

# Women nature and the sacred essay

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



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## **March of Progress**

Adams and Procter-Smith (295) would respond to Mark Henson’s March of Progress by stressing how humanity is allowing things such as technology, materialism, capitalism, and greed to take its life instead of humanity taking on life.

In the same manner, Adams and Procter-Smith asserted that the oppression of people because of class, sex, and race is interwoven with the oppression of animals. Because the consumption of animals as food is experienced separately from the production of the animals’ dead bodies, “ consumers do not see the treatment of workers and animals. It should be noted, however, that majority of the workers in food manufacturing plants consist of the poor and the minorities and that they are constantly being mistreated.

This can be related to Mark Henson’s painting in that people fail to see the destruction they cause in their efforts to achieve financial or economic gains.

Finally, it can also be said that while the lamb is symbolized in the scriptures as the sacrifice, it can be said that in Mark Henson's painting, we and all of nature become the sacrificed, that is, our well-being is put at stake for the sake of materialism, capitalism, and greed.

In response, not only would Adams and Procter-Smith advocate for humanity to take on life instead of being taken by life, but they would also call for solidarity with nature by giving nature the respect it's due and by taking the things we categorize as Other seriously.

On the other hand, Williams' (24) response would be a call to stop sinning against man and nature where she defines sin as the sin of defilement, that is, the manifestation of " human attacks upon creation so as to ravish, violate, and destroy creation: to exploit and control the production and reproduction capacities of nature, to destroy the unity in nature's placements," and " to obliterate the spirit of the created" (Williams 25).

Williams also described the defilement of black women, especially in the nineteenth century when they were considered objects that their masters owned, and whom the masters defiled through rape and by using them as breeders. In Mark Henson's painting, humanity and nature are defiled because of greed and materialism.

## **Women Healing Earth Conference**

I would invite women from India, Chile, and Zimbabwe, as I believe that they would provide a holistic representation of women in the world. They would come from three of the continents in the world, namely Asia, South America,

and Africa. They come from different cultures, backgrounds, and religions, yet it will be interesting to learn that they share the same struggles and difficulties in society and that they all struggle from discrimination or inequality, poverty, and poor health.

I would ask these representatives to describe the difficulties and problems faced by women in their countries. It is notable how women in these countries experience different kinds of difficulties, that is, middle and upper class women experience different types of problems compared to women in the lower class. As such, I would ask the women attending the conference to describe these struggles, how they are different among the classes, and what causes the differences.

I would also ask how their country is trying to mitigate these women-related issues, that is, what women's organizations are doing to further women's causes and what policies or laws their governments are enacting to make the lives of their female citizens better. I would also ask about how their culture and religion aid in or impede the development of women's status in society. As well, I would ask about their male population's perception of the women in their countries and what they're doing to influence this perception, whether to change it or to encourage it.

Finally, I would ask what they envision for the women in their country – what their hopes are for their fellow women and what steps they plan to take to make their vision come true. In addition, I would ask them how they expect other women in the world to respond to their causes, and in what particular

ways other women of the world can support them in order to help them achieve their goals.

Having these women talk about the struggles faced by women in their countries would be an eye-opener for most, if not all, of the students, especially since most of us live comfortable and easy lives that we tend to become oblivious of the predicament of people in other parts of the world. I also think that there is very little awareness with regards to the difficulties that people experience in these countries, especially since only the good things are portrayed in the media.

It would then be quite surprising to learn that women in these countries are still living in a seemingly uncivilized world under conditions that most people in the modern world would find unfathomable.

For example, it would be quite surprising to learn about how Indian women are suffering from malnutrition because the males in their households have the privilege of eating first while the women are obliged to eat last (“Indian Women”). They also suffer from poor health even as babies as male children are preferred over female children. As such, male babies are breastfed more and provided with better care than female babies. Women are also not allowed to go anywhere on their own; thus, putting a limitation on their visits to the doctor. As a result, India has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Aside from not getting the proper attention and nutrition that they need, they get married at an early age, which leads them to becoming pregnant even before their bodies are ready for child bearing. They also have problems with fixed marriages, dowries, and female

infanticides, and although their divorce rate is low, this does not mean that everything is well. Rather, it is because of the perception that divorce signifies a failure for women.

