MASTERARBEIT | MASTER'S THESIS

Titel | Title

Crimes against nature
The climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour - challenging the anthropocentric worldview

verfasst von | submitted by

Amy Nina Simone Winandy BA

angestrebter akademischer Grad | in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien | Vienna, 2024

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Abstract

This thesis explores the intersection of environmental degradation, queer theory, and feminist frameworks, examining how phenomena such as the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour can be understood as crimes against nature. Drawing on philosophical perspectives from thinkers such as Marx, Foucault, and Butler, as well as ecofeminist and queer theoretical frameworks, this work critiques the anthropocentric, patriarchal, and capitalist systems that underpin environmental exploitation and social inequalities. By analysing the role of morality, responsibility, and power structures, the research highlights how marginalised groups, including women and queer individuals, are disproportionately affected by both ecological destruction and social marginalisation. Central to the analysis are the concept of uBuntu and the writings of Karen Barad, which challenge stern individualism and anthropocentrism by advocating for a holistic, interconnected view of humanity's relationship with nature and each other. Ultimately, this thesis advocates for a reconceptualisation of ethical and political approaches to both environmental conservation and social inclusion, moving beyond binary classifications and toward a more inclusive, sustainable framework for justice and equality.

Abstrakt

Diese Arbeit erforscht die Überschneidung von Umweltzerstörung, Queer-Theorie und feministischem Rahmenwerk und untersucht, wie Phänomene wie die Klimakrise und die Diskriminierung von queerem Verhalten als Verbrechen gegen die Natur verstanden werden können. Die Arbeit stützt sich auf philosophische Perspektiven von Denkern wie Marx, Foucault und Butler sowie auf ökofeministische und queere theoretische Rahmenwerke und kritisiert die anthropozentrischen, patriarchalischen und kapitalistischen Systeme, die der Umweltausbeutung und den sozialen Ungleichheiten zugrunde liegen. Durch die Analyse der Rolle von Moral, Verantwortung und Machtstrukturen wird deutlich, wie marginalisierte Gruppen, darunter Frauen und queere Menschen, unverhältnismäßig stark von Umweltzerstörung und sozialer Marginalisierung betroffen sind. Im Mittelpunkt der Analyse stehen das Konzept von uBuntu und die Schriften von Karen Barad, die den westlichen Individualismus und Anthropozentrismus in Frage stellen, indem sie für eine ganzheitliche, vernetzte Sicht der Beziehung der Menschen zur Natur und zueinander eintreten. Letztlich plädiert diese Arbeit für eine Neukonzeption von ethischen und politischen Ansätzen zum Umweltschutz und zur sozialen Inklusion, die über binäre Klassifizierungen hinausgehen und einen inklusiveren, nachhaltigeren Rahmen für Gerechtigkeit und Gleichheit schaffen.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The calendar indicates the year 2024. In early April, the temperature in Vienna hovered around 26 degrees. Unfortunately, this period also saw devastating floods in Madrid. Italy, too, has experienced a significant increase in temperature. Besides the rise in temperature and floods, the far-right ideology is making inroads across Europe and the world. Overpowering the world. Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, and Mark Zuckerberg, the technological revolution tied to wealthy men and expecting them to save the world, and save the climate crisis with technologies (Daggett, 2018). Men, "Saving" nature. A form of control, a push further in capitalism, a step forward from patriarchy. This academic study looks at the climate crisis as not only an environmental challenge but as a deeply gendered and socio-political problem interwoven with systems of power, inequality and marginalisation. As the destruction of nature can be seen as a crime (Higgins, 2012), the discrimination and radicalisation against queer behaviour and people is closely tied to this opposition against the natural and feminine (Salleh, 2017). The anthropocentric worldview, the rise or downfall of mankind.

Fundamentally, the climate crisis is underpinned by unsustainable socio-economic structures that have their roots in global capitalism and are reinforced by patriarchal ideologies, ideologies like the belief that men should be strong, assertive, and the primary breadwinners, while women should be nurturing, passive, and responsible for domestic duties (Kimmel, 2018). These structures prioritise profit maximisation and the exploitation of resources, leading to environmental degradation, ecological destruction and socio-economic inequalities (Foster, 2002).

While the Earth's climate naturally fluctuates, the current rate of change is unprecedented and attributed to human actions releasing greenhouse gases (Nasa, 2010). 65% of all greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, coming mainly from burning fossil fuels and industrial processes (Friedlingstein et al., 2022). After carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), resulting from agriculture and waste, is the most important greenhouse gas contributing to human-induced climate change, (Saunois et al., 2016). The blatant extraction of the earth's resources to fuel human appetite has normalised the exploitation and cheapening of natural resources (Winkel, 2024).

Structures that are centred around the anthropocentric worldview. This worldview is closely linked to power dynamics, such as petro-masculinity, and eco-modernism; it prioritises

human domination over nature, often at the expense of the environment and non cis-white males. This perspective, which emphasises human supremacy, fueled colonial and capitalist endeavours that justified resource exploitation. Petro-masculinity, a term coined by Cara Daggett (2018), highlights how certain masculine identities are reinforced by fossil fuel consumption, intertwining environmental degradation with gender and racial anxieties. Climate change denial, especially among conservative white males, is tied to preserving social hierarchies that benefit these groups. This defensive behaviour is often a reaction to the shifting gender and racial dynamics, leading to scapegoating and violence against marginalised groups such as discrimination against queer identities.

Looking at other current phenomena like the discrimination against queer behaviour, society is in the realm of the definition of deviance. As sociologist Howard Becker describes in his book "Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance" (1963) deviance is not inherent to an action itself, but rather a label applied by those in power. While the book doesn't directly address queer issues, the strong sociological framework it provides can be used to understand how deviating from norms around sexuality can lead to sanctions. Society establishes norms around appropriate behaviour, including expectations for relationships and family structures such as the heteronormative model where a man and a woman marry, have children, and establish a nuclear family (Hochschild, 2012).

Queer identities often challenge these norms. Queer in a sexuality sense but also queer as in *different* as in *challenging the norm*. When people identify as queer, they can be labelled as deviant. Sanctions are punishments or negative consequences for violating norms. These can range from social exclusion and disapproval to legal repercussions or for this thesis discrimination (Becker, 1963).

Discrimination against queer behaviour is deeply rooted in societal structures and norms and is perpetuated by the historical legacy of heteronormativity, homophobia and transphobia. The hate against femininity is omnipresent. This omnipresence of hate against femininity is the prevalence of gender-based violence and online misogyny. Femininity, in various forms, is often met with hostility, ridicule, and violence (Hoskin, 2020).

One concrete example of how discrimination against queer behaviour is embedded in societal structures is the historical denial of marriage rights to same-sex couples. For decades, the legal system in many countries upheld heteronormative definitions of marriage, which explicitly excluded same-sex partners. This legal exclusion was a direct reflection of

societal norms that privileged heterosexual relationships and deemed them the only acceptable form of partnership (Mogul et al., 2011).

This discrimination is rooted in patriarchal ideologies and binary notions of gender and sexuality and manifests itself in many areas of life, including employment, education, healthcare and housing. Such discrimination not only violates the basic human rights of queer people, but also intersects with broader systems of oppression, including racism, sexism and classism, and exacerbates the marginalisation of queer communities, particularly those who find themselves at the intersections of multiple marginalised identities (Van der Toorn et al., 2020).

From a socio-cultural perspective, the stigmatisation of queer behaviour is perpetuated by cultural narratives, religious teachings and media representations that pathologise or denigrate non-heteronormative identities and relationships. These cultural scripts not only contribute to the invisibility and erasure of queer experiences but also create barriers to social acceptance, support and inclusion. Furthermore, the criminalisation of same-sex relationships and gender non-conformity in many parts of the world reinforces social prejudice and exposes queer people to legal persecution, violence and discrimination (Ah-king, 2018).

In the legal sphere, discrimination against queer behaviour is often codified through discriminatory laws, policies and practices that deny queer people equal protection before the law and restrict their access to rights, resources and services. While progress has been made in some countries towards legal recognition and protection of queer rights, in addition to marriage equality, Germany has also strengthened anti-discrimination protections. The General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) was enacted in 2006, providing a legal framework to protect individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation in various areas, including employment and access to goods and services (Ayoub & Paternotte, 2014). Many countries continue to uphold regressive laws that criminalise same-sex behaviour, transgender identities and non-binary expressions and perpetuate a climate of fear, stigma and marginalisation.

In the context of crimes against nature, the discrimination against queer behaviour intersects with the rise of capitalism and the inherent destruction of the natural.

The current anthropocentric Western worldview is defined as the worldview that places humans at the centre of the universe, viewing them as the most important species and the rightful stewards or even dominators of nature. This constitutes the dominance of humans

over the natural world. Humans are the highest species. The highest form of living. The Encyclopaedia of Britannica defines it as a basic belief embedded in many Western religions and philosophies (2016). This worldview as a superior species has led to many different inequalities throughout Western society, it considers humans as masters of everything around them and is at the root of much of the exploitative and extractive behaviour exhibited throughout history and today (Winkel, 2024).

What leads us to this superiority complex? What role does morality play? Morality encompasses justice, fairness, compassion, and responsibility, and is shaped by cultural, religious, and philosophical frameworks (Ritter, 2017). Philosophers like Marx, Foucault, and Butler offer insights into how power structures and ideologies influence these moral dilemmas, highlighting the intersection of environmental exploitation and social injustices.

This master thesis highlights the issue of Crimes against nature. Crimes in the sense that the man-made destruction of nature is leading to a climate crisis which is taking over the world at an increasing speed. Crimes in regards to discrimination against queer behaviour and people. This destruction of both nature and identities is not a recent product of human behaviour but a century-long exploitation and erasing.

The year is 2024. Women's empowerment has never been this high. Over recent decades, there has been a significant increase in women's empowerment globally, particularly in areas of political representation and economic participation (World Economic Forum, 2021). With or without the connection to the online world, women find empowerment in communities and find themselves pushed less into the realm of the man's world. What connects women and queer people? It is the planet and nature that are being destroyed by patriarchy and capitalism, it is women and queerness that are being oppressed and femininity that they want to erase. Terms like mother nature, echoing stereotypes, and queer discrimination comes with the aftertaste of the feminine hate that has been pulled through generations towards women (Hoskin, 2019).

This raises the question of analysis between the nature/female and culture/male dichotomy that exists and how the rise of patriarchy as the main societal system next to capitalistic growth can be connected. These dichotomies themselves are a result of the 'Western' culture, working in exclusive binaries. This highlights the importance of a queer deconstructive approach, overcoming the binary and embedding mankind as a part of nature itself (Ruf, 2024).

Whilst the climate crisis is an act of violence against nature, discrimination against queer behaviour is too (Merchant, 2006). Nature in itself is inherently queer but society's historical and religious opposition to such queerness has led to radicalization against people of the queer community, erasing identities.

Barad asserts that she wants to explore these issues further by "considering acts of nature—that is, nature's intra-activity, it's queer performativity—in making alliances with, indeed in seeing 'ourselves' as always already a part of, all manner of beings that the category 'acts against nature' claims to save or defend but in reality erases and demonizes" (2011, p.126).

