

PART III

Gender and Development

For several decades, postcolonial feminists have examined the global economy and the gendered processes that shape the global labour market. They have explored the intersections of global and Indigenous feminist perspectives, searching for pathways to achieve environmental justice. In such works, it is important to contextualize the interactions between gender, capitalism, and globalization (Acker, 2004). The chapters of Part III combine concerns for gender equality and development, and they do so from three standpoints: Indigenous perspectives on environmental justice, postcolonial feminist perspectives on development studies, and the perspectives of migrant domestic workers seeking justice in an era of neoliberal globalization. The chapters in Part III reflect several major theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions in the field of gender and development studies. These chapters offer an intersectional and interdisciplinary analysis of how globalization affects the process of development and its implications for social well-being and gender equality. The authors make the case for feminist economics and Indigenous feminist perspectives as useful frameworks for addressing major contemporary global challenges. They show how these perspectives indicate viable strategies for dealing with inequalities between the Global South and North, the economic polarization

within each nation, the persistence of poverty, and the world's increasing vulnerability to financial crises, food shortages, and climate change.

In "Indigenous Feminism Perspectives on Environmental Justice," Deborah McGregor explores the emergence of a distinct theoretical, methodological, and practical approach to enabling both gender and environmental justice on the basis of Indigenous feminism. This chapter examines the concept of Indigenous feminism and shows why it is important for the world. We learn about the contributions that Indigenous feminism has made to the international dialogue on environmental and water security. The chapter also indicates the value of Indigenous non-binary gender expressions. It explains the ethical principle of responsibility in relation to water justice. One of the key issues McGregor deals with is the role of the United Nations in defending the rights of Indigenous peoples. She also provides insight into the role of Indigenous legal orders in achieving justice and the importance of Indigenous knowledge systems.

In "A Postcolonial Feminist Critique of Development Studies," Fariba Solati offers a historical context on the emergence of development and post-development studies. She clarifies why postcolonial feminist critics of development differ from other critiques of the development discourse. She also explores the links between

gender-related concerns and various approaches to development and considers applications of these approaches in development policies.

In “Precarious Lives, Fertile Resistance: Migrant Domestic Workers, Gender, Citizenship, and Well-Being,” Denise Spitzer offers us insight into the ways that gender, racialization, and migration

status are configured in the context of neoliberal globalization and the globalized labour market. The chapter examines how the precariousness of migrant lives is constructed and maintained. She investigates the rise of migrant advocacy and of collective resistance to the deleterious effects of neoliberal globalization.

REFERENCE

- Acker, J. (2004). Gender, capitalism and globalization. *Critical Sociology*, 30(1): 17–41.

CHAPTER 7



Indigenous Feminism Perspectives on Environmental Justice

Deborah McGregor

Learning Objectives

In this chapter you will:

- understand the concept of Indigenous feminism and why it is an important field of study;
- learn about the contributions Indigenous feminism makes to international dialogue on environmental/water security;
- learn about Indigenous non-binary gender expressions;
- consider the ethical principle of “responsibility” in relation to water justice;
- learn about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- examine the role of Indigenous legal orders in achieving justice
- develop insights into Indigenous knowledge systems.

Introduction

In this chapter, you will learn about the emergence of a distinct theoretical, methodological, and practical approach for accounting for gender in relation to environmental justice called Indigenous feminism. Indigenous feminism will be defined and outlined as an important field of study to advance the contributions, insights, rights, and responsibilities of Indigenous women. While the ideology of feminism has been in existence for decades, **Indigenous feminism** has only recently emerged. Joyce Green, an Indigenous scholar, writes that Indigenous feminism seeks to “raise

issues of colonialism, racism and sexism and unpleasant synergies between these three violations of human rights” (Green, 2007, p. 20). She further remarks that if Indigenous feminists do not voice concerns and issues, such issues will not be raised at all. Indigenous feminism provides a powerful critique of colonialism, race, and gendered power relations.

