabited constantly changing, from Hitler, to animals, to dolls, to parents. Moreover no one is innocent of the crime, both the narrator and her father being clearly implicated.

> `For us when we were small the origin was Hitler... But Hitler was gone and the thing remained; whatever it was.... Are the

---

[68] Bryden, p.390.

> Americans' worse than Hitler. It was like cutting up a tapeworm, the pieces grew... we killed other people besides Hitler, before my brother went to school and learned about him and the games became war games. Earlier we would play we were animals; our parents were the humans, the enemies who might shoot us or catch us, we would hide from them. But sometimes the animals had power too; one time we were a swarm of bees, we gnawed the fingers, feet and nose off our least favourite doll, ripped her cloth body open and pulled out the stuffing... then we threw her into the lake. Killing was wrong, we had been told that; only enemies and food could be killed (pp.124-5).

But as the metaphors of cancer and the tapeworm demonstrate, and these are just two of the many which pervade the text, at a textual/metaphoric level the narrator also weaves a tapestry of contradictory otherings. This deconstructive use of language removes Surfacing a far distance from the Romantic tradition into which Clark would like to fit it. If Romanticism took to the extremes `the worship of nature, the hatred of the city, exaltation post-modernist and post-environmentalist text, because it refuses any privileging, even of nature.[69] For the description of cultural ills in natural terms exposes not only the soft underbelly of ecocentricism but also

---

[69] Clark, p.14.

ecofeminism.[70]

`American Feminists misread Surfacing when they insist that the image of Canada victimized by Americans is a mirror of the protagonist's victimization by men' because `the narrator of Surfacing makes it quite clear, through the narrator/s discovery that the Americans are really Canadians, that `women' is no more privileged a term than Canadian. Neither has a monopoly of innocence'.[71] Similarly, ecofeminists would be misreading the text if they failed to see the metaphorical ways in which the narrator makes clear that the colonization of the women/nature does not privilege either.

The pure state of nature, Derrida has shown, is a myth, `the ungraspable limit of the almost'.[72] It is always already a colonized cultural concept because unknowable outside of language. Nor does the narrator's experience of the `signs'(p.114) and `syllables'(p.119) of nature with its `multilingual water' and numerous other images of language (p.152) deny this. Indeed, this description of nature as a silence always inscribed by the symbolic suggests precisely that it is an `other' space into which she can take language.

In The Literature Machine Italo Calvino speaks about the necessity of anthropomorphism in metaphors of language. His `delirium of

---

[70] Derrida, p.253.

[71] Bryden, p.390.

[72] Derrida, p.24.

anthropomorphism' he explains as `putting the laziest, most obvious, and most vainglorious image of man to the test: by multiplying his eyes and his nose in every direction until he no longer knows who he is'.[73] In a sense this is what Atwood's narrator does. She does not eschew cultural metaphors for nature but embraces them, realizing that nature is always already cultural, and endeavours to make us realize that there is a dialectic between the two, that the influence goes both ways. To realize that nature is thoroughly cultural and that culture is like a cancer which multiplies the natural, a natural that is only ever good in human terms.

But until women subvert humanist patriarchal rationalistic discourse, which conceives nature as secondary and subordinate to humanity, they are also implicated in the destruction of nature, although not as equally as men because they are never fully the subjects of that discourse.

Here Surfacing achieves a delicate balance between ecofeminism and deep ecology. We are always aware that the narrator's gender, rural background and class make her less responsible than, for example, the urban American men who want to buy her father's land and convert it into a `retreat lodge' for affluent men to `do a little hunting and fishing' (p.88). Unlike deep ecology which absorbs the various existential selves of class, gender and race into one transcendent `Self', Surfacing makes it quite clear that these factors determine the degree to which one is responsible

---

[73] Calvino, p.34.

for exploiting nature.[74]

As long as she has gone along with the rationalist discourse, however, the narrator has been complicit in nature's exploitation. She too has been a `killer'(p.139).