The intertwining of nature, culture and morality has highlighted the importance of redefining the human relationship to the natural world. This thesis aims to provide a critical analysis of the ethical and political implications of actions towards the natural world by emphasising the importance of a new understanding of the human relationship with nature and challenging the anthropocentric worldview that underpins the current environmental crisis by using queer ecology and ecofeminism as a supporting theory.

In addition, it is crucial to recognise the intersecting axes of oppression, including race, class, sexuality and ability, that amplify the gendered impacts of the climate crisis. With the use of queer theory that gives insight into the writings of authors like Judith Butler who connects the current understanding of gender to society's systematic values, and indigenous theories like uBuntu which break open the Western understanding of nature and human-ess, a map of understanding the current state of planet can be created.

People at the intersections of multiple marginalised identities, such as Indigenous women, queer individuals and people with disabilities, face increased vulnerability and systemic barriers to adaptation and resilience measures. As a result, climate-related disasters exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and contribute to the perpetuation of structural violence and social injustice in affected communities. The knowledge of the aftermath of nature's exploitation was there but no action was taken, culture and economic growth re prioritised in Western culture. To the point where the exploitation of land and people was not enough and with colonialism came the greed for power over all. While this thesis will not go into the discourse of colonisation and decolonisation, it is important to mention the influence it had on the capitalistic system.

Given the state of research and the gaps identified in the literature, the question this thesis seeks to answer is:

RQ: How can certain phenomena, such as the climate crisis or discrimination against queer behaviour, be viewed as crimes against nature, considering the inherent queerness of nature and society's capitalism system?

It is a question inspired by the words of Karen Barad (2011, p.121), that: "What kinds of acts against nature inspire moral outrage? Queer pleasures for sure, even some forms of heterosexual sex, and an assortment of other human practices."

Given this complexity, an intersectional feminist analysis of the climate crisis is essential to understanding the mechanisms through which crimes against nature manifest and are perpetuated.

In gender studies, as in any other social science, it is crucial to understand the historical, cultural and social context in which the topic under investigation is situated. A literature review helps researchers to contextualise their research within a broader social, political and historical framework.

Researchers Position

"Identity, including self-identity, does not produce a science; critical positioning does, that is, objectivity." (Knowledges, 2008, p.349)

Objectivity in research is not achieved through a detached, identity-less perspective, but rather through critically positioning oneself within the research process. By acknowledging my own background, socialisation, and identity as a researcher, I aim to demonstrate how my experiences and positionality inform my approach to the topic. This aligns with the idea that transparency about one's standpoint enriches the research, grounding it in critical reflexivity rather than claiming a false neutrality.

To give a deeper understanding of the chosen chapters, topic and to normalise positioning themselves in the research I will give some background information about me, the researcher. I am a white cis woman in my mid-twenties who identifies as bisexual and who was socialised in Luxembourg in a middle-class environment; raised by non-academic

parents. My socialisation can be described as stereotypically female in many aspects. The topic of the Master's thesis establishes a link between my political activities and my master's in gender studies.

Having studied publicity and communication for my bachelor's degree, I was confronted with topics such as the regular usage of sexist advertisements, but also techniques like greenwashing. "Sex sells" is not only a phrase used by past public relations companies but up to this day continues to be used to objectify women and set over-sexualised standards (Andersson & Schytt, 2017). Greenwashing is one of the newer popular techniques to make a company seem more ecological than they are (Alves, 2009). Companies have mastered the performative aspects of marketing, leveraging image and narrative to cultivate an ecological façade.

Becoming active in politics showed me the legal barriers that one often encounters when trying to pass legislation and trying to change the system. Working closely in and with the current capitalistic and patriarchal system, more and more inequalities came to the surface and with it the inexistent morality for these crimes against nature. My academic focus in gender studies has intensified my interest in examining the systemic factors underpinning both environmental degradation and societal discrimination, particularly towards those advocating for a more inclusive social order; I dove into the writings of Karen Barad. Reading her theories on intra-action and how everything is connected gave me a chilling realisation that this concept of community and connectedness is in each individual person, but as a society, humans, Western society seem to have lost the inner personal touch to it. Trying to individualise the planet, people and nature, creating lonely people, a devastated nature and a burning planet. While an inherent awareness of potential solutions may exist, capitalist structures, compounded by patriarchal systems, prioritise profit maximisation over ecological integrity, thus perpetuating a view of nature as a mere instrument for human utility. The research question explores how phenomena such as the climate crisis and the marginalisation of queer identities may be conceptualised, even if there is the research data backing up the above said statements, that capitalism and patriarchy are at the root, it seems to be a mystery *why* we keep destroying ourselves as humans. As my interest in philosophy and sociology is closely linked to gender studies, the needed theoretical frameworks can be drawn from intersecting fields.

By positioning myself in my work, it is important to note that my view of the topic to be analysed can never represent the whole (objective) truth. With my work, I present a

subjective position that can and should provide a starting point for further studies and perspectives.

To ground knowledge within a framework centred on the metaphor of vision, positioning becomes an essential practice. This concept of positioning carries with it a responsibility for the methods and practices that make knowledge possible (Knowledges, 2008).

As a white, queer woman, I partially identify with the research subject. However, I recognise the privileges associated with my social position and the distinctions this engenders. My experiences are different, due to the privileges of my social class, skin colour and others, therefore, I attach great importance to including an intersectional perspective as best as I can. To break down discriminatory structures, there is a need to take a critical look at the ways in which privilege, power, and intersecting identities influence societal dynamics, perpetuate oppression, and shape the understanding of marginalised experiences.

Taking all these factors into account, the hypothesis will be formed around the notion that the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour are seen as crimes against nature because humans destroy the female, natural, queer influences in society, and are thus destroying us as humans and current society.

H1: With the rise of capitalism and patriarchy, the fall of the natural world and the further destruction of the planet are perpetuated and will continue if there is no change in the current worldview and human morality.

As Mark Fisher (2022, p.3) mentions in his book "capitalist realism" that: "It is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism."

Capitalism is so deeply ingrained in our collective consciousness that it feels like the natural order, making it hard to imagine alternatives. As a result, societal collapse or apocalyptic futures seem more conceivable than a world without capitalism. This reflects the power of capitalist realism in shaping our imagination and limiting visions of systemic change.

This academic paper aims to contribute to the discourse on crimes against nature by highlighting the gendered dimensions of the climate crisis and advocating for inclusive and rights-based approaches to environmental policy and governance. The objective will be to map out a spiderweb of interconnected theories and thoughts to bring clarity through the fog that gathers after multiple theories and disciplines come together. By choosing different

research papers and doing a thorough literature review I will tie the different topics together and create a better understanding of the influences and inter-actions of this world.

As the complexity of the different topics and theories show, it is important to create a blueprint or rather spiderweb of all the concepts showing the different influences and relations. Creating this map is of great significance to understand the interconnectedness of it all and to create this sense of belonging, community and appreciation for nature and life. The objective and goals of this study will be to draw the connection of all the theories and concepts. This will be achieved by a thorough literature review and deep analysis of research papers. Creswell (1994, p.22f.) describes the importance of a literature review and what it serves:

"The literature in a research study accomplishes several purposes: (a) It shares with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). (b) It relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature about a topic, filling in gaps and extending prior studies (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). (c) It provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study."

With understanding the mechanics, there are ways against the destructive system. With a society of community and care, patriarchy and capitalism will fall.

State of Research, Literature Review and Research Gap

In order to explain how these phenomena can be analysed through an intersectional, feminist, philosophical lens, there is a need to set the ground with existing literature and research. Following the method of a literature review, key topics have been selected to focus on. While choosing my research question, it became clear there is a gap between the connection of the climate crisis and the discrimination against queer behaviour regarding the intra-connectedness of the world. Under the term of Karen Barad "crimes against nature" I will go into the multiplying of these crises and crimes.

Throughout history, societies have encountered a series of crises, including war, famine, and other forms of human suffering, each imposing significant social and environmental challenges. The climate crisis is one of humans' current social anxieties. People all over the world are affected and the solution is not singular. It needs a shift in society, organisations and also people's mindsets. "From the perspective of a social dilemma, the depletion of natural resources is due to people maximising their short-term interests without considering the long-term effects of their actions on society or the planet." (Joireman et al., 2009, p.181). Crimes against nature are thus perpetuated. Just as the solution is not singular, humans aren't either. Humans might be individuals as if there is no person the same on this earth, but as humans there is a need for other humans to survive and thrive (Keat, 1981).

Everyone is individually special, but still shares a lot of traits with "mother" nature. One of such things is being queer. Using terms like mother nature and classifying nature as inherently feminine would contradict my main argumentation in this thesis, that nature itself is queer and beyond the binary classifications that are fundamental to Western approaches, thus the usage of such terms is only for stylistic reasons. The diversity queerness brings is almost endless. Nature shows us just how there is no set of rules of binaries to play by. Barad (2015) puts it as that queerness questions the binary of the individual group and infiltrates the nature of identity. "Infiltrate" is defined by the Duden dictionary as "to gradually and imperceptibly penetrate something in order to decompose it", the human intervention in nature can be linked to this. Not only does queerness infiltrate this nature, but also humanity's actions that have negative effects on nature infiltrate and result in phenomena such as the climate crisis.

Nature has often been used as a justification for the marginalisation and hostility shown to members of the queer community. Nature was supposed to be heterosexual and binary. In a

Washington Post article about the queerness of nature (Schrefer, 2022, p.1), it is mentioned that: "Christian theologians have long pointed to the absence of animal homosexuality as evidence that humans oughtn't to be doing it, either. Thirteenth-century philosopher and priest Thomas Aquinas argued that homosexual behaviour in humans is wrong precisely because it doesn't occur between animals. He saw it as a sign of decadence — a falling down from our state of animal grace into the world of human corruption."

Queer ecology, a relatively new ideology, seeks to disrupt the understanding of nature created by humanity and instead simply let nature be what it is (Naumov, 2021).
Queer ecology showcases the importance of a new understanding of the human relationship with nature and thus challenging the anthropocentric worldview that underpins society's current environmental crisis.

Timothy Morton (2010, p.273f.) mentions in his research on the topic of queer ecologies that "the ways in which queerness, in its variegated forms, is installed in biological substance as such and is not simply a blip in cultural history." He argues that nature is a process, not a product and that "Instead of reducing everything to sameness, ecological interdependence multiplies differences everywhere." (Morton, 2010, p.277).

As I will also touch on the topic of the "natural" and "normal" in the current society, connecting the dichotomy and binaries of gender with nature and culture, I cite this quote from Timothy Morton's column: "Masculinity performs no performance. If you appear to be acting masculine, you aren't masculine. Masculine is Natural. Natural is masculine. Rugged, bleak, masculine Nature defines itself through contrasts: outdoorsy and extraverted, heterosexual, able-bodied—disability is nowhere to be seen; physical wholeness and coordination are valued over spontaneity (McRuer; Mitchell and Snyder)." (Morton, 2010, p.279).

As queer ecologies and eco-feminism will form the backbone of my master thesis I will go more into depth in the concerning chapters of methodology in the thesis.

