

Ariel's response to Comments and Questions at the NENA/UoN Webinar - 10/10/21

Thanks folks for this feedback, which is really helpful as I try to wrap up a book on these things. Activist writing can be a challenge reaching readers from all sorts of backgrounds - age and political experience, educational training, ethnic and geographic region, sex-gender socialisation, etc.

It would be great if the AELA/CommonAlts site showed a map of First Nations regions - not only for people overseas but for us in Oz. It could help grow post-colonial literacy, as well as reinforce thinking for a future based on ecologically sensitive, self-sufficient, bioregional economies.

Key Readings are posted - and note the difference between **materialist ecofeminisms** which focus is on the human labour interaction with nature, as distinct from US **cultural ecofeminism** which focus is on how 'language' constructs the world. Both eco-feminisms contrast with the **liberal feminist** goal of 'achieving equality' in the mainstream system as it stands.

Chris Krogh: see article in Griffith Review 73: "Erasure: women, economics and language" by Jane Gleeson-White

Chris, Any chance to post this? There's such an upsurge of feminist consciousness in Australia right now - a response to the oppressive 1950s mindset of the Liberal-National Government and nationwide epidemic of domestic violence due to Covid.

David Jago: interesting to explore Jacob Moreno (action methods) alongside Freud

David, I vaguely recall this work from social psychology. Will you forward something?

Amelia Salmon: musing on how tied women's liberation is to real action on climate change

Yes Amelia, women are expressing a strong sense of responsibility over climate on behalf of the next generation. Maybe Hamed will share my chapter from his 2021 book on *Transformative Global Studies: 'A materialist ecofeminist reading of the green economy: or yes Karl, the ecological footprint is sex-gendered'*. I don't see this activism as 'reinforcing old gender roles'. If you widen your politics to an integrative cross-movement civilisational critique - the colonisation of women is much like that of indigenous peoples. In the capitalist patriarchal imperium each is marginalised to a social 'periphery' and so learn and bring different 'ways of knowing' to politics. The anxiety about gender roles stems from shallow 'liberal' thinking like 'identity politics', which we leave behind once we grasp ourselves materially as 'nature-in-embodied-form'.

Caroline Alcorso and others: wondering if we will have access to these slides after the webinar?

Hi Caroline, yes, and an early version of the debts, plus meta-industrial principles are in chapters 1 and 16 of the *Eco-Sufficiency* book - posted.

Harideva: Is our spiritual dimension given a place in your analysis?

For me, spirituality is 'materialist' - being the life energy as flows through all Life-on-Earth.

James Goodman: fantastic to hear that model of 'metabolic value' outlined

Thanks James. Not sure I covered it adequately, but readings will - meta-industrial labour, meta-epistemology ie principles, and metabolic value - as an ecofeminist alternative to the separation of use versus exchange value in capitalist economics.

Monique Shipp: how men are socialised to the patriarchal mindset where unconscious dissociation and projection occur.

Monique for sure. I'll try and unpack this a bit more here, because it was sketchy in the session. As I said, disciplines like sociology and political economy have few tools for understanding how the **capitalist patriarchal imperium** developed historically and still functions as 3 interlocking systems - nested like Russian dolls. Patriarchal culture is the broadest frame, the base from which Eurocentric capitalism evolved, then colonialism in turn. But these two systems are still embodied within, and driven by, patriarchal energies - chapter 3 of my *Ecofeminism as Politics*. The originary alienation from the mother/woman - prerequisite for Oedipal identification with a father figure is fraught, disembodied, dissociated, denied, projected, then resolved by sublimation into a patriarchal culture of binaries. This is what holds up the 'othering' of Man over Woman, Humanity over Nature, Production over Reproduction, White over Black, North over South. The process is at work in monotheism, Enlightenment science, Eurocentric law and economics. Under capitalism,

Women, Blacks, Animals, are all resourced as 'closer to nature'. The climate crisis is embedded in these structures of masculinist entitlement - hence the need for consciousness-raising. Sorry about the jargon, but there's no everyday words for unpacking such things.

Sarah Stokely: feminists have done the best work with Freud's ideas, see Judith Herman's book Trauma and Recovery

Good one Sarah.