You will also learn about the field of **Indigenous knowledge systems (iks)**. Indigenous feminism emerged because academic disciplines failed to consider the unique and distinct context, history, and reality of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous feminism reveals that historical and ongoing

colonial structures and processes continue to hinder the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous feminism shows that not only is colonialism at work to dispossess Indigenous peoples, but also that racism, patriarchy, and sexism all intersect in insidious ways to discriminate, marginalize, and dehumanize women.

Indigenous knowledge systems emerged as a field of study to address the hegemony of Western knowledge. Western knowledges have contributed to the colonization and continued marginalization of Indigenous peoples, women in particular (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016). The importance of Indigenous knowledges is well recognized internationally and has been for decades in the environmental realm (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016). Much attention has been paid to the potential benefits of IKS in addressing local, regional, and global environmental challenges. Less attention has been paid to how knowledge is specific to “gender, age, sexuality, livelihoods, and experiences of colonization” (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016, p. 9). Gender differentiation and specialization means that men and women hold different knowledges of the environment/waters and furthermore have different priorities. “Indigenous women’s knowledge extends beyond the activities done by women and involves a system of inquiry that reveals Indigenous processes of observing and understanding and the protocols for being and participating in the world” (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016, p. 11).

In this chapter, the concept of Indigenous feminism will be applied to environmental and water justice. This is achieved by analyzing international Indigenous environmental/water declarations generated by Indigenous women. What characteristics define a unique approach to environmental and water justice? What actions have Indigenous women taken to address their distinct experiences and concerns? What do Indigenous women envision as their future? These are some of the questions that will be addressed.

Feminism

The central characteristic of **feminism** or feminisms (socialist, radical, liberal, ecofeminist) is that it takes gender seriously as an ideological, theoretical, and methodological process intended to expose, analyze, and address the subordination of women in patriarchal societies. What is interesting about feminism, unlike other ideologies and theories, is the commitment to transformation and practice to address the subordination of women. Feminism does not just study the context, condition, and experience of women; it also seeks to address the conditions. Feminism is a highly recognizable term/concept (in Western countries, at least) because it supported and was central to a social movement. Few ideologies have managed to transcend academia and form part of the public consciousness.

Feminism remains to a certain extent “white centered, despite the active involvement of women of colour in the second and third wave feminist movement” (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010, p. 2). Mainstream feminism remains limited in its capacity to address the unique concerns of Indigenous women relating to colonialism (both historical and ongoing). Indigenous feminism has emerged as distinct from the feminist discourse of “women of color and postcolonial feminism” (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010, p. 1).

Indigenous/Aboriginal Feminism

Until recently, very little had been written specifically about Indigenous feminism (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010). The relevance of Indigenous feminism in Indigenous societies has been questioned in some circles as it is argued that women enjoyed far more power, respect, and autonomy than their European counterparts (Green, 2007). The reality is that colonization has “involved their removal from positions of power, the replacement of gender roles with Western patriarchal practices and exertion

of colonial control over Indigenous communities through the management of women's bodies and sexual violence" (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010, p. 1). Further, the contemporary lived reality of Indigenous women is primarily that of racist, colonial, and patriarchal forms of oppression evidenced in both settler society and Indigenous societies. This is in part due to the forced imposition of colonial patriarchy in Indigenous societies and the subsequent internalization of such ideologies. Indigenous women are doubly subjugated because they experience oppression in dominant society and often in their own. This was evident in the public inquiry on **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**, which recognized that Indigenous women experience far more violence historically and currently than other women (Ambler, 2014).

Indeed, a synergy exists between feminism as an ideology and the social justice movement and Indigenous women, yet it is not uncritically embraced. Critics of Indigenous feminists and feminism balk at gendered analysis of Indigenous societies, especially of men and their role in the oppression of women. As such, Indigenous feminism does not shy away from scrutiny of Indigenous society to reveal internal oppression of women. Indigenous feminism is critical and important for revealing the intersection of gender, race, sex, colonialism, and power. Indigenous feminism embraces the theoretical as well as the practical and lived experience. Indigenous feminism has an activist orientation, with the goal of transforming society to counter "social erasure and marginalisation" of Indigenous women (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010, p. 5). "Aboriginal feminism seeks an Aboriginal liberation that includes women and not just the conforming woman, but also the marginal and excluded, and especially the women who have been excluded from their communities by virtue of legislation and socio-historical forces" (Green, 2007, p. 25).