Nature and Culture

The dichotomy between nature and culture has long been a central theme in philosophical, anthropological and sociological discourse, shaping the understanding of gender roles and identities. This chapter explores the interplay between nature and culture in relation to women and men, highlighting how social constructions of gender identities are influenced by and reflected in perceptions of the natural and the cultural. Genova mentions in 1994 (p.13) that "Nature never said there are only two genders; culture did that." For this analysis, the mentioning will be about the binaries of men and women as the existing research is based on this duality but the existence of non-binary, intersex and transexual people will be mentioned in the sense that nature just as we humans are diverse and not able to be put in binaries. Ultimately, this thesis aims to challenge essentialist assumptions about gender and emphasise the fluid and socially constructed nature of gender identities.

Couper (2018, p.285) says that: "'nature', as a category in binary relation with 'culture' (or 'humans'), is a cultural construct. Perceptions of both *separation from* and the need for more *contact with* nature are cultural constructions, functions of a shared *idea* of 'nature'."
This is where Ortner (1972, p.10) shares that "the categories of 'nature' and 'culture' are of course categories of human thought--there is no place out in the real world where one could find some actual boundary between the two states or realms of being."

"Nature unexamined; an unproblematic, all-encompassing, non-human Other. Yet the concept of 'nature', in its binary relation with the category 'human', is culturally specific, characteristic of Anglo-European thought, and perhaps uniquely so – a cultural myth." (Couper, 2018, p.286).

A "myth" deeply embedded in Western ideologies, a cultural construct shaped by Anglo-European thought. The binary opposition between "nature" and "human" is not an inherent truth but rather a culturally specific framework. This binary reinforces the idea of a non-human "Other" that exists separately from and is subordinate to humans, enabling exploitation and domination of the natural world without ethical consideration. Couper (2018) highlights how these dualistic, culturally specific myths underpin exploitative systems, revealing the need to dismantle these binaries to address both environmental degradation and social oppression. Recognising the cultural construction of "nature" helps situate these phenomena within broader structures of power, such as capitalism and patriarchy, which perpetuate harm to both people and the planet.

A myth is also a term that Judith Butler uses for the construct of gender. The adaptation of binaries and the performance of gender (Butler, 2004).

A close friend and co-worker of Judith Butler is Donna Haraway. Known for her interdisciplinary work in feminist theory, science studies, and the intersections of technology, gender, and ecology, Haraway has explored various topics. One of her most famous works is "A Cyborg Manifesto" where she introduces the concept of the cyborg as a figure that blurs boundaries between human and machine, nature and culture, and organism and artefact. She uses this cyborg imagery for feminist politics and posthumanist thought.

Genova (1994, p.6) mentions that Haraway describes nature and its relation to culture: "In its scientific embodiments as well as in other forms, nature is made, but not entirely by humans; it is a co-construction among humans and non-humans. This is a very different vision from the postmodernist observation that all the world is denatured and reproduced in images or replicated in copies".

Talking about copies means also talking about the originals. Real life. Nature at its core. Nature is often described as simple, the basic. Culture on the other hand gets the glory of being complex. Ortner (1972, p.24): "The culture-nature scale is itself a product of culture, culture being seen as a special process the minimum definition of which is the transcendence, by means of systems of thought and technology, of the natural givens of existence."

In the same research paper, the discussion is formed around how like so many other feminist theoreticians, especially feminist scientists, Haraway cannot accept total human control. Nature's voice needs to be liberated from the distortions of humanists as well as scientists (Genova, 1994).

This need for liberating nature is one that I have come across when choosing my research topic. Many theorists, like Donna Haraway, do not see nature as *culture's silent dummy.* Rather, they see themselves as *rescuing nature from the clutches of determinist science*. In Haraway's view, the task is to *reinvent nature* (Genova, 1994, p.7). She underpins this task with the explanation that "the meaning of 'nature' for example, is a concrete practice, not an abstract exercise. Words are deeds. In this view, metaphysics and science are always already political acts, but just for that reason, not necessarily ideological ones." (Genova, 1994, p.19).

The opinions and views on what nature is and how to define and capture it has been a challenge. Ortner (1972, p.10) wrote on the side of culture that: "Every culture, or, generically, 'culture' is engaged in the process of generating and sustaining systems of meaningful forms (symbols, artefacts, etc.) by means of which humanity transcends the givens of natural existence, bends them to its purposes, controls them in its interest. may thus equate culture broadly with the notion of human consciousness, or with the products of human consciousness (i.e., systems of thought and technology), by means of which humanity attempts to rise above and assert control, however minimally, over nature."

Culture is humanity's way of creating meaning and tools—such as symbols and technology—to transcend and shape the natural world to serve human purposes. Culture is deeply tied to human consciousness and reflects our effort to assert control over nature, however limited that control may be. In this sense, culture represents both our understanding of the world and our attempt to influence it. This perspective aligns with Ortner's broader argument that culture, as a product of human consciousness, seeks to transcend and control nature, with women historically positioned closer to nature and thus symbolically subordinated within this dynamic.

There are many reasons listed why women are supposed to be closer or more like nature. Ortner (1972, p.24): "Woman's physiology, more involved more of the time with 'species life' women's association with the structurally subordinated domestic context, charged with the crucial function of transforming animal- like infants into cultured beings; 'woman's psyche' appropriately moulded to mothering functions by her own socialisation, and tending toward greater personalism and less mediated modes of relating--all these factors make woman appear to be rooted more directly and deeply in nature."

One thing cannot forget and which is leading us through this thesis is that: "A related point is to avoid the pitfall of positioning everything in relation to the human and to embrace a commitment to being attentive to the activity of each critter in its ongoing intra-active engagement with and as part of the world it participates in materialising." (Barad, 2011, p.127).

Whilst looking in this chapter on the dichotomy of nature and culture, the main takeaway and bridge between chapters is the hierarchy that this dichotomy brings with it. Ortner (1972, p.11) posits that: "my point is simply that every culture implicitly recognises and asserts the distinction between the operation of nature as such and the operation of culture (human consciousness and its products), and further, that the distinctiveness of culture rests precisely on the fact that it can under most circumstances transcend natural givens and turn

them to its purposes. Thus culture (i.e., every culture) at some level of awareness asserts itself to be not only distinct from, but superior in power to, nature, and that sense of distinctiveness and superiority rests precisely on the ability to transform--to 'socialise' and 'culturalise'--nature."

In order to dive into the next subsection of breaking these binaries, society resisting change and the "Other", Karen Barad (2011, p.150) mentions that: "In this radical reworking of nature/culture, there is no outside of nature from which to act; there are only 'acts of nature' (including thinking and language use), which is not to reduce culture to nature, but to reject the notion that nature (in its givenness, its meaninglessness) requires culture as its supplement, as Kirby puts it, and to understand culture as something nature does."

One of Karen Barads focus points is the entanglements and intra-connections of the world and nature. Whilst this will be an ongoing theme throughout the thesis this topic will conclude in the analysis, tying everything together.

"Entanglements are not a name for the interconnectedness of all being as one, but "ents are relations of obligation—being bound to the other—enfolded traces of other- ing. Othering, the constitution of an "Other," entails an indebted- ness to the "Other," who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the "self"—a diffraction/dispersion of identity. "Otherness" is an entangled relation of difference (*différance*)" (Barad, 2011, p.150).

"What if we were to recognize that differentiating is a material act that is not about radical separation, but on the contrary, about making connections and commitments?" (Barad, 2011, p.150).

Natural and *Normal*

"Feminists reappropriate science in order to discover and to define what is 'natural' for ourselves" (Haraway, 1991, p.23).

Judith Butler's work in "Gender Trouble" (1990) emphasises how framing gender as "natural" or "normal" restricts the potential for diverse expressions of identity. This perspective critiques the reduction of identity to rigid binaries that often uphold existing power structures.

Seeing the other point of view of the queer being of nature, with no definitions, Genova (1994) states that, "the normal, the natural, deserve to be banished from humans' conception of nature. Just as a state of affairs is not good or bad, no state is in itself natural. Alternatively, one put the point this way: since every state is potentially a natural one, no state can be considered natural." (Genova, 1994, p.18). Genova thinks that the idea of something being 'normal' or 'natural' should be removed from thinking about nature. Just like no situation is inherently good or bad, no situation is inherently natural. Despite the fact that anything can be seen as natural, we should not label any one thing as more natural than another.

When people argue that heteronormativity is "natural" and "normal" it is important to understand the underlying assumptions and biases that underlie these beliefs. Heteronormativity refers to the societal assumption that heterosexuality is the default or "normal" sexual orientation, and that gender identity corresponds to biological sex. This framework privileges heterosexual relationships and cisgender identities and marginalises or erases non-heterosexual and transgender experiences (Thorne, 2018).

Arguments that heteronormativity is "natural" and "normal" often rely on essentialist views of human biology and reproduction and claim that heterosexuality is inherent in human nature and is necessary for the continued existence of the species (Gupta & Rubin, 2020). This perspective relies on biological determinism and reproductive imperatives to justify the dominance of heterosexuality within social and cultural norms (Jackson, 2006).

However, such arguments overlook the diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and relationship dynamics found in all cultures and throughout history. They ignore the complexities of human sexuality and the ways in which social, cultural, and environmental factors shape individual experiences and expressions of identity (Englert & Dinkins, 2016).

Furthermore, classifying heteronormativity as "natural" and "normal" serves to reinforce existing power structures and inequalities and perpetuate discrimination and exclusion

against queer people and communities. It rejects the validity of non-heterosexual and transgender identities and pathologises them as deviations from the supposed natural order (Ho, 2020).

In reality, sexual orientation and gender identity are complex and fluid aspects of human diversity, shaped by a combination of biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors. By challenging heteronormative assumptions and promoting queer visibility and acceptance, there can be work done towards creating more inclusive and just societies that celebrate the full spectrum of human experiences and identities.

In the chapter above, themes of dualisms and their polarities were mentioned. Although polarities form the fundamental metaphysical framework of reality, Plumwood identifies dualism as a more intricate concept. Polarities are present universally and constantly, being all-encompassing and often interconnected. They can be interdependent and sometimes converge, potentially being essential to each other (Carfore, 2021).

Philosophers like Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and Aristotle, along with some Eastern religions, describe reality as an interconnected b of opposing forces. Although these forces seem to be in opposition, they cannot exist independently; each is defined in relation to the other; polarities are defined only in relation to the other—as up can only exist as opposed to down, left to right, and self to other, etc.

Dualisms carry assigned values that are transmitted through generations. Unlike mere separation or categorisation, such as distinguishing between A and not-A, dualisms create and naturalise hierarchies where one side is deemed superior and deserving of better treatment. The danger in mastery and domination is that sociological constructs (e.g., master-slave identities) can become "naturalised" and accepted as biological facts (Plumwood, 1993). This means socially constructed identities can be internalised and perpetuated over time, leading to systemic oppression. It is crucial to recognise that these social constructs are not immutable. Identifying these false constructs is the first step in overcoming oppression (Carfore, 2021).

When talking about the natural and normal a lot of the arguments used stem from theology. When confronted with the reality of the current environmental crisis, some Christians respond with statements like, "It's in God's hands" or "God would not create a problem that He cannot fix." These responses reflect a belief system and ideological commitment to a transcendental monotheistic God. Such a God is characterised by omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. An omnipotent God is all-powerful, without limits, and

capable of doing anything He desires—much like the patriarchs of late-modern capitalism. He controls natural elements like wind, water, storms, and land. If He created a problem, surely, He can fix it. Omniscience means this God is all-knowing, aware of all categories of thought, including the known unknowns and the unknown unknowns. His knowledge is total, and He has a plan beyond human understanding, which many find comforting.