Accepting her lover's `voice of reason' and going along with the abortion, threading the frog onto David's hook, refusing to take responsibility, to resist the coercion of that discourse. Finally, however, hers is not a repudiation of that discourse, a relapse into silence and acceptance of that marginalized position, but precisely the subversion of it, which liberates her into a new power of responsibility. To be able to assert herself, to state herself. A Kurtz figure, known only through her voice, she resists the specular appropriations of the dominant discourse. Her use of narrative is thus intimately tied up with her ontology. Hence the tense change from the form `I was saying' to the more immediate present, which occurs just before her `retreat' into `madness', demonstrates the possibilities of adopting new subject positions within language.[75] Such a subversion, or `ab-use' as Spivak puts it, of language allows her to use the historically subordinated positions of women/nature precisely so that her `madness' must be re-read in different terms.[76]

---

[74] Bookchin in Young, p.127.

[75] Bryden, p.393.

[76] Gayatri Spivak, Thinking Academic Freedom in Gendered Post-Coloniality, p.3.

At no point is that `retreat' represented as inaccessibly `other' to us, although the patriarchal language of critics like Donald Bartlett and Bruce King does its best to force the difference of that experience into the unnameable silence of `madness', `insanity',[77] `dementia'[78]. That there is an unexplainable and niggling `excess' of meaning that escapes appropriation by these labels is obvious in their very need to write a text they insistently label `cliched', `shallow' and `stereotyped'[79].

King patronizingly comments, for example, ` I hope that along with explication and praise Surfacing will also be examined for those flaws of style and sensitivity which sometimes weaken her work. A particular weakness is that when we see other people through the narrator's eyes, we see them as flat, grotesque, wooden cliches'[80]. And later, `No doubt it would be said that these objections pertain to the narrator's vision and not Atwood's. It is a neurotic and perhaps insane narrator who has a poetic perception of nature, a newspaper headline vision of man and his problems'[81].

Of course he does not question his own `vision' of the text, his metaphors

---

[77] Bruce King, `Margaret Atwood's Surfacing, p.27.

[78] Bartlett, p.27.

[79] King, p.31.

[80] King, p.31.

[81] King, p.32.

indicative already of the specular logic going on within them, no doubt we are reading here his own neurosis and fear of the text, which must `explicate' and render two-dimensional things he cannot explain. His sense of an `excess' which doesn't quite fit into his symbolic code is apparent. Moreover, he fails entirely to see the narrator's `mimicking' of masculinist discourse in her `caricatured' representations of David. In this particular context, we see the ways in which Luce Irigaray's methodology of `mimicry' function. As Toril Moi explains,

> `Caught in the specular logic of patriarchy, woman can choose either to remain silent, producing incomprehensible babble (any utterance that falls outside the logic of the same, will by definition be incomprehensible to the male master discourse) or enact the specular representation of herself as a lesser male. The latter option, the woman as mimic, is, according to Irigaray, a form of hysteria. The hysteric mimes her own sexuality in a masculine mode, since this is the only way in which she can rescue something of her own desire' [82].

We might argue that the narrator's representations of not only herself, particularly in her `mad' episode, but also David and Anna are `a conscious acting out of this hysteric (mimetic) position allocated to all

---

[82] Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics, p.134.

women under patriarchy.

Thus unlike Freud's patient Anna whom he constructs in his `First Lecture' on psychoanalysis, the narrator of Surfacing does not have to resort to the physical metaphors which remain so vulnerable to recuperation by masculine discourse. As such the text can be read as a talking cure, but only in the sense that that metaphor (which belonged to Anna and not Freud) points to the need to cure language itself rather than the patient [83]. The need, that is, to cure the hysterical repression of the feminine in patriarchal discourse. What Moi says of Irigaray thus applies equally well to the narrator.

> `Through her acceptance of what is in any case an ineluctable position (she) doubles it back on itself, thus raising the parasitism to the second power. Hers is a theatrical staging of the mime: miming the miming imposed on woman, Irigaray's subtle specular move (her mimicry mirrors that of all women) intends to undo the effects of phallocentric discourse simply by overdoing them'.[84]

In this respect, Surfacing demonstrates beautifully how and under what circumstances this strategy actually works. The narrative anticipates the

---

[83] Sigmund Freud, `First Lecture'.

[84] Moi, p.140.

remarks of King and Bartlett, representative as they are of masculinist discourse, and calculates in advance its logic. Both her caricatured representations of characters and her `madness' turn the masculinist interpretation back on itself. Leaving it ultimately to reflect the failures or its narcissistic logic rather than a failure of Atwood's or the narrators.