Indigenous feminism, applying a gendered analysis, reveals violence of all kinds, at various

levels and scales, in processes of historical and contemporary colonialism. If gender was an organizing principle to colonize societies of Indigenous peoples, to undermine Indigenous women, their political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual role, then decolonization must also include a gendered aspect (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016). Indigenous feminist analysis and activism "must aim to understand the changing circumstances, the commonalities, and the specifics of Indigenous women across time and space; it must seek ultimately to attain social justice not only along gender lines but also along those of race, class and sexuality" (Huhndorf & Suzack, 2010, p. 3).

It is also critical to point out that gender is not limited to discussion about women's experience, particularly in contrast to that of men. More nuanced understanding and analysis is required to move beyond understanding gender (men/women) in strictly binary terms. **Heteropatriarchy** is an ideology of the dominant world order and has been detrimental to Indigenous peoples but particularly detrimental to women and LGBTQA2s+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Asexual, Two-Spirited; Women's Earth Alliance (WEA) and Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN), 2014). Heteropatriarchy is defined as "[S]ystems and practices that normalize and centre male dominance; male-female gender binaries; and heterosexual identities, family units, and sexual expressions. This system is manifested in economic, material, and social disadvantages for those whose gender or sexual identity does not align with heteropatriarchy" (Williams, Fletcher, Hanson, Neapole, & Pollack, 2018, pp. 5–6).

Indigenous non-binary gender expression is the term Indigenous feminist scholar Sarah Hunt utilizes to disrupt the typically binary lens used to understand the intersection between race, colonialism, and heteropatriarchy (Hunt, 2015). "Colonial laws and ideologies have entailed the imposition of gendered and racialized categories, which have

been used to ensure fewer and fewer Natives over time” (Hunt, 2015, p. 105). Colonialism acted to erase the realities of two-spirit people and non-gender-conforming people. “Gendered analyses of power in Indigenous communities had tended to focus on men and women, reinforcing the gender binary” (Hunt, 2015, p. 104). Hunt further argues that a focus on a binary-gendered analysis misses the mark in terms of understanding the impact of colonialism and patriarchy on Indigenous communities. Hunt argues that the development of an Indigenous gender-based analysis, beyond the binary, is required to account for the experience of all members of Indigenous societies (Hunt, 2015).

Anti-colonial Analysis and Indigenous Feminism

Anti-colonial scholarship addresses and critiques European colonialism’s historical distortion of Indigenous peoples’ political, economic, cultural, social, and spiritual lives and experiences (Johnson, Cant, Howitt, & Peters, 2007). Anti-colonial theory aims to demonstrate how Western knowledge has sought to undermine alternative ways of knowing and living in the world and the devastating consequences of such actions. As a theoretical orientation, postcolonialism deconstructs and analyzes how Eurocentric ideologies continue to marginalize Indigenous political ambitions, economic livelihoods, cultural values, and relationships with the land (Louis, 2007). Anti-colonial scholarship through such critiques generates space for other ways of being and knowing the world and shows how “colonialism is continually being enacted through status-quo approaches to sustainable development policy that are subservient to extractive modes of development” and “directly challenges the dominant ‘business as usual’ way of doing things” (Williams et al., 2018, p. 11). In *Women and climate change impacts and action in Canada: Feminist, Indigenous, and intersectional*

perspectives (2018), **anti-colonialism** is taken up in the following ways to analyze the current climate change agenda implications for women:

- Works with reclaiming Indigenous and local knowledge in ways that transform the economic, cultural, and political systems which are the root causes of climate change;
- Recognizes that colonial-capitalist accumulation relies on axes of exploitation that include racial, gendered, hetero-normative, other socially constructed norms and identities, and nation state lines. It applies an intersectional analysis to problematize colonial and socially constructed categories, shedding light on how these are reinforced or challenged through climate change impacts and action; and
- Recognizes the unique contributions of Indigenous and aligned Western feminisms in challenging colonial-capitalist accumulation and heteropatriarchy (Williams et al., 2018, p. 11).