In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, agriculture is the main form of living. 80 percent of women live in the communal areas where they make up 61 percent of the farmers and provide 70% of the labor (Economic and Social Development Department). The work of women farmers is then important for ensuring food security. However, most of them are unpaid, and those in the rural areas work from sixteen to eighteen hours a day. They spend around 25% of their time on domestic activities and 49% on agricultural tasks (Economic and Social Development Department). However, although women obviously contribute more to Zimbabwe's agricultural industry, men are responsible for making decisions in male-led households even when they are absent while women are responsible for making decisions on farm management only in female-led households. As Ruether (Bakalyar) stated, women are linked to nature not only by bearing life but also by being responsible for fuel-gathering, falls and food.

Although things might seem better in Chile in that women are able to join the workforce, are able to get education, and where men support women joining the workforce (Lewis), problems still exist. For example, women are not well represented in the government (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights). Women also receive lower wages than men for the same job even when the women have a higher educational attainment. In addition, domestic violence is prevalent due to discrimination against women. As

reported by the National Service for women, one woman loses her life at the hands of her partner every week (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights). As indicated in Ruether's book *Women Healing Earth* (Bakalyar), there is a link between environmental degradation and social exploitation, which takes the forms of racial discrimination and poverty.

Although efforts are being made to alleviate women's sufferings in these countries, it's undeniable that real and complete change is still a long way off. Although women's organizations are actively working towards the achievement of equality between men and women and are striving to gain more rights for women, there have been instances where these organizations have been restricted in their actions. An example was when the leaders of Women for Zimbabwe Arise were arrested for holding a peaceful protest (The Observer). Chile even had its first female president, Michelle Bachelet. However, while she has done a lot to advance women's rights in Chile, there are fears that her efforts will not be continued by the succeeding regimes (Estrada).

As such, women from all over should not rest on their laurels as there's still much work to be done. I would then encourage other students to attend the conference by pointing out that women share the same predicament all over the world – the same sufferings, struggles, hopes, and dreams – and that we should all work together to make this a better place for women. In turn, this will also ensure that we will be able to provide a better place for our future children and grandchildren.

## **Conference on Women in the Third World**

In preparing and implementing a presentation about women in the third world, my teammates and I will gather and present information about the characteristics of third world countries and what difficulties these countries experience in general. We will then present information about the status of women in these countries – their lifestyles, living conditions, their cultures, beliefs, and religions. We will present this information about women in the different classes of society, with the assumption that the status of women in each class is different from each other. Next, we would present the factors that influence the status of women in these countries. For the women in the middle to upper classes, we will discuss what influences affect their beliefs, behaviors, and norms. We will discuss the same for the lower classes, along with the factors that cause their difficulties, and what their societies and governments are doing to aid their situation. Finally, we will make some recommendations on what can be done to make life easier for these women. In addition, they can make their lives better by sharing their time and energy for the service of others. Even as students, they can still help out by doing volunteer work or just by being kind to each other. Every kind gesture will surely make a difference.

Some of the simple ways I can help keep the environment clean is by recycling, cleaning up my trash, and being an advocate of such even it's only among my friends and relatives.

Another thing I can do to help oppressed women is to be more open-minded about diversity, that is, to be accepting and respectful of each other's differences. Also, I would do this not only from a distance, but by actually



doing something to make a difference. For example, I can increase my interaction with them, offer my help in any way I can, and try to learn more about their culture and traditions. Not only will these help enrich my learning and experience, but these will also hopefully make them feel better somehow.

## **My Footprint**

I was surprised by my quiz results, especially since I consider myself to live a pretty simple life. This makes me wonder about other people who live more extravagantly than I do. I can just imagine how much of the earth's resources they're using.

This quiz taught me that although I think that I already live a simple life, I can still simplify it even more. To do so, some of the lifestyle changes I can make are to buy food from natural food stores instead of at the supermarket. I'll also try to reduce the frequency of eating at restaurants and enjoy home-cooked meals instead. In addition, I'll try to take shorter showers and take the recyclable garbage to recycling centers.

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