In a patriarchal society, it is unsurprising that a monotheistic God is male-identified. These characteristics of a monotheistic God reflect Catherine Keller's assertion that males are seen as separative selves, while femininity is considered more soluble or relational (Keller, 1986).

In various writings, the French feminist philosopher, Luce Irigaray argues that the Western monotheistic male God symbolises the "ideal ego" for men, or the superego in Freudian terms (Irigaray, 1985). By internalising the attributes represented by God, men can fantasise about embodying these qualities. Thus, a male God functions as a universal role model for men, with omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience becoming unquestioned ideals. These ideals are embedded in society, where domination and hierarchy prevail over reciprocity and egalitarianism. This interconnection of psychology, ideology, and society establishes the Western male God as the ideal male ego, assumed to be morally superior and the unquestioned norm, thereby structuring society around patriarchal values. "Society is structured around this norm—as patriarchy." (Carfore, 2021, p.240).

Patriarchy and Capitalism

In the current anthropocentric society, the intertwining of patriarchy and capitalism aggravates the perpetuation of binary thinking, societal resistance to change and the exploitation of different people; women (Ćorić, 2014). This chapter explores the complicated relationship between patriarchy and capitalism, and how these systems intersect to perpetuate power dynamics and hierarchical structures.

Patriarchy, as a system of social organisation characterised by male dominance and the subordination of women, enforces binary gender norms that restrict individuals to certain roles based on their assigned gender (Lorber, 1996). This assigned gender plays a vital role in the hierarchy that is the Western society. The questions that can be raised are what defines a woman or a man? Are there attributes common to women or the feminine that would allow us to speak of women? The aforementioned Simone de Beauvoir famously said that *one is not born a woman, one becomes one* and the rejection of essentialist views about 'race', class and gender, feminist theory has attempted to think of femininity beyond logocentric and patriarchal attributions (Gines, 2017). Central to this is the question of the ontological status of natural or biological gender (sex) in contrast to social gender (gender). Judith Butler (2004) argues that not only socially acquired gender but also so-called biological gender is to be understood as an effect of discursive practices and only becomes intelligible as such.

At the same time, capitalism, driven by profit maximisation and exploitation, commodifies gender and perpetuates inequalities by assigning value based on traditional gender roles and divisions of labour (Henry, 2018).

In light of emerging "hyper-objects" such as climate change and pandemics, there is a pressing need for those in the West to reconsider their ideologies and restructure the economic, political, and social systems (Boulton, 2016, p.772). Greta Gaard advocates for a shift from a domination-based, extractive economy to partnership-based, community-oriented society (Gaard, 2015). Rather than seeking salvation beyond this world (in heaven), it is crucial to focus on creating a better world here and now, fostering a "heaven on Earth" (Carfore, 2021, p.241).

The intersection of patriarchy and capitalism perpetuates social resistance to change by reinforcing normative binaries such as masculine/feminine and productive/reproductive. These binaries not only limit individual agency but also serve to exclude those who deviate from prescribed gender roles or challenge existing power structures (Eisenstein, 2010).

Power structures and hierarchies can have different sourcing. Being born into one or "working one's way up" are just two common examples that people use. Octavia Butler argues that the need for hierarchy is the fatal genetic flaw in human beings (Genova, 1994, p.7).

Foucault's view of power shifts the focus away from the idea of directly tackling dominant, patriarchal structures. Instead, he focuses on the various relations of power that shape sexual identities. If historical and cultural power techniques and self-practices influence the individual, then sexuality must also be seen as a result and product of power. It is not originally free and only later restricted by oppressive structures. Foucault critically rejects the idea of the 'repression hypothesis'. Butler (2004) agrees with Foucault and argues that there is no place outside of power. Therefore, subversive reading strategies and bodily practices such as drag, or parody are only possible in relation to the norms that simultaneously enable and constrain them. The repeated power of convention shapes and concretises bodies that are connoted as either male or female or that are excluded from the realm of the socially and symbolically intelligible. Butler therefore localises agency in a resistant appropriation that takes place through moments of transformative repetition and citation (Babka & Posselt, 2024).

Belief systems shape the world that is inhabited. Presently, 4.3 billion people, or 55 percent of the global population, believe in a monotheistic God. When God is perceived as male, characteristics associated with power are often attributed to masculinity. This psychological tendency leads individuals to unconsciously assign qualities of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence to male figures in the real world. Because God is a figure that is not encountered in everyday life, these assumptions frequently remain unchallenged (Carfore, 2021).

Patriarchal capitalism is linked to other systems of oppression such as racism, colonialism and heteronormativity, further marginalising and excluding marginalised groups.

Louis Althusser, a Marxist philosopher, incorporated structuralist ideas into his analysis of capitalist production relations and the ideological formation of individuals. He introduced the concept of 'interpellation which suggests that individuals are recruited into social roles and identities by ideological apparatuses like the family, school, religion, and media. According to Althusser, these ideological apparatuses shape individuals by instilling specific notions of normality, authority, and values, thus embedding them within society. By internalising gender roles, consumer behaviour, and perceptions of work and property, these apparatuses help sustain patriarchal and capitalist structures (Babka & Posselt, 2016).

Ortner (1972, p.15) agrees with the fact of "woman's full human consciousness". "Her complete involvement in and dedication to culture's pursuit of transcending nature may, ironically, shed light on another significant aspect of "the woman problem"—the nearly universal and unquestioning acceptance by women of their own devaluation." (Ortner, 1972, p.15).

Carfore (2021, p.237) writes: "(...) the ecofeminist movement could offer a framework capable of acting 'as a catalyst for radical change in our culture.' (Daly, 1985) It must. Being behind on addressing climate change, already in the midst of the sixth mass extinction event, does not make the news. Having lost too many Black, Indigenous, and other people of colour (BIPOC). The women's movement must become intersectional, aligning itself with other movements working to address and subvert domination and oppression. Bell Hooks (1989) contends that the feminist movement should be a 'liberation struggle'; a struggle to 'exist apart from and as a part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all forms. In the light of this, patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression.' (Hooks, 1989, p.22)."

Breaking Binaries, Resisting Change and the "*Other*"

In modern society, binary oppositions have long structured and still shape the understanding of the world and create how we perceive ourselves and others. This chapter explores the influence of binary thinking and the ways in which it perpetuates societal resistance to change while excluding those who are considered the 'Other' (Moore-Gilbert, 2000).

By breaking down learned binaries - such as male/female, nature/culture and mind/matter, underlying power dynamics, inequalities and exclusions that reinforce social norms and hierarchies can be uncovered. "The logic of colonization is based on a hyperseparation between two poles of a dualism, or contrasting pair, where one is seen as superior and the other inferior. Examples of these dualisms are man–woman, human–nature, White–Black, master–slave, God–world, reason–emotion, public–private, production–reproduction. Dualisms have been the major forms of oppression in Western thought as they are "closely tied with domination and accumulation." (Plumwood, 1993, p.42).

Drawing on insights from a range of disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, and critical race theory, this chapter explores the mechanisms through which binary thinking operates and explains the concept of the "Other".

Furthermore, this chapter explores the resistance to change that often accompanies efforts to break through binary thinking. Whether in the form of backlash against gender nonconformity or resistance to social justice movements. By critically analysing the ways in which society resists change and excludes the "Other", this chapter aims to uncover the underlying power dynamics and ideologies that perpetuate binary thinking.

In order to break these binaries, there has to be a change in the system. Ortner (1972, p.28) says: "The result is a vicious circle: various aspects of woman's situation (physical, social, psychological) lead to her being seen as 'closer to nature' while the view of her as closer to nature is embodied in institutional forms that regenerate her situation. The implications for social change are similarly circular: a different cultural view can grow on, out of a different social actuality, a different social actuality can grow only out of a different cultural view."

In Simone de Beauvoir's book, *The Other Sex (Le Deuxième Sexe)*, French feminism initially turned the phallogocentric characterisation of women as the *Other* of men in a more positive light. From the perspective of deconstructive feminism, however, it remains problematic that such a strategic reference to gender otherness runs the risk of reproducing binary gender stereotypes and essentialist concepts of gender (Simons, 2019). Based on the assumption that differences do not only exist between the sexes but are always already present within

every identitary category, Spivak, among others, understands gender as fundamentally alteritarian in that gender identities are always already divided and interwoven with different incommensurable claims to identity (Stanziani et al., 2024). Alteritarian refers to a perspective or movement that advocates for fundamentally alternative systems or ideologies in opposition to mainstream or authoritarian structures.

"Haraway undertakes the task of imagining a new nature for a new world order. Just as Edward Said demanded that we stop orientalizing, i.e., creating a face for the other and then pretending that the face we created was always already that of the other, Haraway insists that we stop naturalizing, i.e., normalizing the conditions that science constructs." (Genova, 1994, p.7).

Taking a look at what lies underneath the binaries, there is a need for separation, radical separation as mentioned in neo-animism, and therefore there is a need to create differences from others. Neo-animism is a contemporary reinterpretation of animistic beliefs. Traditionally it holds that natural objects, places, and creatures possess a spiritual essence or consciousness. This modern version often integrates ecological awareness and philosophical perspectives, aiming to re-conceptualise the human relationship with nature in ways that counteract the alienating effects of modernity and anthropocentrism (Harvey, 2005).

Neo-animism suggests that acknowledging the inherent value and agency of all entities can foster a sense of wonder and respect for the natural world. This re-enchantment opposes the disenchantment brought about by scientific rationalism and industrial capitalism, which often view nature as a mere resource to be exploited (Harvey, 2005). It suggests that humans are not separate from nature but are deeply embedded within it, sharing reciprocal relationships with other entities. By advocating for a worldview where humans are one among many beings with value and agency, neo-animism offers an alternative to the power dynamics perpetuated by anthropocentrism (Descola, 2014).

Neo-animism can be seen as part of broader efforts to decolonise thought and practice, aligning with critiques of colonial and capitalist exploitation. By valuing indigenous and traditional ecological knowledge that often includes animistic elements, neo-animism supports a more inclusive and equitable approach to environmental stewardship. It complements ecofeminist critiques of patriarchy and environmental degradation by emphasising relationality and care. It supports a worldview where nurturing and cooperative relationships with the earth are central, resonating with ecofeminist calls for a more harmonious and equitable coexistence (Abram, 2012).

Alterity describes this other-ness. It derives from Latin and comes from Hegel. It refers to the complex relationship between the self and the other in Levinas and Ricœur, among others (Venema, 2002; Babka & Posselt, 2024). Without going into theological territory, it is important to mention that the current worldview and society have been heavily influenced by religious beliefs and views. One of such is the heaven/hell binary. The belief is that Earth is just a temporary place to live before either going to heaven or hell (Botero et al., 2014). Carrying out crimes against nature is allowed as the earth is just a pre-stage of heaven and hell, perpetuating the wasteful culture that humans have created.