Anti-colonial analysis and Indigenous feminism have their own theorists, practices, and spheres of engagement and generate space for addressing environmental/water (in)justice from a gendered lens (in this chapter, that of women). These frames of analysis are evident and asserted by Indigenous women around the world, as seen in the stated declarations of Indigenous women at various fora. Indigenous women have distinct contributions to make to the international dialogue on the global environmental crisis, in particular environmental/water justice issues including climate change. The next section examines three international declarations prepared by Indigenous women over the past two decades: the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women (1995); the Mandaluyong Declaration (2010); and the Lima Declaration (2013). These declarations exemplify anti-colonial and feminist articulations of how women and the people (and non-humans) they care for are affected by a continuing colonial

agenda, manifested in capitalism, globalization, and trade liberalization.

Case Studies in Applying Anti-colonial and Indigenous Feminism

Indigenous women in the Global South and North are linked through coming together at various international environmental and sustainable development gatherings to collectively assert their own voices and perspectives. Indigenous women, often in opposition to the dominant environmental/sustainable development paradigm, not only offer invaluable and necessary critiques but also provide a plan of action for a more just future. Three case studies form the basis of the next section: the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women; the Mandaluyong Declaration of the Global Conference on Indigenous Women, Climate Change and REDD Plus; and the Lima Declaration: World Conference of Indigenous Women: Progress and Challenges Regarding the Future We Want.

The Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women (1995)

Indigenous women involved in the development of the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, convened as part of the fourth World Conference on Women, provided a powerful anti-colonial critique of what is referred to as “recolonization.”

“The ‘New World Order’ which is engineered by those who have abused and raped Mother Earth, colonized, marginalized, and discriminated against us, is being imposed on us viciously. This is recolonization coming under the name of globalization and trade liberalization” (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, 1, article 6).

We, the women of the original peoples of the world have struggled actively to defend our rights to self-determination and to our

territories which have been invaded and colonized by powerful nations and interests. We have been and are continuing to suffer from multiple oppressions; as Indigenous peoples, as citizens of colonized and neo-colonial countries, as women, and as members of the poorer classes of society. In spite of this, we have been and continue to protect, transmit, and develop our Indigenous cosmovision, our science and technologies, our arts and culture, and our Indigenous socio-political economic systems, *which are in harmony with the natural laws of Mother Earth*. We still retain the *ethical and esthetic values, the knowledge and philosophy, the spirituality, which conserves and nurtures Mother Earth*. We are persisting in our struggles for self-determination and for our rights to our territories. This has been shown in our tenacity and capacity to withstand and survive the colonization happening in our lands in the last 500 years (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, 1, article 5; italics mine).

The women pointed out that the broader international environmental meetings failed to critique the “new world order,” stating:

This poverty is caused by the same powerful nations and interests who have colonized us and are continuing to recolonize, homogenize, and impose their economic growth development model and monocultures on us. It does not present a coherent analysis of why is it that the goals of “equality, development, and peace” becomes more elusive to women each day in spite of three UN conferences on women since 1975 (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, 2, article 11).

The non-economic activities of Indigenous women have been ignored and rendered invisible, although these sustain the existence

of Indigenous peoples. Our dispossession from our territorial land and water base, upon which our existence and identity depends, must be addressed as a key problem (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, 2, article 7).

The Beijing Declaration offers 30 proposals and demands that signify a rejection of the new world economic order and the move to a world based on responsibility and caring for the earth to sustain all life. Indigenous feminism sentiments (although not termed in that way by the Indigenous women at the gathering) in the Beijing Declaration as distinct impacts on women are outlined throughout. Asserting Indigenous feminism as a form of critique of how women are treated in the international environmental realm also includes an assertion of Indigenous world view, legal orders, philosophies, and knowledges as part of a sustainable path forward. For example, in relation to environment/water, article 22 states that Indigenous peoples will decide what “to do with our lands and territories and to develop it an integrated, sustainable way, according to our cosmovision” (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, p. 3). The first article in the declaration outlines the responsibility to care for the earth and points to the knowledge, philosophy, spirituality, and natural laws that nurture the earth. However, Indigenous lifeways are not uncritically accepted, and it is clear that those aspects that are discriminatory and disadvantage women in any way should be abolished. This is similar to the critique that Indigenous feminists make of Indigenous societies, particularly the way that colonialism has been internalized in many communities. For example, article 36 advocates that Indigenous customary laws and justice systems that are supportive of women be recognized and reinforced and those that are not be eradicated (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995, p. 4). The Beijing Declaration centres the

