

Acknowledgments

In California where I grew up, I learned about the United Farmworkers movement when our family drove the Interstate 5 corridor through the central valley, saw the workers and the fruit stands, and I began asking questions that led me to support the "No Grapes" campaign in the 1970s as a high school student. In Washington state, I marched with PCUN (Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste), the union whose members came up to help Washington farmworkers pressure the growers for better contracts. Each year in spring, the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival draws hundreds of thousands of visitors; the highly competitive art contest selects one artist whose work will be featured on the annual festival poster; amateur and professional photographers capture the tulips' dazzling beauty, the kids on bicycles, the Dutch windmill and the Tulip Run, but can't seem to focus on the migrant farmworkers laboring in the rain-drenched fields, often with their children beside them. In Minnesota, migrant workers labor in the sugar beet fields and in apple orchards. Whether they are indigenous Mexicans, migrant or seasonal workers, citizens or undocumented, farmworkers face many challenges: education for their children, health care for the family, substandard housing, long hours, dangerous and low-waged work—all products of institutional racism. After reading Helena Viramontes' *Under the Feet of Jesus*, one of my eco-composition students told me that in the western Minnesota town where she grew up with the sugar beets and later worked as a lifeguard, she saw many white swimmers get out of the public pool when the migrant school children came to swim. "It's no coincidence that we treat migrants like dirt," she concluded.

In Minnesota, migrant farmworkers arrive and depart seasonally, like the butterflies. But these migrants are not treated the same.

While most Minnesotans don't see the Mexican migrant farmworkers who pick up to 85% of the food eaten in the United States, the annual migration

of Monarch butterflies from the Oyamel trees of Mexico's Michoacan forests to the lakes and rivers of Minnesota is eagerly anticipated, celebrated, and tracked. We can't know how many monarchs arrive and depart annually, though we do know that climate change, deforestation, industrialized agriculture, and overdevelopment have damaged monarch habitat and vitality. Labor statistics document the 20,000 to 35,000 migrant agricultural workers who are recruited annually to work in Minnesota's farm fields and food processing plants. Most are permanent legal residents of the United States from the border region of southern Texas and northern Mexico who spend April through November in Minnesota, then return home during the off-season. Both monarchs and migrants contribute to food production, monarchs through their pollination and migrants through their labor.

This book's cover image is titled "Migrant Workers," a lithograph by Minnesota's Sami-American artist Kurt Seaberg. Unlike the Tulip Festival artists, Seaberg's lithograph beautifully depicts the labor of both migrant farmworkers and monarch butterflies, framing the image with visual references to the power lines above the workers, the industrial pollutants surrounding the fields where they work, and the toxins that lurk beneath the surface, ecologically and culturally, threatening the health of humans, environments, and food systems. Above, the monarch butterfly emerges again, from chrysalis to adult, offering the possibility of health and renewal for pollinators, for laborers, and for those willing to challenge the toxins of environmental racism and environmental degradations. I am grateful to Kurt Seaberg for his ecologically and culturally attuned lithography and activism that reconnects the ethics of interspecies, social, and environmental justice. In this book, I try to do with words what Seaberg does with art: illuminate relationships among social justice, transspecies justice, and ecological justice, all rooted in whether humans conceive and perceive our self-identity as *intra-active* (Barad 2007) and *kincentric* (Salmon 2002), or whether we see our identity as separate from the rest of life, superior to earthothers, and thus free to control, remake, manipulate, burden, or destroy.

Writers flourish in the context of intellectual, activist, and collegial relationships, and I am amazed and humbled by how much of my writing was brought forward by invitation and through conversation with colleagues. Thanks are due to Annie Potts for inviting me to contribute to her volume on *Meat Culture* (2016), prompting me to explore ideas for an essay that became chapter 2. I was fortunate to be able to "test drive" that essay to attentive audiences thanks to invitations from Cynthia Belmont at Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, and from the students organizing a Food Justice Summit at the Claremont Colleges in California. Claire Jean Kim and Carla Freccero reached out to me with an invitation to contribute to their special issue of *American Quarterly* on "Species/Race/Sex," providing the impetus to

advance my longstanding interest in the politics of breastfeeding across race and species that began in 1994, with my essay in *The Ecologist*, "Milking Mother Nature: An Ecofeminist Critique of rBGH." A colleague and friend from Tamkang University in Taiwan, Peter I-Minh Huang, extended a timely invitation that helped to separate my literary from political milk studies (the paper was becoming unwieldy at sixty pages) and carve out the essay on "Literary Breastmilk in U.S. 20th Century Fiction" for the inaugural issue of *World Literature*. These endeavors were further supported by encouragement from pattrice jones, who kept telling me, "you have a lot to say about milk," and who urged me to write out my thoughts after being deeply troubled by what I saw at the annual Fourth of July fireworks. Thanks to panel cochairs Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, "Fireworks" was compressed into a ten-minute conference presentation for a session on "Material Feminism" at the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) 2013 conference in Lawrence, Kansas.