Post-structuralist theories expand this perspective by asserting that identities are always constituted through specific processes of differentiation; identities are shaped by how they're different from others. The supposedly self-identical thus always have only a precarious coherence, insofar as every identity remains structurally referenced to a 'constitutive outside' (Derrida, Butler). Alterity thus proves to be a constitutive component of every identity, that being different from others is a big part of what makes up who we are as humans (Babka & Posselt, 2024).

Different theories and concepts evolve around the importance of identity and how humans are socialised by it. People who do not fit into the given binaries or categories are therefore oftentimes discriminated against or violated for deviating, even though their existence gives context and explanation to the norm.

Edward Said's study Orientalism from 1978 highlights the processual construction of cultural otherness within colonial and post-colonial contexts. In this framework, the Orient as the *Other* serves as the counterpart that shapes and defines the rational European identity. Said's analysis and critique suggest that European identity is forged and affirmed through the process of othering, specifically grounded in the 'white, male, heterosexual' subject. Homi Bhabha further develops this concept by not only situating the issue of the *Other* within binary power dynamics but also describing it as an inherently contradictory process characterised by unstable stereotypes (Babka & Posselt, 2024).

Different views from different lenses through which different people see the world. Rationality and economic growth were prioritised in order to strengthen the democratic system, yet this was tied to the exploitation of other people and countries, overlooking the inherent democratic values: equality, freedom, human rights, accountability, pluralism and civic participation (Evans, 2002).

These democratic values are often undermined by the limitations on participation, which historically privilege men and exclude other groups from meaningful engagement.

Carfore's article explores Plumwood's usage of "the term 'hegemonic centrism' to describe how power and privilege are cloaked as universal and unbiased (consider science and reason), where marginalised perspectives are seen as 'emotional,' 'biased,' or 'political.' (Plumwood, 1993)." (Carfore, 2021, p.242).

Patriarchy and capitalism are formed around the notion of productiveness, power, and authority rather than care, equality and justice. Carfore (2021, p.242) argues that "Black Lives Matter protests, the removal of colonial statues, climate marches, and the destruction of property *are* forms of Christian love. Public displays of love differ from private love. To love what's best in someone is oftentimes a tough love. This is inspired by Cornel West who famously states—'Justice is what love looks like in public.'".

Plumwood contends that in Western culture, the identity of the "master" is built on rejecting and denying dependence on various "Others." This framework, rooted in the Western ideal of reason, creates major blind spots and problematic ways of thinking. By prioritising reason, these perspectives label anyone outside the master's identity—defined as White, wealthy, powerful, land-owning, and rational—as inferior and exploitable. (Carfore, 2021). These, the white, wealthy, land-owning, powerful, and rational will be explored in the next chapter.

Nature, Women and Exploitation - a Crisis

The inroads and intersections between gender, nature and systems of power, are complex, particularly in the context of patriarchal capitalism (Mellor, 1994). Building on discussions of binary thinking, social resistance to change and marginalising practices, this chapter explores how the exploitation of nature and women is closely intertwined with broader systems of oppression.

Historically, women have been closely associated with nature, which has often been portrayed as passive, nurturing, and in need of control. This gendered construction of nature has justified the exploitation and commodification of women and the environment, perpetuating hierarchies of power and domination (Merchant, 2006). Patriarchal capitalism exacerbates exploitation by commodifying women's labour, bodies and reproductive capacities for profit-making purposes (Federici, 2004). In this context, it is femininity that plays into the realm of queer behaviour.

Drawing on feminist and ecological perspectives, it is important to show how the exploitation of nature and women reinforces binary thinking and perpetuates societal resistance to change.

In addition, there is the intertwining of gender and environmental injustices, highlighting how the exploitation of women and nature disproportionately impacts marginalised communities and exacerbates social inequalities, and environmental degradation.

A subtle form of exploitation can be seen when it comes to different hierarchies within jobs. Looking at the art of cooking, which is traditionally seen as a woman's job at home, the job is seen as more of a chore rather than actual work. Ortner (1972, p.20) has further explained that: "it is interesting to note that when a culture (e.g. France or China) develops a tradition of *haute cuisine – 'real'* cooking, as opposed to trivial ordinary domestic cooking – the high chefs are almost always men. Thus, the pattern replicates that in the area of socialisation – women perform lor-level conversions from nature to culture, but when the culture distinguishes a higher level of the same functions, the higher level is restricted to men." High chefs referring to chefs de cuisine, the quote highlights how men and women are assigned different roles in society based on cultural perceptions of value and status, with 'high' or 'elevated' roles. Queerness often challenges these rigid gender roles and hierarchies, just as women are relegated to 'lower-level' roles in this culinary example, queer individuals often face social and structural barriers that prevent them from participating fully in spaces considered valuable or normative within society. When queer behaviours or identities don't

align with the prescribed masculine/feminine binary or heteronormative standards, they are often dismissed, marginalised, or deemed 'lesser' in the same way that women's work is often devalued.

This view is also reiterated by Ortner (1972, p.16), that "she appears as something intermediate between culture and nature, lor on the scale of transcendence than men." Similarly, Londa Schiebinger (1993, p.19), a historian of science and gender, explores the establishment of cisgender heteronormativity in the scientific literature regarding plants and animals in her book "Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science." (2008). She traces this phenomenon back to the late 1600s when European naturalists first acknowledged sexuality in plants. These naturalists endeavoured to rename and reclassify plant reproductive systems, conceptualising them in alignment with heterosexual marriage, presumed to serve solely for reproduction rather than pleasure, and human reproductive anatomy. Notably, women naturalists were rare during this period, and it was primarily men who documented observations about nature (Adams & Gruen, 2021).

Furthermore, Carolyn Merchant's "The Death of Nature" from 1980 (2006) provides a historical ecofeminist analysis of the feminization of nature and its subsequent mechanisation for profit. During the shift from pre-industrial European societies to early capitalism, the link between nature and women became increasingly contradictory. Initially portrayed as a nurturing, passive mother with endless resources for human exploitation, nature was redefined as a chaotic force needing man's control 'for the betterment of humanity'. Efforts such as draining marshlands, mining metals, and clearing forests transformed the view of nature into a controllable, dissectible entity, thereby justifying the exploitation of natural resources. This capitalist exploitation had significant gendered impacts on women, who had once engaged in subsistence labour alongside men. Angela Davis, in "Women, Race & Class" (1983), explains how women's roles as avers, soap makers, carpenters, brewers, and various other trades within communal settings were replaced by privately-owned factories. In these factories, low wages and harsh working conditions devalued their skills and diminished their social status (Adams & Gruen, 2021). The concept of the ideal housewife was widely promoted through women's magazines and romance novels. However, as Davis notes, "among Black female slaves, this vocabulary was nowhere to be found. The economic arrangements of slavery contradicted the hierarchical sexual roles in the new ideology" (Davis, 1983, p.24). Beyond Western contexts, gender does not universally serve as a primary framework for organising society or explaining inherent power dynamics, challenging previously held assumptions about its universality.

Oyerónké Oyěwùmí (1997) highlights how pre-colonial Yorùbá society in southern Nigeria was structured primarily by age, rather than gender, with leadership roles accessible to individuals of all genders. Social hierarchies were based on distinctions between elders and youth, and the notion of a biologically determined "woman" did not exist. This concept only emerged in the mid-nineteenth century when European colonization introduced gendered policies and practices that disrupted existing social structures. Colonizers, uncomfortable with the active participation of those they identified as women in public and governance spaces, imposed rigid gender binaries. This colonial imposition transformed Yorùbá society, relegating non-men to subordinate roles, limiting their access to leadership, and excluding them from essential social services. According to Oyěwùmí, the categorization of women as a subordinate group defined by their anatomy was largely a result of the patriarchal colonial state (Adams & Gruen, 2021, p.377).

In regions where the gender binary had not been established, there was greater fluidity regarding love, desire, and the gendered division of public and private spheres (Adams & Gruen, 2021, p.377). Afsameh Najmabadi, in "Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity" (2005), writes that in late-seventeenth-century Qajar Iran, depictions of beauty and amorous relationships were "undifferentiated by gender" Seeing this different way of living and categorising than the st, drove the idea and concept of "the other" further into frame, whether this was the other as women, cultures, sexualities or just nature as being the Other opposed to the transcending man. Such a notion of mastery and control was necessarily wedded to a Cartesian dualism in which the 'human' person, 'conjoining mind and body, could be set in total opposition to the non-human world' (Passmore, 1995, p.133)" (Godrej, 2016, p.1983).

"For Descartes, it was man's task therefore to make himself master and possessor of nature (Passmore, 1995, p.134)" (Godrej, 2016, p.1983).

Val Plumwood (1986, 1993) argues that this dualistic thinking underpins many of stern culture's most troubling aspects in its approach to nature. It generates further divisions that portray the concept of "human" as inherently anthropocentric, masculinist, agentic, and rational. In contrast, the feminine is depicted as inert, passive, and emotional, positioning it as less than fully human. A powerplay started decades ago that nature is now paying the price for.

The Crisis

"The mobilizations of 2019, which saw millions around the world join climate marches and strikes, and Greta Thunberg tell the United Nations, 'The world is waking up, and change is coming whether you like it or not', have long since faded into a pandemic-clouded memory." (Maher & McEvoy, 2023, p.1323). Amid the century-long exploitation of nature and its different marginalised groups of people, a looming climate crisis characterised by human-caused environmental degradation and the gradual loss of the planet's health has been coming. The urgency for collective responsibility and action is evident. Despite increasing signs of environmental degradation and impending catastrophes, societal scepticism remains, and insufficient efforts are being made to decelerate further climate changes and mitigate its impacts.

The intersection between the climate crisis and the discrimination of queer behaviour lies in the themes of exploitation, resistance, and power. As established with some groundwork of the state of research behind the major forces in today's society like capitalism and patriarchy, this chapter will shed light onto the "concept" of the crisis, the reality, the framing, and the wall we as humans are hitting at this intersection. After an examination of how patriarchal capitalism and binary thinking contribute to the normalisation of exploitative practices and hinder transformative action in the face of the climate and anti-discrimination emergency.

Emergency: something dangerous or serious, such as an accident, that happens suddenly or unexpectedly and needs fast action in order to avoid harmful results (Cambridge, 2024).

Calling the climate crisis or the discrimination against queer behaviour an accident would be an understatement; it would rather be categorised as a slow acknowledged burning down. The need for immediate action in order to avoid harmful results persists.

Discrimination against queer behaviour refers to the unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or non-normative gender expression. This can include actions, policies, or societal attitudes that stigmatise, exclude, or disadvantage queer people (Meyer, 2003). As discussed in the previous chapters of the exploitation of women and nature, both of them will combine to close the queer circle. Being queer is often put together with the notion of femininity and thus takes a lor role in patriarchy.