concerns and calls to action of Indigenous women, pointing to human rights violations and violence against Indigenous women. It outlines a set of proposals including the right to self-determination (in all aspects: health, education, intellectual and cultural heritage, and, of critical importance here, elevating the participation of Indigenous women at every level and scale in a dialogue that affects the lives, livelihood, and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples).

The Mandaluyong Declaration (2010)

The Mandaluyong Declaration of the Global Conference on Indigenous Women, Climate Change and REDD Plus, held in Legend Villas, Philippines, in 2010, conveys similar sentiments to the Beijing Declaration of 15 years earlier. Eighty women, from 60 Indigenous Nations and 29 countries, gathered to tell their own stories of how they are differently affected by the impacts of climate change on the basis of gender. The anti-colonial critique is evident in the declaration, the women clearly critical of the world economic order.

While we have least contributed to the problem of climate change, we have to carry the burdens of adapting to its adverse impacts. This is because of the unwillingness of rich, industrialized countries to change their unsustainable production and consumption patterns and pay their environmental debt for causing this ecological disaster. Modernity and capitalist development which is based on the use of fossil fuels and which promotes unsustainable and excessive production and consumption of unnecessary goods and services, individualism, patriarchy, and incessant profit-seeking have caused climate change (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, para. 1).

The delegates all point to the lived experience Indigenous peoples and in particular how women

are affected by climate change. They point to the underlying causes of climate change (modernity and capitalist development that is extractive and destructive). Climate change has contributed to the undermining of traditional livelihoods, identity, and the well-being of the people, unprecedented disasters, loss of land and communities, and food and water insecurity, all resulting in “hunger, disease and misery” (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, para. 3). The combined impacts of climate change point to a loss of land and lives, which has political and legal implications for the exercise of sovereignty.

Women are particularly compromised because of their caregiving role in families and communities: as “main water providers, we have to search and fight for access to the few remaining water resources” (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, para. 5). The declaration adds:

Complicating these are the situations of multiple discrimination based on gender and ethnic identity. These are manifested in the lack of gender and culturally sensitive basic social services such as education and health and our lack of access to basic utility services such as water and energy. The systematic discrimination and non-recognition of our sustainable resource management and customary governance systems and their access, control and ownership over their lands, territories and resources persists (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010).

In terms of Indigenous knowledge systems, the declaration points out that the norms, laws, knowledge, and values that guide sustainable resource governance are weakened by climate change. Yet, the women point out:

We shared how we are addressing the issues of food, water and energy insecurity. How we are sustaining and transmitting our traditional

knowledge to the younger generations. How we are continuing our traditional land, water and forest resources management systems. How we are exerting our best to ensure the overall health and well being of our families and communities. Our efforts to recover, strengthen, use, and adapt our traditional knowledge and our ecosystems to climate change and to transmit these to our youth are bearing some good results. . . . We shared our Indigenous ways of predicting and coping with climate change-related disasters and we hope to further strengthen these knowledge and practices (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, p. 3).

And point out that “we continue to use and adapt our traditional knowledge and land, water, forest and natural resource management systems to climate change” (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, p. v3) and stress the importance of Indigenous knowledge systems as key to the future: “Our spirituality which links humans and nature, the seen and the unseen, the past, present, and future, and the living and non-living has been and remains as the foundation of our sustainable resources management and use. We believe if we continue to live by our values and still use our sustainable systems and practices for meeting our basic needs, we can adapt better to climate change” (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, p. 4).

The delegates who generated the Mandaluyong Declaration advocate for the recognition and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a way to help protect peoples from the risks associated with REDD Plus. Similar to the Beijing Declaration, the Mandaluyong Declaration outlines priority work areas and actions, including:

- Awareness raising, skills training workshops, information dissemination.
- Gender analysis of policies and approaches for mitigation and adaptation.

