

A quick guide



Intersectional Lens: Understanding Ecofeminism in Climate Crisis

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What is Intersectionality ?

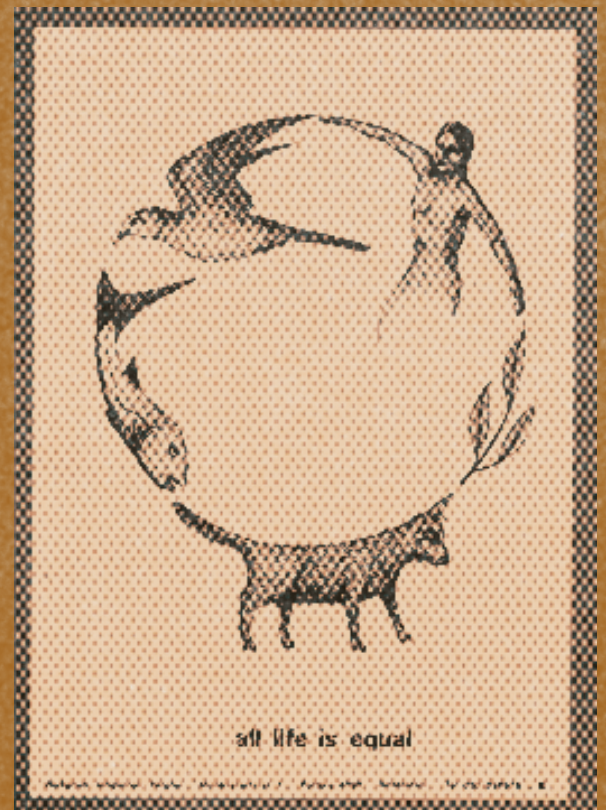
Intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, describes how overlapping identities (such as race, gender, class, and sexuality) intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

This **framework** helps us understand

environmental issues by showing

how **marginalized communities** often face

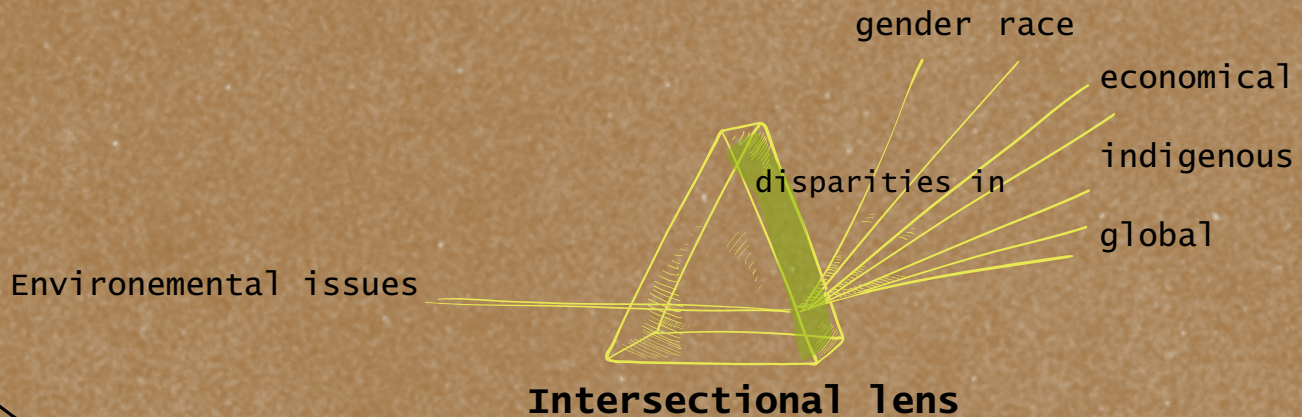
the brunt of **ecological damage**.



The Intersectional Lens in Practice

why does it matter?

Using an intersectional lens means looking at environmental issues with a nuanced perspective, addressing both ecological and social disparities.



Key Moments of Intersectionality Across Social Movements

1960s–1970s: Civil Rights Movement and Second-Wave Feminism

✦ The Black feminist critique of mainstream feminism emerges.

1989: Kimberlé Crenshaw Coins the Term "Intersectionality"

✦ Kimberlé Crenshaw publishes her seminal paper, *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex*.

1990s: Environmental Justice Movement

✦ Grassroots organizations in the U.S., such as those led by African American communities, fight against environmental racism.

2000s: Climate Justice and Global South Movements

✦ Global South activists emphasize the disproportionate effects of climate change on marginalized populations, especially women and Indigenous communities.

2013–2016: Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Intersectionality in Anti-Racism

✦ Founders Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi explicitly use intersectionality to center the experiences of queer, trans, and Black women within the BLM movement.