Discrimination against queer individuals persists globally, manifesting in various forms such as legal inequalities, violence, and social stigma. A comprehensive report by Human Rights Watch highlights that lesbian, bisexual, and queer women and non-binary people face extensive violence and discrimination across twenty-six countries. This includes physical and

sexual violence from family members and security forces, discrimination in property rights, and barriers to accessing healthcare and justice (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

Additionally, a global survey by Ipsos in 2023 found significant inequalities in the acceptance and treatment of queer individuals worldwide. The survey indicated that while some countries show progress in queer rights and acceptance, many regions still experience substantial levels of prejudice and exclusion, particularly against transgender and non-binary individuals (Ipsos, 2023). Whilst acceptance is growing, inequalities persist. In 2021, France reported a significant rise in homophobic acts, with a notable increase in violence against queer individuals. This included physical assaults and harassment. One high-profile incident involved the beating of a young gay man in Bordeaux, which was widely reported and condemned by activists and politicians. The increasing trend of anti-queer violence in France reflects a broader pattern seen across Western Europe, where hate crimes and discriminatory behaviours against queer people have been on the rise (Camut, 2023). These findings underscore the urgent need for policy reforms, enhanced protection mechanisms, and broader societal shifts to ensure equal rights, and safety for queer communities globally. Through this research, we seek to illuminate the complex web of intersecting oppressions that shape environmental injustices and impede progress toward a sustainable and equitable future. By interrogating the connections between gender, nature and power in the context of the climate crisis, alternative paths to collective responsibility, resilience and environmental justice can be interrogated.

Throughout this thesis, we have drawn from anthropology, sociology and philosophy. Continuing this journey through the chapter on climate change, I will draw some research from geography and biology to explain history and concepts, keeping in mind that this thesis is and will stay inside the social sciences and form a mind map of collected knowledge.

As explained in the introduction, while natural climate fluctuations have occurred throughout Earth's history, the current rate of change is unparalleled and primarily attributed to human activities (Nasa, 2010). Carbon dioxide (CO_2), constituting 65% of all greenhouse gases, stems from the combustion of fossil fuels and industrial processes (Friedlingstein et al., 2022). Following CO_2, methane (CH_4) emerges as another significant greenhouse gas driving human-induced climate change, originating from agricultural practices and waste (Saunois et al., 2016). This exploitation of natural resources has normalised the commodification of the environment. Everything opposing this new form of reality and "normal" was and is "deriving from the norm".

Deriving from the norm is a theme that has already been encountered in the chapter of breaking binaries and how people who deviate from it get sanctioned. In Western society there are many different forms of sanctions and views on what counts as deriving from the normal (Kahan, 1996). Drawing from theology, which played a big part in the formation of the current society and worldview, the time on earth for a lot of religions is only a gateway to paradise/heaven. Carfore posits that "Heaven is not of this world; it is often considered a separate realm existing over and above this Earth. This ideology has led to the destruction of the Earth since in this sense what one does here on this Earth doesn't ultimately matter" (Carfore, 2021, p.239). The dichotomy of heaven/hell in theories like neo-animism stating that what humans do on earth does not matter as it is only a preparation. Though actions must be aligned with those of religious writings and gods to get into heaven, those writings usually do not include newer concepts like that of climate change and how to live aligned to that in a capitalistic and growth oriented society.

Power Plays: Unpacking Petro-Masculinity and Eco-Modernism

The anthropocentric worldview, which places humans at the centre of importance in the universe, has roots in various historical and philosophical developments. This worldview emerged prominently during the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution in Europe, between the 14th and 17th centuries, although its origins can be traced back even earlier (Merchant, 2006; Callicott, 1989). Humanism emphasises the value and agency of human beings, contributing to a shift from a theocentric (God-centred) worldview to an anthropocentric one. This period celebrated human achievements and rationality, laying the groundwork for later scientific exploration. Thinkers such as Francis Bacon and René Descartes championed the idea that humans could use reason and science to dominate nature (Nash, 1989). Enlightenment thinkers reinforced the idea of human superiority over nature, promoting progress through scientific and technological advancements.

The anthropocentric worldview can be linked to the themes of power dynamics, petro-masculinity, and eco-modernism, examining how these ideologies reinforce human domination over nature, often at the expense of the environment and marginalised communities. The anthropocentric perspective fueled colonial and capitalist endeavours by justifying the exploitation of natural resources and people. This worldview legitimised the domination of nature and the extraction of resources. The focus on human supremacy and progress through technology has led to the rise of industrial systems that prioritise economic growth over ecological balance (Moore, 2015; Gaard, 2015).

Petro-masculinity and Eco-Modernism are two concepts that offer critical perspectives on the relationship between societal structures, gender, and environmental issues. Integrating these concepts on crimes against nature, considering the inherent queerness of nature and society's historical opposition, provides a nuanced understanding of how different ideologies and identities interact with environmental exploitation and conservation efforts.

Petro-masculinity, a term coined by Cara Daggett (2018), refers to a form of masculinity that is closely tied to the fossil fuel economy. It embodies the aggressive defence of fossil fuel interests and is often linked with authoritarian and nationalist ideologies. This concept is rooted in the idea that certain forms of masculine identity and power are maintained and reinforced through the exploitation of natural resources. Daggett (2018) contends that climate change denial and related environmentally destructive behaviours largely serve as compensatory responses to deep-seated anxieties tied to race, gender, and climate issues, which are perceived as threats to traditional white Western masculinity and authority. These

compensatory behaviours, she suggests, manifest through authoritarian impulses and their corresponding socio-political movements.

Petro-masculinity highlights how traditional masculine identities are constructed and maintained through the domination and exploitation of nature. It also explores how societal norms and identities (including gender and sexuality) intersect with environmental degradation. The defence of fossil fuel interests under petro-masculinity can be seen as a form of resistance to environmental sustainability initiatives. This resistance mirrors societal opposition to queerness and other non-normative identities, illustrating how entrenched power structures resist transformative change that threatens their stability. The concept can be framed as a crime against nature, where the aggressive defence of fossil fuel consumption leads to significant environmental harm.

Many petro-masculine men mourn a mythologised, idealised state of the world that includes national exceptionalism, unfettered economic opportunity, and white racial supremacy (Nelson, 2020). They fear losing the societal superiority that results from their being white, and among the men, from their being male. The fact their views may be myopic, inaccurate, or offensive in myriad ways does not diminish their fundamental importance to those who maintain them. Perhaps, their idealised, mythologised national past also includes petro-masculine conceptions of petroleum-driven industry, white supremacy, and dominance over the feminised Mother Earth (Nelson, 2020).

According to McCright and Dunlap (2011, p.1163), climate change denial has almost become a defining characteristic of conservative white male identity. These individuals report perceiving less risk in the world and are comfortable maintaining higher levels of overall risk acceptance. This tolerance for risk is thought to be connected to their privileged social status and strong psychological investment in their in-group identity (Kahan et al., 2007). As a result, they are more likely to hold climate-denying beliefs as a way to protect their identity, status, and the hierarchical socioeconomic system that has historically benefited them (McCright & Dunlap, 2011). Additionally, they are likely to believe that they will have the capability to address and overcome any future challenges, including those arising from environmental risks (Nelson, 2020).

These processes seem to involve various psychoanalytic defences, notably denial—a primitive defence mechanism driven by anxiety and fear, including existential threats (A. Freud, 1937).

Many individuals who defensively deny or minimise the significance of climate change may do so to preserve a sense of existential stability, thereby avoiding feelings of dread and guilt associated with their personal petroleum consumption or other environmentally harmful behaviours (Nelson, 2020).

This ingrained prejudice against women, whether conscious or unconscious, has perhaps been exacerbated by fears concerning shifts in sex and gender roles and associated social power structures, such as increased rights for queer people and the growing influence of the #MeToo movement. This narcissistic crisis can lead to scapegoating and compensatory violence, including grandiose, omnipotent acts against devalued others (Daggett, 2018).

In climate-destructive sadistic acts, the planet is perceived as the ak, feminine "other" that is penetrated and abused (Saidero, 2017). The resulting environmental damage, which affects everyone, is either denied or manically celebrated. Nelson (2020, p.287) also claims that "the act is also one of protest and revenge against those out-group "others" who are perceived as opposing petro-masculine ideas, including liberals, Obama supporters, those who support the Paris Accords, Elon Musk and Tesla owners, members of queer communities, people of colour, and environmentalists."

On the other hand, eco-modernism is an environmental philosophy that argues for the decoupling of human progress from environmental impacts through technological innovation and economic development. Proponents believe that advanced technologies can address environmental challenges without requiring radical changes to societal structures (Grunwald, 2018). Especially as, "liberal solutions flatten responsibility for the climate crisis, perpetuating the notion that all of humanity is equally culpable" (Maher & McEvoy, 2023).

Eco-Modernism's focus on technological solutions contrasts with approaches that advocate for deeper societal changes. While Eco-Modernism focuses on technological advancements, it often lacks an intersectional approach that considers how these technologies impact different communities. The reliance on technology can be critiqued from an ethical standpoint, questioning whether it adequately addresses the root causes of environmental degradation and social injustice. This fits into the broader discussion on morality and societal responsibility towards nature and marginalised groups.

The fundamental issue with the concept of 'de-growth' is not its call for reduced individual consumption or the consideration of limiting economic activity to maintain the biosphere's stability. Instead, the problem lies in the fact that these arguments are often presented without addressing the core motivations of the capitalist system. Such discussions typically

overlook whether 'de-growth' is feasible without dismantling capitalism and transitioning to a system of rational planning, where production and consumption are determined socially and democratically. The significant advantage of economic planning is that it prioritises the growth of sectors that are socially and ecologically essential while reducing those that are harmful, such as oil production, rather than merely supporting the limitless accumulation of exchange value in the cheapest manner possible (Maher & McEvoy, 2023). Power struggles, exploitation, relentless pursuit of more—but what if the real progress for the climate, nature, and equality lies in stepping back? A step away from the relentless drive for economic growth, and instead, a step toward prioritising intrinsic growth and investing in the well-being of the planet and all who inhabit it.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

"Feminism's most compelling epistemological insight lies in the connections it has made between knowledge and power. (Lennon & Whitford, 1994)" (Doucet & Mouthner, 2006, p.40)

With this quote, taken from Doucet & Mouthners's article (2006, p.40), *Feminist Methodologies and Epistemology*, the essence of this thesis is to bridge the existing knowledge with a critical examination of social structures and to uncover underlying hierarchies and powers which are connected. In order to conceptualise the above-mentioned chapters and topics, they will be framed, following the methodology of a literature review and build on already existing theoretical groundwork.

Literature reviews and analysis have been used for centuries to examine already existing literature and research in order to answer new research questions, differentiating between different ways of conducting literature reviews, this thesis will be a narrative literature review. One of the most common, subjective reviews, "should be distinguished from narrative reviews. Narratives are appropriate for describing the history or development of a problem and its solution", in this case, the anthropocentric worldview (Fink, 2019, p.17).

Given that gender studies is a complex and interdisciplinary field, a literature review enhances the understanding of the existing knowledge, theories, and methods that are useful to the topic. By analysing the existing literature, gaps could be identified, and contradictions or areas where further research is needed were highlighted. This process was used to formulate the research question. Papers, theories and books have been selected using Google Scholar and searching with terms that were mentioned in the research question.

RQ: How can certain phenomena, such as the climate crisis or discrimination against queer behaviour, be viewed as crimes against nature, considering the inherent queerness of nature and society's capitalism system?