- Skills training workshops that are gender-sensitive, including the sharing of knowledge with grassroots women's organizations.

Indigenous women call for research on climate change impacts on Indigenous women and on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Ideally, such research would be conducted by Indigenous women themselves in the following areas:

- Food security and climate impacts and roles of women.
- Traditional knowledge and community forest management and the roles of Indigenous women.
- Traditional livelihoods of Indigenous women and climate change.
- Gender dimensions of adaptation and mitigation policies and measures.

Indigenous women call for enhancement of traditional practices and systems and more specifically to “reinforce Indigenous women’s traditional knowledge on mitigation and adaptation and facilitate the transfer of this knowledge to the younger generations” (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, article 3.4).

Indigenous women call for increased political participation and policy advocacy: “Indigenous women in political and decision making bodies and processes and in the formation of the climate agenda” at all levels and scales (global, national, regional and local), essentially enabling women to speak and advocate for themselves (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, article 5.2).

Indigenous women advocate for a human rights-based approach to dealing with climate change, arguing in favour of “a holistic framework for a gender-sensitive, ecosystem, human rights-based and knowledge-based approach to climate adaptation and mitigation efforts (Mandaluyong Declaration, 2010, p. 7). Although the Mandaluyong Declaration was generated by Indigenous women, the space is open for going beyond

non-binary gender expressions by the inclusion of “gender-based analysis” and “sensitivity.”

The Lima Declaration (2013)

The Lima Declaration: World Conference of Indigenous women: Progress and Challenges Regarding the Future We Want advocates for the principle “Nothing about us, without us” and further declares, “Everything about us, with us.” The women call for “the direct, full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples; including the vital role of Indigenous women in all matters related to our human rights, political status, and wellbeing” (Lima Declaration, 2013, para. 1). In relation to the environment:

We, Indigenous women, affirm our responsibility to protect the Earth, our Mother. Indigenous women experience the same pain and impacts from the physical abuse and excessive exploitation of the natural world, of which we are an integral part. We will defend our lands, waters, territories and resources, which are the source of our survival, with our lives.

Protection of Mother Earth is a historic, sacred and continuing responsibility of the world's Indigenous Peoples, as the ancestral guardians of the Earth's lands, waters, oceans, ice, mountains and forests. These have sustained our distinct cultures, spirituality, traditional economies, social structures, institutions, and political relations from immemorial times. Indigenous women play a primary role in safeguarding and sustaining Mother Earth and her cycles (Lima Declaration, 2013, paras. 4 & 5).

As in the Beijing and Mandaluyong declarations, the women advocate for self-determination through the UNDRIP and human rights instruments. They point out that it is Indigenous peoples who bear the burden of social and environmental harms. Women and girls bear particularly

Notable Indigenous Feminism Scholars

Here are just a few notable Indigenous feminism scholars from around the world:

- Sarah Hunt (Kwagiulth (Kwakwaka'wakw) is an excellent community-based scholar and author of *Decolonizing rape culture*. Her writing and research focuses on justice, gender, self-determination, and the spatiality of Indigenous law. Her writing and research emerge within the networks of community relations that have fostered her analysis as a community-based researcher, with a particular focus on issues facing women, girls, and two-spirit people. See her TED Talk on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmJZP2liqKI>).
- Zoe Todd (Métis/otipemisiw) is from Amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton), Alberta, Canada. She writes about fish, art, Métis legal traditions, the Anthropocene, extinction, and decolonization in urban and prairie contexts. She is assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University. See her work in 2016: An Indigenous feminist's take on the ontological turn: "Ontology" is just another word for colonialism, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29(1), 4–22.
- Kim Anderson (Métis) is associate professor and Canada research chair in Indigenous relations, Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition, University of Guelph. Her current research is focused on exploring how "all our relations" are developed and maintained in urban environments.
- Rigoberta Menchú Tum (K'iche') is a political and human rights activist from Guatemala. She is an activist and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. She has since created the Indian-led political movement Winaq (Mayan: "The Wholeness of the Human Being"). See her book *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (1983) and interview on human rights (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru7Hy9FDQS4>).
- Aileen Moreton-Robinson (a Goenpul woman of the Quandamooka people [Moreton Bay, Queensland]) is distinguished professor of Indigenous Research at Queensland University of Technology. She is an Indigenous feminist, author, and activist for Indigenous rights. See her work *Talkin' up to the white woman: Indigenous women and feminism*, (2002), Brisbane, Australia: University of Queensland Press.
- Rauna Kuokkanen (Sápmi) is professor, Arctic Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Science, University of Lapland. Her research interests and writing concern Indigenous women in the north, gender and politics, self-determination, Indigenous feminist theory, Indigenous women's rights and Arctic governance, and legal and political traditions. Her newest work is titled *Restructuring relations: Indigenous self-determination, governance and gender*, published by Oxford University Press in 2018.