The same device undermines Bartlett's assertion that `Insanity makes plausible her implausible acts: at the height of her dementia she observes that `from any rational point of view her actions are absurd' [85]. He is quite happy to write the narrator off as mad, yet he relies on the authority of her words to do so. The words take on a dramatic irony as he represents them to us, he himself unaware of the ways in which they render his own reading superficial and inadequate. Only to him are these acts implausible, and he must see them as such, not realizing that his discourse makes them plausible. In this sense the mimicry of masculine discourse succeeds in a manner which raises it from being itself an hysterical symptom, to a powerful means of exposing the hysteria of a masculine discourse that must repress anything which it cannot directly appropriate.

Unlike many other women's writing, such as Ruth Wallsgrove cited above, the narrative thus manages to avoid the machinations of specular logic. It neither capitulates to masculine categories nor joins the ranks of highly emotive, often beautiful, but ultimately marginalized texts which openly, one

---

[85] Bartlett, p.26.

might say `brazenly', flaunt their femininity. (See `[86]). Instead its deconstruction of specular logic raises it into a third space, one, I would argue, which is essentially discursive. What we encounter seems to me, then, to come closer to Julia Kristeva's model, which, following on from Voloshinov and Bakhtin, posits language as `a heterogeneous signifying process located in and between speaking subjects rather than as a universal langue'.[87] In this sense we can begin to appreciate the dialogism of the text, which not only relativizes different discourses within it but interacts also with those `outside' it.

Moreover, by raising itself into a dialogue with masculinist discourse, the narrative counters the usual spectacle made of woman's madness. Instead of the usual `audience of men: inquisitors, magistrates, doctors - the circle of doctors with their fascinated eyes', which Cixous and Clement speak of in `The Newly Born Woman', instead of woman's madness observed through the rationalist discourse of science, the narrator has begun to speak around the speculum. To articulate not merely metaphorically through literal hysteria, which, as Freud's work on hysteria demonstrates, is all too easily recuperated by masculinist discourse[88], but in a language

---

[86] Annie Leclerc, `Women's Word' in `The Feminist Critique of Language', pp.74-79

[87] Moi, p.154.

[88] See Freud's `First Lecture' in "Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis', where his `reading' of Anna's symptoms remains patently unsatisfactory. He does not even attempt to decipher Anna's symptoms in specific or cultural terms, (continued...)

what disallows appropriation, which usurps masculinist categories by taking them into a different register. This is woman speaking, not woman speaking as woman or for woman, but a woman speaking, whom we only ever hear, but never see. She does not even have a name and that very social context is what changes the meanings of those apparently putative categories, woman/nature, showing them to be free to all, and open to new meaning. The narrator, as it were, frees language from its binary units by inhabiting them, showing their meanings to be contingent on social context, frees them by a discursive inhabitation.

Precisely because her `madness' is not outside language but occurs as a moment of linguistic epiphany, as a moment of encoded/inscribed silence, which intrudes upon and usurps patriarchal discourse, it cannot be discounted. It is a moment of empowerment, not because difference itself, but the privileging of certain differences is abandoned, namely those between the humanist concept of the unified western white male subject and the undifferentiated and colonized women/nature/native object.

Unlike David Malouf's Ovid in An Imaginary Life, who attempts to make language as `transparent and unobtrusive', as a seamless `connective tissue', the language of Surfacing's

---

[88] (...continued)
reducing, for example, and in an insignificant parenthesis, her hallucination of her fingers as five snakes, simply to an experiential `fact' that, there were, `most likely, snakes behind the house' that had previously given the girl a fright...thus provid(ing) material for her hallucination., p.15

narrator becomes increasingly sophisticated and intrusive as the switch in one sentence from the `old' discourse, `I lean against a tree', to the new, `I am a tree leaning', accentuates (p.174) [89].

The assertion `I am a tree leaning', is a positive inhabitation of the putative women/nature identity in so far as it asserts her `equal' difference within nature and from culture. Like deep ecology's transpersonal identity theory, the revalorization occurs as the holistic and healing experience of the `Self' in identity with and as part of, to use Warwick Fox's metaphor, `all the particulars' as well as the `whole tree' of the ecological system.