Lexi Randall-L'Estrange: could we have a talk with just Ariel and how to move toward these ten principles and what we can imagine the future feels like when we get there?

Happy to, Lexi.

Terry Leahy: For an alternative closer to what Ariel is talking about, see: <https://youtu.be/q-E2f0I8fyI> And a good text is Nancy Chodorow in Rosaldo & Lamphere, Women, Culture and Society

Bronwen Morgan: a new web of consciousness raising meetings integrating the non-human across a fluid spectrum of gender identities ... Beginning with exploration of the six debts ...

Yes Bronwen, all these different and competing 'identities' are simply patriarchal, and now capitalist creations.

Chris Krogh: one of the most powerful and radical changes I think your suggestions provoke, Ariel, is that we commit time to being with each other, slowing down and listening.

Love it.

Hamed Housseini: Gar's writings on the topic:

<https://thenextsystem.org/principle><https://www.routledge.com/The-New-Systems-Reader-Alternatives-to-a-Failed-Economy/Speth-Courrier/p/book/9780367313395#>

Shei: recommend 'bubbling along' - Rick Tarnas, Carlo Rovelli and Robin Wall-Kimmerer helps me

How is that? What do they say, Shei?

Hamed Housseini : another great source of information about many alternatives to capitalism:

PLURIVERSE: <https://cup.columbia.edu/book/pluriverse/9788193732984>

I think this site has a free copy - *Pluriverse* available here:

<https://www.radicalecologicaldemocracy.org/pluriverse/>

Book inspired by green theorist Wolfgang Sachs' first *Post-Development Dictionary*, 25 years ago.

Ted Franklin: the devil is in the question of who has 'the agency' to bring this new world into being

Ted I think 'the agency' exists among those who already know how to meet human needs without destroying planetary systems. That is to say, they have learned how to provision using principles of reproductive/regenerative labour. I call these 'agents of history' - the meta-industrial class. And it is a labour class that consists of peasants, indigenes, mothers and the like. In other words, it is defined by labour and has nothing to do with (liberal) 'identity politics'. This is the broadest most inclusive definition of 'the working class' around. It is a global majority and already subsidises the infrastructure of capital by nurturing its labour force and its natural resource base.

Eleanor Glenn: "Live simply, so that others may simply live" - I'm uncomfortable with this idea "freedom from work"

Am with you Eleanor; surely regenerative work defines our human realisation through participating in the cycles of nature.

Shirley Lewis: How can I find out what people are doing - without being stuck in front of my laptop ...

Claire Burgess: these so called 'advanced' technologies have exploitative supply chains ...

Anne Tennock: with these technologies we ALL sell our souls and ecological futures ...

Spot on. This is a huge political dilemma for our movements.

Aileen Walsh: the ecological disaster is largely ignored, but plants and animals and especially insects can not evolve fast enough to cope

I am in anguish over it too, Aileen.

Daryl Taylor: given the ongoing and relentless attack on, and marginalisation of, the Primary Reproductive Economy by the Nation State and Corporations, and the closure of ecological space and capacity of ecological sinks, which strategies best catalyse our collective attention on, and enable

networked resilient, restorative and regenerative Place-Based, Peer-with-Peer Human Scale Household, Neighbourhood and Community Exchange Material Realist Physical Economies?

In white middle class societies such as people like us using zoom (!), I think we have to build up public understanding of unspoken, invisibilised, feminist and decolonial capacities. The Left is awkwardly co-dependent within the existing system.

Terry Leahy: I am taking it that the key difference between Gar's Vision and that of Chomsky is that Gar intends a state to supervise this, even if it is built from the bottom up participatory networks. Chomsky envisages a network of cooperatives but not organised by a state. Ariel envisages a localised non-monetary economy without a national state to supervise this.

Yes Terry, that would be my dream, horizontal networks.

Yolanda van Gellecum: for a living model of feminist distributed power governance at the neighbourhood level, see the Communes of "Rojava" Democratic Confederalism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDnenjldnnE>

They are wonderful - maybe Ocalan's analysis is useful for our own sex-gender consciousness raising groups ...

Bronwen Morgan: 'each of those debts is an extraction of life energy from each of those groupings' - a rich phrase

Yes, but I tell you, because of the fixed patriarchal Humanity v Nature, Economics v Ecology divide, it's so hard to get the thermodynamic aspect across to people.