insidious harms, including environmental violence and human rights violations.

The anti-colonial critique is evident when the women point out that the environmental crisis

faced by all is due to the rise of the "exploitive model of economic growth and development" (Lima Declaration, 2013, para. 9) and the nations' failure to uphold Indigenous and human rights.

They state that nations must: “recognize and respect our rights to land, territories and resources as enshrined in Indigenous customary law, the UNDRIP, and other international human rights instruments” (Lima Declaration, 2013, para. 10).

Finally, we affirm that Indigenous women have knowledge, wisdom, and practical experience, which has sustained human societies over generations. We, as mothers, life givers, culture bearers, and economic providers, nurture the linkages across generations and are the active sources of continuity and positive change (Lima Declaration, 2013, para. 15).

The Indigenous feminist and Indigenous knowledge perspectives are evident in that the declaration affirms that women have knowledge and

expertise that can contribute to the well-being of the earth and peoples. The women bring forward the distinct concerns, issues, and experience of Indigenous women, in addition to the unique contributions women make to addressing challenges at every scale. As in the other declarations, Indigenous sovereignty is asserted and understood as central to a sustainable future.

Conclusion

Indigenous women can offer distinct contributions to combatting the current environmental crisis based on their responsibilities and knowledge systems that have supported Indigenous societies for millennia. For decades, Indigenous women from across the globe have gathered to share their experiences, concerns, and knowledges and

Call to Action

Support the goals and aspirations of Indigenous women outlined in the declarations noted in the chapter. There are many ways in which this can be done in everyday practice; just some are mentioned here. Recognize that whatever happens to women happens to the earth and whatever happens to the earth happens to women. Support Indigenous women in their efforts to protect the environment whenever you can. Educate yourself: attend and participate in presentations, workshops, lectures given by Indigenous women in your community or school. Also, educate others: for example, explain to friends, family, and colleagues the importance of self-determination of Indigenous peoples through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Support non-binary people and facilitate their voices and experiences whenever possible. Support land/water-based education to reconnect with Mother Earth. If your school or community does not provide it, then demand it. You can also listen to the voices of women online. There are many resources that can be found on the Internet (videos, presentations) of women offering their own voice. When they arise, support women during times of disaster or emergencies by fundraising. Finally, follow the Lima Declaration principle: “Nothing about us, without us.” This means, no decision, discussion, dialogue, or conversation about Indigenous women should occur unless Indigenous women are equal participants with a strong voice. If you do not see Indigenous women in a meeting/workshop/conference yet people are talking about issues related to and affecting Indigenous women, then call participants out and demand for the participation of Indigenous women in the discussion.

to advocate for a sustainable future. The Beijing, Mandaluyong, and Lima declarations by Indigenous women are anti-colonial in their character as they uncover the underlying reasons for ongoing environmental recolonization, dispossession, and violence. However, each declaration also lays out future priorities and plans.

It should be noted that there is a significant gap in recognizing gender beyond the man/women binary, and work needs to be done to ensure that Indigenous non-binary gender expressions are accounted for.

Tying It Together

This chapter's main purpose was to point out that Indigenous women face unique challenges that are tied to the fate of the earth. The distinct concerns of women can be addressed by Indigenous feminism. This chapter also informs you

that gender must be considered more broadly and include non-binary persons. While gender analysis has been and continues to be discussed in detail in many settings, there remain many international, national, and local fora where this is unfortunately not the case. This is especially true in regard to both Indigenous feminism and climate change policy development.