Moreover, she goes further, not merely to become a tree leaning but to become neither an animal or a tree but `the thing in which trees and animals move and grow, I am a place' (p.175). One is reminded of Michelet's description of women, re-read by Helen Cixous and Catherine Clement. His figure is of a woman, who, after being persecuted in the city,

> finds herself in the heart of the forest. It has become her kingdom; she has become like the animals.... The crows keep her company. People come from all over to consult her, in secret. She is forbidden, menaced by the stake or by the in-place. But she ensures the survival of the pagan forces of

---

[89] Roslyn Jolly, `Transformations of Caliban and Ariel: Imagination and Language in David Malouf, Margaret Atwood and Seamus Heaney', p.303.

> desire. "She has a woman's craving. Craving for what? For everything of course, for the Great Universal Everything.... To this immense, deep dreamed.... The beautiful dram! And how can it be told? That the marvellous monster of universal life was swallowed up inside her; that from now on life, death, everything was held within her entrails, and as the price of such painful labour, she had conceived Nature'.[90]

`She', claims Clement and Cixous, `is able to dream nature, and therefore conceive it' (my emphasis).[91]

Finally the imaginary is entering into the symbolic.

No longer the space between the lines, the narrator has become a place in which nature is conceived, and conceived symbolically: she is imbued with and issues forth meaning. And it is at this point that she `breaks surface', becomes `separate again', emerges as it were into discourse, into self consciousness (p.175). It is an inhabitation of the putative woman/nature identification on her own terms: she does not say, `I am mother earth', but `I am the thing in which the trees and animals move and grow, I am a place'. We are witnessing the discursive defamiliarization of words, as it were, where the words `mother earth' will no longer mean only one thing, but will now contain this other meaning, of woman writing

---

[90] Helene Cixous and Catherine Clement, The Newly Born Woman, p.4.

[91] Cixous, p.5.

herself into the symbolic, bringing the imaginary into being.

The oppositionary identity of rationalist humanistic and patriarchal language is thus used or `inhabited in a certain way', which transmutes it into what Rosemary Reuther called `dialectical unities.'[92] The disempowering unity of the passive, silent, nature/women premised within the cogito is differentiated into the empowering statement, `I speak therefore I am', which renders the entire narrative a testimony to that power.

One final point. I have insisted throughout that although we require a new space in which the metalanguage of scientific discourse will be deconstructed, we do not want to abandon the insights of that discourse. Particularly in so far as that implies the ocular metaphors and methods of that discourse. Although a specular logic may be limiting, it is only so when utilized as a totalizing epistemology. What I want to suggest is that Surfacing rescues it as one possibility among others, liberates it into a plurality of possibilities. Metaphorically we see how this functions on the final page of the novel.

`I watch him', the narrator says of Joe, `my love for him useless as a third eye or a possiblity' (p.186). It is a statement of her liberation, through the preceeding narrative, into that position of power formerly inhabited by the masculine `I/eye'. The voyeurism of the specular gaze however has

---

[92] Quoted in Zimmerman, p.26.

mutated. It is no longer a gaze that subordinates object to subject. There is in it no attempt to recuperate her subjectivity at the expense of `his', because first and foremost it is a gaze of caring. A `love' which she defines as `useless as a third eye', something outside the logics of specularity, of binary oppositionns and essentialism. A third possiblity which cannot be understood from the point of view of those logics. After all, within binocular vision, what use is a third eye? It has no function at all except to disrupt the very structure of binarism. It remains outside the comprehension of such a logic precisely because it is not an extrapolation within it.

Yet what the narrator foregrounds by giving us alternative interpretations, `useless as a third eye or a possiblity' (my emphasis), is the possibility of recognizing, within that specular logic, that what it defines as `useless' is precisely what must be explored as a possibility. It is in the unkown, in other words the marginalized, the written off, that we may find a different way of going about things. By remaining within that logic, giving us alternative possibilities, she demonstrates the way out of it. But to take it is to change the structure of binarism entirely. What she is suggesting then is the possibility of an entirely new conceptual paradigm, and as the final line of the novel suggests, this is one intimately bound up with the aural. Joe calls to her, and she is poised listening to him. He cannot see her, she watches him, but not in a way that she intends to deceive him. She listens, her sight subordinated to that sense. They inhabit a middle ground

that is `neither land nor water' (p.186). Neither speaks to her, not the formerly `multilingual water', nor the tree she became. They are simply a silence that is the possiblity of speech and that waits to be symbolically encoded in a new and hopefully mutual way. `The lake is quiet, the trees surround me, asking and giving nothing' (p.186).