Keywords like: crimes against nature, the queerness of nature, capitalism & patriarchy, nature & culture dichotomy, climate crisis & exploitation, were chosen to start the research and following an initial analysis, further keywords and theories re chosen: queer ecologies,

uBuntu, ecofeminism, queer theory, morality, societal fears, and some specific authors like Karen Barad, Michel Foucault, Bell Hooks, philosophical, and sociological researchers.

For this research, it is important to scrutinise existing literature, providing a contextual backdrop for the research. A thorough literature analysis and review serves the purpose of summarising prior research, presenting and interconnecting findings pertinent to the primary focus.

My research will employ contemporary feminist methodologies grounded in critical scholarship, informed by an intersectional perspective (Leavy & Harris, 2019, p.5).

Doucet & Mauthner (2006, p.37) mentioned that "what marked feminist epistemologies as unique for at least a decade is a threefold characterization initially proposed by Sandra Harding (1987), that feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint epistemologies, and transitional (postmodern) epistemologies."

Harding's third part in her threefold characterization was that the concept "of "knowers" are not individuals but are rather communities and more specifically science communities and epistemological communities. "Communities, not individuals 'acquire' and possess knowledge (Longino 1990:14; see also Campbell 1998; Longino 1993, 2002; Nelson 1990, 1993; Walby 2001)." (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006, p.37).

In order to ensure validity and reliability, credible authors were chosen, reputable journals from the university library and Google Scholar and recent research as well as more fundamental data were used to have a broad coverage of the field.

Triangulation and Consistency re highlighted to have a broad and regular research pattern, whilst this was used, Sandra Harding's (2001) three step feminist epistemology was taken into account, that "the first is the view that all observation, "facts," and "findings" are value tinged and that value judgments play a critical role in rigorous empirical inquiry: 'There is a world that shapes and constrains what is reasonable to believe, and . . . it does so by impinging on our sensory receptors' (Nelson 1990:20; Campbell 1998; Longino 1990). The second key element is the notion of empiricism as a 'theory of evidence' and, further, that 'all evidence for science is, in the end, sensory evidence' (Longino, 1990:21)." (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006, p.37).

Queer Ecologies and uBuntu

The concept of the queerness of nature challenges the traditional Western understanding of the natural world and its relationship to human society. In Western thought, nature is often seen as static, ordered and governed by fixed laws, while humans and society are seen as separate from and superior to the natural world, creating the anthropocentric worldview (Alberro, 2020).

Queer ecologies, however, break through this dichotomy by revealing the inherent diversity, complexity and fluidity of nature and challenging normative notions of gender, sexuality and identity. In order to touch upon the queerness of nature but not get into biology, a few examples of nature's queerness will be mentioned. In 1913, biologists found out that *penguins, like most birds, are socially but not sexually monogamous*. A lot of the birds, especially when in small groups like a zoo, turn to triangular, bisexual behaviour. As Edinburgh zoo director, T.H. Gillespie comments on these sexual triangulations, that the penguins 'enjoy privileges not as yet permitted to civilised mankind.'" (Schreffer, 2022, p.2).

"Civilised mankind". A phrase so often used that on a burning planet, with rising fascism and violence, civilised gets a new meaning. Karen Barad (2011, p.146) says that the world humans created is thought of as composed of individual objects with determinate properties and boundaries. "Space is a given volume in which events occur, time is a parameter that advances in linear fashion on its own accord, and effects follow their causes," (Barad, 2011, p.146).

Nature's queerness is challenging this ontology. Ontology is a branch of philosophy that looks into the nature of reality, trying to find out what exists and how things are categorised. Ontology examines the structure of reality, and the concepts used to understand it. Barad (2011, p.129) also asserts in her article 'Nature's Queer Performativity' that "all of these assumptions about time and space have been called into question by nature's queer performances: lightning bolts, neuronal receptor cells in stingrays, a dinoflagellate animal-plant life-form found in North American estuaries, atoms, all part of nature's queer being". Barad counts humans among "nature's critters whose practices, identities, and species cannot be accounted for within a classical ontology" (Barad, 2011, p.129). In this context, the African philosophical concept of uBuntu offers a unique perspective on the relationship between humans and nature. uBuntu, which is often translated as "I am because you are", emphasises the interconnectedness, interdependence, and intrinsic value of all life forms. In contrast to the individualistic worldview that guides through Western societies, uBuntu recognises the mutual design of human society and the natural environment and pushes the

need for harmony, respect and reciprocity in the relationship between humans and nature (Cornell, 2014).

uBuntu emphasises that individuals are part of a larger community and that one's actions affect others. The philosophy stresses the importance of relationships and community over individualism (Ramose, 1999). This perspective provides a counter-narrative to the capitalist and patriarchal systems critiqued in this thesis, which often prioritise individual gain over collective well-being. uBuntu can be a powerful tool in resisting oppression and fostering solidarity among marginalised groups, as it emphasises unity and collective empowerment. By valuing indigenous knowledge and perspectives, Ubuntu contributes to decolonising efforts, challenging dominant Western narratives.

Queer ecologies and the philosophy of uBuntu, offer an alternative framework for understanding the crimes against nature. By exploring these perspectives in regards to the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour, new insights can be gained into the interconnectedness of human and non-human worlds, and challenge dominant paradigms.

Choosing to focus on identities for this research, there is a need to place the definition and part identity plays in this society. Identity refers to the set of characteristics, beliefs, values, and experiences that shape an individual's sense of self and their perception of belonging within social, cultural, and personal contexts. It has different dimensions, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, and personal interests. Identity is dynamic, evolving over time through interactions with others, cultural influences, and life experiences (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024).

Identity also plays a vital role in society by shaping individuals' interactions, relationships, and experiences. It influences social categorization, creating a sense of belonging and community among individuals who share common characteristics. However, identity also intersects with systems of power and privilege, contributing to social stratification and inequalities. Moreover, identity affects representation and visibility within society, influencing who is recognised and valued. As individuals navigate their identities, they negotiate multiple aspects of self and seek affirmation from others, shaping their sense of agency and well-being within society. Barad, (2011, p.125-126) also states that "Identity is a phenomenal matter; it is not an individual affair. Identity is multiple within itself; or rather, iden-tity is diffracted through itself—identity is diffraction/*différance*/ differing/deferring/differentiating."

Eco Feminism and Queer Theory

This chapter addresses the complex interplay between ecofeminism and queer theory and offers theoretical insights into the exploitation of nature and women in patriarchal capitalism. Ecofeminism criticises the interconnected systems of patriarchy, capitalism and environmental degradation and highlights the disproportionate impact on women and marginalised communities (Puleo, 2017). In parallel, queer theory disrupts normative ideas about gender and sexuality, challenges binary thinking, and reveals the fluidity and diversity of identities (Watson, 2005).

This thesis aligns with Val Plumwood's intersectional ecofeminism, which critiques the intertwined oppressions of nature, women, and marginalised groups under patriarchal and capitalist frameworks. It opposes cultural appropriation and imperialism, practices that commodify and exploit non-Western perspectives, thereby reinforcing colonial power dynamics. Building upon Plumwood's call for a 'critical rethink' (1986), this work advocates for a fundamental reassessment of Western ideologies that prioritise domination, economic exploitation, and anthropocentrism. Such a reevaluation challenges entrenched assumptions sustaining environmental degradation and social inequalities, promoting instead frameworks grounded in interdependence, respect for diverse cultural knowledge, and ecological sustainability (Carfore, 2021).

By synthesising ecofeminist and queer perspectives, this chapter interrogates the complex dynamics surrounding gender, nature, and exploitation. It examines how the gendered construction of nature perpetuates the commercialization and exploitation of women and the environment, while queer theory deconstructs normative gender binaries and challenges dominant narratives that justify oppression.

Looking at Queer theory, Barad (2011, p.147) mentions that "the somehow exhaustive repetition and development of this point does not ward off panicked attempts to contain, tame, or normalise nature's queerness, which will not be quarantined, always threatening to leak out and contaminate 'life as know it'—turning the fun-house, freak show of atoms' perverse putterings into an anxiety-inducing large- scale 'catastrophe.'"

Queer theory was first introduced by Teresa de Lauretis in her 1991 article "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities." It gained significant traction in academia during the 1990s, aiming to address "'an already deeply entrenched set of questionings and abrasions of normality' (Hall, 2003:54)" (Watson, 2005, p.69). Among the feminist theorists most recognised for shaping specifically queer concerns are Teresa de Lauretis, Judith Butler, and

Eve Sedgwick. They laid much of the *conceptual groundwork for queer theories* in the early 1990s (Watson, 2005, p.71).

From an intersectional perspective, this chapter examines the interconnectedness of gender and environmental injustices and uncovers the underlying power structures and ideologies that carry out oppression and exclusion. In this context, some ecofeminists have inadvertently perpetuated the very sexism they aim to dismantle by uncritically reversing gender norms, roles, and power structures. For example, certain segments of the White feminist movement have encouraged women to adopt traditionally masculine roles. Additionally, some strands of feminism, such as those found in Goddess spirituality, assert that women are inherently superior to men. This reaction against the dominator remains tied to the same power dynamics it seeks to oppose. Consequently, it fails to genuinely liberate women or nature and instead reinforces the domination structures that feminists strive to eliminate (Carfore, 2021).

Moreover, the term "ecofeminism" was introduced by French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in her 1974 book "Le Féminisme ou la Mort". D'Eaubonne (2020) called for women to lead an ecological revolution to save the Earth, asserting that "the destruction of the planet is due to the profit motive inherent in male power" (Adams, 1993; Eaton, 2005; Carfore, 2021, p.235).

Ecofeminists, whether activist or academic, religious or secular, radical, cultural, or ecowomanist, emphasise the "important connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature." (Adams & Gruen, 2022, p.1). Ecofeminist theory explores these connections empirically, epistemologically, and conceptually/symbolically (and/or culturally) (Eaton, 2005; Lorentzen & Eaton, 2003; Carfore, 2021).

Carfore (2021, p.246) goes further to link ecofeminism with theology, as she asserts: "As ecofeminist and Brazilian Catholic nun Ivone Gebara states, 'Ecofeminism is born of daily life.' *Gebara I (1999)* It is 'enduring together garbage in the streets, bad smells, the absence of sewers and safe drinking water, poor nutrition and inadequate healthcare.' It is enduring the wildfires, the pandemic, and climate change as responsible citizens of Earth, considering not short-term for-profit gains, but rather, decisions made and relationships that endure seven generations (*Indigenous concept)*. An intersectional ecofeminism recognises that racial justice is intertwined with climate justice, fighting against the same forces of domination. The same harmful dualisms justifying oppressions through the logic of colonization." (Carfore, 2021, p.246).

Intersectionality is a critical framework that examines the complex and interrelated systems of oppression experienced across multiple axes, including race, class, gender, species, ability, ethnicity, and sexuality. This approach acknowledges that these identities intersect, shaping unique experiences of both marginalisation and privilege. A. E. Kings (2017) points out that ecofeminism has long engaged with concepts related to intersectionality, even before Crenshaw coined the term.

Crenshaw's work highlights the multifaceted oppression faced by Black women, emphasising how racial and gender discrimination intertwine. Similarly, ecofeminists articulate the interconnected oppressions experienced by women in relation to environmental degradation, revealing that marginalised communities often bear the brunt of ecological harm. Plumwood underscores that oppression is rooted in interlocking dualisms—such as nature/culture and male/female—that create hierarchies and systemic inequality (Carfore, 2021). This intersectional lens is vital for developing comprehensive strategies that address both social and environmental justice.