2017–Present: #MeToo Movement and Ecofeminism's Expansion

✦ The #MeToo movement broadens its scope to include marginalized voices, focusing on the unique vulnerabilities of women of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and economically disadvantaged groups.

What is Ecofeminism ?

Developing an intersectional lens allows us to understand ecofeminism and how it has always been relevant. The term "Ecofeminism" was first coined by Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1970s, combining ecological and feminist thinking to reveal parallels between the exploitation of nature and the oppression of marginalized groups, especially women. It's a movement for justice—for the planet and people.



intersectionality



environmentalism

 **Ecofeminism remains highly relevant in a climate crisis era.**

It highlights how marginalized communities, particularly in the Global South, often bear the brunt of climate impacts such as displacement, food insecurity, and loss of livelihoods. Ecofeminism calls for addressing systemic inequalities that drive both environmental destruction and social injustices. By integrating these principles below, it promotes inclusive solutions, such as empowering women in climate leadership and advocating for policies that balance ecological health with social equity.

Principles of Ecofeminism



Interconnectedness

Ecofeminism views all forms of life—human, animal, and ecological—as deeply interconnected. This principle recognizes the mutual dependence between ecosystems and social systems. By understanding these links, ecofeminism challenges anthropocentrism (human-centered thinking) and seeks to highlight the connections between environmental degradation and social inequalities.



Equity

Ecofeminism emphasizes fairness and justice, particularly for marginalized communities that often bear the brunt of environmental and social exploitation. It advocates for equitable resource distribution and decision-making power, including the perspectives of women, Indigenous groups, and other underrepresented populations.



Sustainability

The movement underscores the need for sustainable living practices that respect environmental boundaries and social well-being. This includes promoting regenerative agriculture, ethical consumption, and localized economies aligned with ecological limits.



Nurture Ethics

Rooted in feminist theories of care, ecofeminism prioritizes nurturing relationships with the earth and its inhabitants. It moves away from domination-based ethics toward models of cooperation, empathy, and responsibility. This principle links personal care (such as nurturing relationships) to global care (like protecting ecosystems).

Women of the Ecofeminist Discourse

Established Advocates

Vandana Shiva – Promoted Agricultural liberation & Green revolution

Maria Miles – Feminist Sociologist

Wangari Maathai – Kenyan environmentalist founded the Green Belt Movement

Greta Gaard – An academic, Gaard introduced the concept of queer ecofeminism

Carolyn Merchant – Environmental Historian

Young voices

Varshini Prakash – Executive Director of the Sunrise Movement

Greta Thunberg – A leading climate activist

Autumn Peltier – A water-rights advocate from the Anishinaabe community.

Leah Thomas – Founder of the Intersectional Environmentalist

Movements that have shaped the ecofeminist discourse



Chipko Movement
(India, 1970s)

- **Focus:** women's active role in protecting the environment by preventing deforestation.
- **Legacy:** Empowered rural women to protect their natural resources and livelihoods.



Green Belt Movement
(Kenya, 1977)

- **Focus:** Environmental justice through reforestation and women's empowerment.
- **Legacy:** Helped millions of women plant trees and promote sustainable development.



Standing Rock Movement
(USA, 2016)

- **Focus:** Indigenous women leading protests to protect water sources from the Dakota Access Pipeline.
- **Legacy:** Highlighted the intersectionality of environmental and Indigenous rights.



Call To Action as an Individual

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Ecofeminism thrives when individuals take thoughtful action, grounded in understanding interconnectedness and justice. By adopting ecofeminist principles daily, you contribute to a world that values equity, sustainability, and care for all beings. Small steps—like **supporting ethical brands**, **learning about environmental justice**, or **starting conversations in your community**—can lead to a powerful collective impact. Your choices matter; together, we can create a more just and compassionate world.

Resources

To explore and learn more

Books–

Ecofeminism, Second Edition by Carol J. Adams & Lori Gruen

As Long as Grass Grows by Dina Gilio-Whitaker

Nature, Culture, and the Sacred by Nina Simons

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Ecofeminism Isn't Just For Hippies (Slate)

What is Ecofeminism? (IE Med.)

bell hooks and Online Feminism by Hazel T. Biana

From Rachel Carson to Wangari Maathai—Meet the Women Who Ignited Environmental Movements (Ms. Magazine)

The Faces of Ecofeminism: Women Promoting Gender Equality and Climate Justice Worldwide (Global Citizen)

A Feminist Climate Renaissance for the Roaring 2020s (Asparagus Magazine)

Podcasts–

A Feminist Climate Renaissance

How to Save a Planet

Intersectional Environmentalist Podcast

Visual Learning–

How empowering women and girls can help stop global warming by Katharine Wilkinson

Ecofeminism Explained by Isaias Hernandez

The True Cost

Madeleine Jubilee Saito's Poetry Comics

Ana Mendieta