One needs to be careful then, when speaking a new language, of naming it, of setting it up as a monologue or metadiscourse upon others. This is why I am essentially uncomfortable with the idea of adopting any one position from which to speak about the environmental or any other debate, and more importantly, why I espouse fiction as a particularly amenable form in w--, Thinking Academic Freedom in Gendered Post-Coloniality, TB Davie Memorial Lecture, University of Cape Town, 1992.
hich to speak. Fiction does not assume any authority about its subject, it has no single name under which it goes, it is never one type of discourse, it is always, as Bakhtin has said, a dialogism of interwoven voices, a polyglossary, and as such prevents the crystallizing out of hierarchies that occurs in `serious', `nonfictional' theory. It is for precisely this reason that Barthes advocated that science, in order to achieve any kind of truth at all, would have to become literature.[93] As Italo Calvino puts it, `literature is more scientific than science, because literature knows that language is never naive, and knows that in writing one cannot say anything extraneous to writing, or express any truth that is not a truth having to do with the art

---

[93] Barthes, p.7.

of writing'.[94]

Atwood's use of fiction thus marks off its difference in a metaphoric way yet refuses to be drawn into the scientific use of metaphor as a reductive trope. Her use of metaphor is clearly more sophisticated in the ways in which she uses it to deny simple oppositions, to insist that `nature' is in fact always already appropriated by culture, whose innocence is a fantasy of the western mind. To deny the myths of a golden age and insist that we take absolute responsibility for our interpretations of the real also. In pragmatic terms this translates to the need to recognize that conservation has already a responsibility to manage the remaining wilderness precisely because it has always already been incorporated into not only the human mind but the economic power structure, and refusal to manage it is quite simply a refusal of responsibility. Yet this is the way government systems have been operating: like science they `anaesthetize' the problem, that is, as the narrator puts it, `if it hurts, invent a different pain' (p.7). Largely the focus on `the environmental crisis' has become that invention. By watching the pain of other animals we forget our own powerlessness.

---

[94] Calvino, p.29.

Bibliography

Atwood, Margaret, *Surfacing*, Virago Press, London, 1989.

Barthes, Roland, *The Rustle of Language*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986.

Bartlett, Donald R., `"Fact" and Form in Surfacing', *University of Windsor Review*, (1981) Fall- Winter v17.1 21-28.

Berryman, Charles, `Atwood's Narrative Quest', *Journal of Narrative Technique*, 17.1 (1987), 51-56.

Boslough, *Masters of Time*, The Orion Publishing Group, United Kingdom 1992.

Brink, Andre, `Woman and Language in Darkest Africa: The quest for articulation in two postcolonial novels', *Literator* 13.1 (April 1992) 1-14.

Bryden, Diana, `"The Thematic Ancestor": Joseph Conrad, Patrick White and Margaret Atwood', World Literature Written in English, 24.2 (2984) 386-397.

Calvino, Italo, *The Literature Machine*, Secker and Warburg, London, 1982.

Cameron, Deborah, *Feminist Critique of Language*, Routledge, London, 1990.

Cheney, Jim, `Eco-Feminism and Deep Ecology', *Environmental Ethics*, 9(2) (1987) 115-145.

Cixous, Helene, Clement, Catherine, *The Newly Born Woman*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986.

Clark, Meera T., `Margaret Atwood's Surfacing: Language, Logic and the Art of Fiction', *Modern Language Studies*, 13.3 (1983) 3-15.

Collard, Andree, Rape of the Wild, *The Women's Press*, London, 1988.

Derrida, Jacques, *Of Grammatology*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1974.

Eckersley, Robyn, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, University College London Press, London, 1992.

Fox, Warwick, *The Deep Ecology- Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels*, University of Tasmania, 1989.

Frielick, Stanley, *Deep Ecology, the Environment and African Literature*, Conference Paper, University of Zululand, 1992

Fuss, Diana, *Essentially Speaking*, Routledge, New York, 1989.

Bibliography

Atwood, Margaret, *Surfacing*, Virago Press, London, 1989.

Barthes, Roland, *The Rustle of Language*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986.

Bartlett, Donald R., `"Fact" and Form in Surfacing', *University of Windsor Review*, (1981) Fall- Winter v17.1 21-28.

Berryman, Charles, `Atwood's Narrative Quest', *Journal of Narrative Technique*, 17.1 (1987), 51-56.