Rita Gyorffy: mentor and support your young people; be the elders they need

And this also helps to heal the social divisiveness of capitalism.

Terry Leahy: see my new book *The Politics of Permaculture*. London: Pluto, 2021

Terry is path-breaking in this.

Cathryn: **try reading Richard Heinberg or Pablo Servigne & Raphael Stevens. Happy to talk more**

Cathryn, do say why you recommend them.

Anouk Pinchetti: technology is inevitable, but it will be put to whatever uses our systems push it

I don't think you can sustain this 'technological neutralist' position Anouk, not on ecological grounds.

Wayne McMillan: my feeling is that the ecological crisis we face goes beyond identity politics but doesn't diminish pertinent issues of gender, race, sexual orientation ... does class based analysis have any real value in a new society?

Wayne, I hope the above comments help clarify that I'm talking about social structures not identity politics, and about a new kind of class analysis.

Laura Bedford: systems are there. need to re-define 'advanced' society. The West is not advanced but profligate.

Thanks Laura.

Ted Franklin: on the difference between capitalist and ecosocialist technology, there's a great book by Victor Wallis: *Red-Green Revolution: The Politics and Technology of Ecosocialism*.

Ted, I probably disagree. See the 2006 exchange between Victor and ecofeminist Maria Mies published during my time as an editor of *Capitalism Nature Socialism*.

Hamed Housseini: Technology is a question of SCALE that both men and women and nonbinaries should think about and act upon.

Hamed, I don't think we can treat technologies as just quantitative though. They are culturally and cognitively embodied.

Libby Stewart: the majority world cannot participate in technological 'fixes

cathryn: Nate puts it well: we all have energy slaves

Exactly.

Marsha Emerman: eco-feminist perspective ... places humans within a context of nature that is essential before we can play any constructive role in creating not just better 'systems' but a liveable, sustainable world for all life on earth.

Couldn't say it better!

barton quilkey: climate - the dynamics of how capitalism functions as a system makes change impossible - but also it uses a conscious effort to co-opt green movements

Right on Libby and barton!

Ted Franklin: would you like to get rid of the Internet?

Yes, and I plan to, soon as I've got my political work up and away! I'm truly conflicted about this.

Eilean Watson: experiment with the Global Ecovillage Network.

Important; although the movement does have different 'inflections' around the world.

Laura Bedford: have people here read the IPCC report? There will be extreme limits on a system based on agricultural and localised self-sufficiency in many parts of the world. The 'North' will become more arable while Africa and Oceania become uninhabitable. If we talk about equality we need to take a global view and recognise climate debt!

Yes for sure.

Aileen Walsh: we cannot trust the state because they are beholden to the fossil fuel corporates

Too true.

Shei: I think we need to pursue a nuanced, kind and integrative approach rather than surmising entities into boy or girl things, and falling into binary traps. Observations on how things stand, constructive feedback loops, building accountability, and envisioning succession in parallel to visions of life might be steps forward?

Shei, that's just what we're talking about. As for 'the boy thing', is there no space for a joke while we're 'bubbling along'? To get a sense of how science and technology are sex-gendered knowledge forms check out Merchant's book *The Death of Nature*. This traces how 'the professionalisation' of science and medicine was achieved by the systematic hunting down and burning of women healers and midwives by armed gangs under order of King James. The UK Royal Society now replaced the notion of 'organism' by a notion of nature and the body as 'machine'.

Bronwen Morgan: the 'kitchen table' movement to elect politicians as 'community independents'

carmel brain: we are in a debt based economy which has reached limits to growth, it is difficult to fathom that nearly 8 billion people could survive without industrial scale food production

carmel, see Vandana Shiva's book on petro-farming. Also I have FAO research affirming that the current world population can be fed by organic farming with some left over. The problem is agro-industrial productivism, which aside from destroying soils and water, deliberately destroys supplies to create scarcity and thus keep prices high.

Andrew McClelland: many of the encouraging models are already in place but ...

Happy to talk more - maybe look at some of the readings.

Chris Krogh: I think a first nations - eternal generations developing - perspective may be even more important to guide new-old thinking such as permaculture

Nice point, Chris.