Like the milk essays, the climate justice and cli-fi narratives chapters were born as joined twins, soon separated for publication. The cli-fi narratives essay came first, invited by Serpil Oppermann as a keynote for Turkey's first ecocritical conference, "The Future of Ecocriticism," held in Ankara, Turkey, in 2009. That presentation and others were first published in *The Future of Ecocriticism: New Horizons* (Cambridge Scholars, 2011). The essay was later revised and updated on the invitation of Simon Estok, who was editing a special issue of *Forum for World Literature Studies* (China) in 2014, and again for Mary Phillips and Nick Rumens, who were editing a Routledge volume, *Contemporary Perspectives in Ecofeminism* (2015). Serpil Oppermann and I cochaired a panel on "Cli-Fi Narratives" for ASLE 2015, where we felt like the grandmothers of this ecocritical genre, moderating presentations from a "next-gen" of cli-fi ecocritics like April Anson, Stephen Siperstein, and Laura Wright who were already advancing this approach. Over the course of the essay's evolution, I had the good fortune of corresponding with Dan Bloom, the blogger in Taiwan who first coined the term "cli-fi" and who has created and maintains the most comprehensive website on cli-fi literature, science, and popular culture in the world.

My work on climate justice began in 2008 with presentations for the colleges where I serve on faculty, University of Wisconsin-River Falls and Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota. The presentation morphed from an ecofeminist perspective on the linkages among global warming, world hunger, and industrialized meat production in 2008, to an exploration of links among sexism/speciesism/climate change in 2011, and into its present form, which was continually augmented and refined thanks to audience feedback during invited presentations at SUNY-Stony Brook's Humanities Institute (thanks to Sophia Christman-Lavin for hosting and introducing the

talk), the University of Kansas (thanks to Schuyler Kraus), and the University of South Dakota (thanks to Meghann Jarchow) in 2014 as well as Indiana University of Pennsylvania (thanks to Susan Comfort) and UC-Santa Barbara (thanks to Corrie Ellis and John Foran) in 2015.

Lori Gruen talked with me about the early stages of U.S. space exploration and its programs with chimps. Her longstanding advocacy for interspecies justice, her research and activism for primate freedom, and her friendship over the years have contributed inestimably to my work, particularly for material on animals in space discussed in chapter 5. Lorraine Kerslake and Terry Gifford invited me to contribute to their coedited special issue of *Feminismo/s* on "Ecofeminismo/s: mujeres y naturaleza," prompting me to explore outer space while setting a clear deadline here on earth, and Bridget Flynn kindly hosted me at Oberlin for the first "animals in space" presentation. Both Lori Gruen and Carol Adams co-organized the Wesleyan conference honoring the work of ecofeminist Marti Kheel, and that conference prompted my work on ecomasculinity and ecosexuality, writing that was later augmented when I met Beth Stephens at the Center for Twenty-first Century Studies conference at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "Anthropocene Feminism" in 2014. Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle's work on ecosexuality and ecoerotics as politics have energized and delighted me, particularly with their guided "Ecosexual Tour" through the Walker Art Center's exhibit, "Hippy Modernism," and I am honored that they use my ecofeminist writings as part of their theoretical foundation. Through their work, I discovered I am an ecosexual!

Along with these supportive professional, collegial, and artistic connections, it is family and community who make writing possible. I gain nourishment from the dharma talks and mindfulness practice at Common Ground Meditation Center, from the weekly sermons and racial justice activism at First Universalist Church, from participating in the annual BareBones Productions Halloween performances and the Heart of the Beast MayDay parade, as well as from the Mississippi River, and the plants and animals who share this ecoregion. At home, my writing is supported by Sasha, my feline companion, and by my daughter Flora, whose curiosity, compassion, patience and playfulness motivate me every day; she will be happy that we can now take that long-promised summer road trip, after the past three summers of writing. My mother, Beverly, has never lost faith in me over the years; from her, I learned feminism. She is the ground on which I stand.

Like most ecoactivist-scholars, I dedicate the merit of my writing to present and future generations in the hope that it will contribute toward building a just world, one more intimately attuned to life: to our interbeing with humans of diverse races, genders, nations, and with all species and elements of this one precious earth.

CREDITS

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