Boslough, *Masters of Time*, The Orion Publishing Group, United Kingdom 1992.

Brink, Andre, `Woman and Language in Darkest Africa: The quest for articulation in two postcolonial novels', *Literator* 13.1 (April 1992) 1-14.

Bryden, Diana, `"The Thematic Ancestor": Joseph Conrad, Patrick White and Margaret Atwood', World Literature Written in English, 24.2 (2984) 386-397.

Calvino, Italo, *The Literature Machine*, Secker and Warburg, London, 1982.

Cameron, Deborah, *Feminist Critique of Language*, Routledge, London, 1990.

Cheney, Jim, `Eco-Feminism and Deep Ecology', *Environmental Ethics*, 9(2) (1987) 115-145.

Cixous, Helene, Clement, Catherine, *The Newly Born Woman*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986.

Clark, Meera T., `Margaret Atwood's Surfacing: Language, Logic and the Art of Fiction', *Modern Language Studies*, 13.3 (1983) 3-15.

Collard, Andree, Rape of the Wild, *The Women's Press*, London, 1988.

Derrida, Jacques, *Of Grammatology*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1974.

Eckersley, Robyn, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, University College London Press, London, 1992.

Fox, Warwick, *The Deep Ecology- Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels*, University of Tasmania, 1989.

Frielick, Stanley, *Deep Ecology, the Environment and African Literature*, Conference Paper, University of Zululand, 1992

Fuss, Diana, *Essentially Speaking*, Routledge, New York, 1989.

Goodin, Robert E., *Green Political Theory*, Polity Press, Oxford, 1992.

Granofsky, Ronald, `Fairy-Tale Morphology in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing', *Mosaic*, 23/4, 1990.

Hallen, Patsy, *Making Peace with the Environment: Or Why Ecology Needs Feminism*', Murdoch University, Western Australia.

Hawking, Stephen, *A Brief History of Time*, Transworld Publishers, London, 1988.

Huggan, Graham, `Resisting the Map as Metaphor: A Comparison of Margaret Atwood's Surfacing and Janet Frame's Scented Gardens for the Blind', *Kunapipi*, 11.3 (1989) 5-15.

Jacobus, Mary, Keller, Evelyn Fox, Shuttleworth, Sally, *Body/Politics*, Routledge, New York, 1990.

Jolly, Roslyn, (Aug. 1986),`Transformations of Caliban and Ariel: Imagination and Language in David Malouf, Margaret Atwood and Seamus Heaney', *World Literature Written in English*, (26)2, 295-330.

Jones, Dorothy., `"A Kingdom and a Place of Exile": Women Writers and the World of Nature',

Kemp, Penny et al, *Europe's Green Alternative*, trans. Julia Sallabank, Black Rose Books, Canada, 1992.

King, Bruce, `Margaret Atwood's Surfacing, *JCL* 12 (1977) 23-32.

Lowe, Marian and Hubbard, Ruth, *Woman's Nature*, Pergamon Press, New York, 1983.

Macherey, Pierre, *A Theory of Literary Production*, Routledge, London, 1989.

Moi, Toril, *Sexual Textual Politics*, London, 1985.

Shlovsky, Victor, `Art as Technique', in David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory*, Longman, 1988, pp.15-30

Spivak, Gayatri, `Criticism, Feminism, and The Institution', *The Post-Colonial Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, (ed. Sarah Harasym), Routledge, New York and London, 1990

--, Thinking Academic Freedom in Gendered Post-Coloniality, TB Davie Memorial Lecture, University of Cape Town, 1992.

Thomas, Sue, `Mythic Reconception and the Mother/Daughter Relationship in Margaret Atwood's "Surfacing", *Ariel* 19.2 (1988) 73-85.

Wajcman, Judy, *Feminism Confronts Technology*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991.

Wallsgrove, Ruth, `The Masculine Face of Science', in *Alice through the Microscope*, pp.228-240, ed. Lynda Birke, Virago, London, 1980.

Whithim, Philip, `"Packing it in Salt": Form in Atwood's Surfacing', *CEA Critic*, 50.1 (1987) 67-73.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988.

Young, John, *Post Environmentalism*, Belhaven Press, London, 1992.

Zimmerman, Michael, `Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics', *Environmental Ethics*, 9.1. (1992) 21-44.