

In western cultures, we often hear stories about nature being associated with women for multiple reasons. Whether you've grown up hearing about Mother Nature, or seeing a man give a woman flowers, or even just have the understanding of psychological teachings about nature vs nurture, you will know that nature is a concept that is often associated with females and feminine energy. This concept is not always interpreted as weak and inferior, but subconsciously human beings see nature as inferior to humans and culture— so, we tend to put it at the bottom of the hierarchy we associate with nature and humans. This will impact views on women almost as much as it does on nature because of our direct connection to each other.

Although I personally don't enjoy the thought of women being subordinate in a patriarchal society, I have definitely experienced life in America to drive this very notion. Men get paid more to do the same job as a woman, men pay less for the same exact clothing that a woman would buy, and you'll rarely see a woman at the top of a fortune 500 company. It is hard to watch from a first hand perspective, but it is even harder to switch the thought pattern of your subconscious if this is all you were ever taught. Fortunately, there are ways to train your subconscious and to switch your perspective, so let me offer a different insight from *Exploring Ecofeminist Perspectives: An Introduction to Ecofeminist Thought*: "There are important connections between the domination and oppression of women and the domination and exploitation of nature and therefore women have a stake in ending the domination of nature" (Mies and Shiva 1993). By saying this, the authors want to get across the point that women know how it feels to be dominated, discriminated against, and exploited in the ways that nature has always been, not only in America but globally. Because of this, they have insightful discernment on ways to rebuild the ideologies of nature (and women) that western culture has deconstructed over the course of time.

Like previously mentioned, women nowadays are educated, full of grit, and extremely determined individuals from most standpoints. This is still not recognized in society today, and in order to embrace some form of gender equality, women's lives need to be recognized as 'meaningful and given legitimation in the culture. This would provide an immediate living social basis for alternative consciousness' (Companion to Environmental Philosophy). Just like nature, our culture nowadays doesn't really place a sense of importance on the functionality of women. We know that men are supposed to work, be the breadwinner, and support everyone else in the family. This leaves room for women to stay home and clean, which doesn't fully give a woman a

sense of purpose in most cases. By making it known that women are just as important in society as men, equality will be more achievable in the future. This same concept goes for nature, but as time goes on it feels like the value of this resource is depleting.