An anti-colonial analysis reveals the underlying ideologies that have resulted in the global environmental crisis. An Indigenous feminist analysis reveals that there are considerations unique to Indigenous women that UNDRIP and other human rights instruments hold as key to addressing. Indigenous women have not been silent; they have voiced their concerns and outlined calls to action and plans of action, such as those put forward in the Mandaluyong Declaration, that have not been heeded. The challenge for all of us is to listen and to act on the knowledge Indigenous women share.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. There has been Indigenous activism and resistance for countless generations, expressed in many international Indigenous declarations. Why must women assert their own voice? What is missing if women are not active or present?
2. All three declarations speak to the disproportionate violence and discrimination that Indigenous women face in every aspect of life. Why do you think this situation exists? Why has it been so easy to ignore the experience and voice of women?
3. Anti-colonial discourse reveals the destructive impacts of capitalism and colonialism on the lives of Indigenous peoples, particularly Indigenous women. What factors make women more vulnerable to the negative impacts of environmental destruction?
4. Why do you believe non-binary expressions of gender have not been adequately recognized in many international environmental fora?
5. Describe the "future" that Indigenous women have called for over the past decades.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

Anderson, Kim. (2016). *A recognition of being: Reconstructing Native womanhood* (2nd edn). Toronto, ON: Canadian Women's Press.

This book offers a critical approach to Indigenous feminism and two-spirited theory, examining Indigenous women's efforts at resistance to heteropatriarchy.

Kermoal, Nathalie, & Altamirano-Jimenez, Isabel. (2016). *Living on the land: Indigenous women's understanding of place*. Edmonton, AB: University of Athabasca Press.

This edited volume offers insights into the nature and scope of Indigenous women's environmental knowledge. It also provides a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to research involving Indigenous women.

Green, Joyce (Ed.). (2017). *Making space for Indigenous feminism*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

This book is an edited volume with contributions from Indigenous feminists and allies focused on

the topics of violence against women, recovery of Indigenous self-determination, racism, misogyny, and decolonization.

Suzack, Cheryl, Huhndorf, Shari, Perreault, Jeanne, & Barman, Jean (Eds.). (2010). *Indigenous women and feminism: Politics, activism, culture*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.

This book contains a collection of essays examining the historical roles of Indigenous women, their intellectual and activist work, and the relevance of contemporary literature, art, and performance for an emerging Indigenous feminism.

MULTIMEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Native Women's Association of Canada, Finding your voice, environmental toolkit for Aboriginal women (2009)

https://www.nwmo.ca/~media/Site/Files/PDFs/2015/11/04/17/34/1705_findingyour-voice-environmentaltoolkitforaboriginal-women.ashx?la=en

This toolkit was designed to empower, assist, and engage Aboriginal women when dealing with environmental issues affecting their communities. It is meant to provide relevant information and provide Aboriginal women with the tools they may need to ensure that their issues are being addressed and their perspectives are being heard when they are looking to effectively participate in any environmental decision-making process.

Violence on the land, violence on our bodies: Building an Indigenous response to environmental violence (2014)

<http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf>

This toolkit is the result of collaboration between the Women's Earth Alliance (WEA) and the Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN), centring on the

experiences and resistance efforts of Indigenous women and young people in order to expose and curtail the impacts of extractive industries on their communities and lands. WEA invests in training and supporting grassroots women to drive solutions to our most pressing ecological concerns—water, food, land, and climate. NYSHN is a network by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice in the United States and Canada.

Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), Water rights toolkit (2014)

<http://www.onwa.ca/upload/documents/water-commission-toolkit-final.pdf>

This toolkit was designed to empower, support, and engage Aboriginal women when dealing with water rights issues in their communities. It was created by the Ontario Indigenous Women's Water Commission (oiwcc), which strives to reassert and promote the traditional and inherent roles of Indigenous women as the caretakers of the waters by engaging in traditional practices, participating in education and planning on water issues, and forming relationships among Indigenous women.

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