Queer theory, at its core, involves diverse approaches to examining desire and its connection to identity. It has developed, perhaps predictably, within a rich context of critical theory and activism. Utilising poststructuralist deconstruction techniques, queer theory aims to uncover the historical construction of sexual identity (Watson, 2005). "…'queer' also represents a dynamic process, both at the level of theory and action (...)." Watson (2005, p.68) writes in her essay, the term 'queer theory' might be somewhat misleading, as it does not refer to a single, unified body of work. Instead, it encompasses a continually evolving collection of 'theories' that employ the term 'queer' for various purposes. She describes queer theory as "one among many of the useful ways of understanding the myriad complexities of identity, oppression and group dynamics" (Watson, 2005, p.68), which is also the reason for this theoretical framework.

Queer theory has been shaped by psychoanalytic and post-structural concepts concerning identity, sexuality, and the role of the symbolic. Philosopher Jacques Derrida is often credited with exploring binary constructions such as male/female, proper/improper, and light/dark, as seen in the state of research with another dichotomy of nature/culture. His work significantly influenced the broader trend towards emphasising signification through language and the formation of identity (Watson, 2005).

"Foucault also redefined the concept of power, suggesting that power is not a 'thing' possessed or wielded by a dominant majority, but rather a matter of relationships and

interactions among individuals. engage in disciplinary behaviour, or 'bio-power' (1978), both upon ourselves and over others." (Watson, 2005, p.70-71).

Crucial to queer theory, hover, was his assertion that wherever power operates, there is also the potential for resistance or reverse discourses. For Sedgewick, 'queer' represents an 'open mesh of possibilities' (1990), recognising the non-monolithic nature of individual experiences. She emphasises that "human experiences of desire, sex, and sexuality are uniquely diverse, as illustrated in her thirteen categories that redefine the landscape of sexual and gender identification (Phoca, 2001: 62)." (Watson, 2005, p.72-73).

The influence of queer theory echoes throughout the history of political activism. 'Queer' emerged as a concept of transgression, both assigned and embraced, as a form of resistance. "Embracing taboo-breaking, 'monstrosity,' and the anti-normal, transformative identities re-celebrated, ultimately challenging and undermining the normativity of heterosexuality and binary gender identity. 'Being queer' came to be defined by a critical stance towards the taken-for-granted, everyday activities that constitute 'normal being'." (Watson, 2005, p.73).

This "rebellion" can have many faces, such as Butler's (1993, p.83) critiques that "the understanding of taking on a gender as a kind of consumerism", that capitalism is taking over again, supporting mass consumerism and capitalism. According to Kirsch (2000, p.17), queer theory "closely follows the development of current capitalist relations of production". David Halperin (1995, p.122) says that 'queer' should be seen as ". . . an ongoing process of self-constitution and self-transformation – a queer politics anchored in the perilous and shifting sands of non-identity, positionality, discursive reversibility and collective self-invention."

A possible approach to counter these arguments is to integrate queer theory and activism into a spectrum of critical theories that scrutinise social and cultural domains. Recognising that the queer project is a contested terrain, as Hall suggests, "it is essential to understand that for queer to maintain its capacity to challenge the 'natural,' it must continuously undergo denaturalization itself" (Hall, 2003, p.88). Looking at the critiques on queer theory, Turner (2000) maintains that "the political and epistemological system rests on universal statements about human identity making equality impossible." (Watson, 2005, p.76). In the next chapter, with different philosophical concepts and the main focus on morality, the analysis continues.

Morality and Philosophy

Morality often includes concepts such as justice, fairness, compassion and responsibility and can be influenced by cultural, religious and philosophical practices, for example. Ritter defines morality as, among other things, "the inner self-determination," which encompasses my insights and intentions regarding the purpose of the "subjective will." This concept of morality relates to "subjective individuality," positioning it in contrast to general norms and in relation to the broader "right of the world" (Ritter, 2017, p.332).

Morality plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours related to the phenomena, such as the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour viewed as crimes against nature. Morality provides a framework for evaluating the ethical dimensions of human-nature relationships and societal dynamics (Garner, 1990). It addresses questions of responsibility and accountability for the consequences of human actions on the environment and marginalised communities. The frameworks shape attitudes toward the intrinsic value of nature, the rights of marginalised groups, and the ethical treatment of non-human beings, guiding decision-making processes and policy development. Morality intersects with power structures, privilege, and historical oppositions to queerness, shaping societal attitudes and behaviours toward environmental conservation and social inclusion. It creates dilemmas, prompts reflection on competing values, interests, and priorities, challenging individuals and societies to navigate conflicting moral imperatives and consider the long-term consequences of their actions (Lo, 2019).

Alluding to the problematics surrounding the role of morality, Barad, (2011, p.122) provides an example that, "given the usual associations of humans with culture and animals with nature, one might think that forms of violence against animals perpetuated by industrial meat production—that is, the mass extermination of 'others' made killable—would qualify in this logic as 'acts against nature' worthy of our provoking moral outrage. And yet, it is particular sexual acts that are criminalised and labelled immoral, while the mass extermination of animals goes unnoticed and unpunished, and is normalised, naturalised, and sanitised as part of the cost of food production". Also, Michel Foucault's work offers valuable insights into power dynamics and the construction of social identities, all of which are highly relevant to the study of crimes against nature. Foucault's concept of "biopower" examines how power operates not only at the level of individual bodies but also over entire populations, shaping societal norms, institutions, and practices related to nature and the environment (Macey, 2009). In his analysis of disciplinary mechanisms and regimes of knowledge, Foucault explores how systems of power produce and reinforce dominant discourses that define what is considered "natural" or "normal" behaviour. This is particularly pertinent in the context of

crimes against nature, where certain behaviours and practices are constructed as deviant or criminal based on prevailing social norms and ideologies. Moreover, Foucault's examination of the relationship between knowledge and power highlights the ways in which scientific discourses and technologies of surveillance and control are deployed to regulate human interactions with the natural world. This includes the management of resources, environmental governance, and the criminalization of activities deemed harmful to the environment (Macey, 2009). Additionally, Foucault's concept of "governmentality" sheds light on the role of state institutions, regulatory frameworks, and disciplinary practices in shaping environmental policies and responses to ecological crises. By analysing the techniques and strategies employed by governments and other authorities to manage and control populations in relation to their environments, Foucault's work provides critical insights into the political dimensions of crimes against nature (Hindess, 1997).

Drawing upon the theories of known philosophers, theories and perceptions vary. One key aspect of Marx's theory relevant to the topic is his concept of "metabolic rift." Marx argued that capitalism, driven by the imperative of profit maximisation and commodification, leads to the unsustainable extraction and exploitation of natural resources. This results in disconnection or "rift" between humanity and nature, as well as ecological imbalances and crises. Additionally, Marx's emphasis on the contradictions inherent within capitalism sheds light on the contradictions between capitalist accumulation and ecological sustainability. While capitalism relies on continuous growth and consumption to maintain profitability, this model is inherently unsustainable and leads to ecological crises, such as climate change and biodiversity loss (Foster, 1999). On the other hand, René Descartes' dualistic worldview and his mechanistic conception of nature and his philosophical framework have played a significant role in shaping Western attitudes towards nature and the environment, contributing to the commodification, exploitation, and degradation of natural resources. His dualistic worldview and mechanistic understanding of nature have perpetuated a human-centred perspective that underestimates the intrinsic value and interconnectedness of the natural world, exacerbating environmental crises, and crimes against nature (François, 2012).

Rousseau argued that humans are inherently good in their natural state, but societal structures and institutions corrupt their natural virtues. This perspective challenges the notion of humans as inherently separate from and superior to nature, emphasising a more harmonious relationship with the natural world (Edward & Remigius, 2019). In the same vein, Arendt's exploration of the human condition emphasises the importance of plurality, action, and responsibility in shaping human existence. Her analysis underscores the

interconnectedness between humans and the world they inhabit, highlighting the significance of the natural environment in shaping human experiences and actions (Suchting, 1962). But Blaise Pascal's reflections on human finitude and mortality underscore the fragility and impermanence of human existence. This perspective can foster environmental awareness and humility, encouraging individuals to recognise the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living beings. By acknowledging the finite nature of human life and the Earth's resources, individuals may be motivated to adopt more sustainable and respectful practices towards the natural world. Pascal often emphasised the vastness of the universe compared to the smallness of human beings. He pointed out that humans are trapped between the infinities of the incredibly large (the cosmos) and the incredibly small (atoms), highlighting the limited and fragile place in the grand scheme of things, similar to Barad (Campos, 2018).

Hooks' intersectional feminist perspective emphasises the interconnectedness of social identities and systems of oppression, including race, class, gender, and environmental injustice. Hooks' ecological feminism advocates for a feminist ethic of care towards the natural world, challenging patriarchal and capitalist notions of domination and exploitation. By applying care ethics to environmental issues, Hooks' emphasises the importance of nurturing and sustaining relationships with the Earth and all living beings. Hooks' advocacy for decolonizing feminism and environmentalism calls attention to the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and extractivism that underpin crimes against nature. Environmental justice movements must confront the historical injustices and power imbalances that have shaped patterns of environmental harm and ecological destruction. Hooks' insights into decolonial praxis and resistance offer strategies for challenging colonialist narratives and advancing environmental justice agendas rooted in solidarity, reciprocity, and respect for Indigenous sovereignty and land rights (Biana, 2020).

Aligning with Hooks' intersectional feminist framework, these arguments highlight the interconnectedness of social identities and systems of oppression. This thesis advocates for ecological feminism, emphasising a feminist ethic of care toward the natural world that challenges patriarchal and capitalist ideologies of domination.

Additionally, it supports Hooks' call for the decolonisation of feminism and environmentalism, recognising the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and extractivism in environmental harm.

Weil's concept of attention, which emphasises deep engagement and empathetic understanding of others' experiences, can be applied to the natural world. Crimes against nature often result from a lack of attention and empathy towards non-human beings and

ecosystems. Weil's call for cultivating attentive receptivity to the suffering of others, including the environment, can inspire ethical responses to environmental degradation and exploitation. Weil's emphasis on human responsibility and agency in the face of injustice and oppression is relevant to addressing crimes against nature. Individuals and societies have a moral obligation to confront environmental degradation and advocate for environmental justice. Weil's ethical framework encourages active engagement and solidarity with the natural world, challenging apathy and indifference towards environmental issues. Weil's critique of structural injustice and systemic oppression provides a lens through which to analyse the root causes of crimes against nature. Environmental degradation often stems from social, economic, and political inequalities that perpetuate environmental exploitation and marginalisation. Weil's call for collective action and solidarity in the face of injustice can inform efforts to address environmental challenges and promote environmental justice (Meltzer, 2001).

While Hooks' emphasises collective action and systemic change in addressing the interconnectedness of oppression, advocating for a feminist ethic of care and the decolonization of feminism and environmentalism, Weil focuses on individual moral responsibility and empathetic engagement with the natural world, arguing that crimes against nature arise from a lack of attention to suffering.

Findings & Analysis

In the face of a planet on the brink of environmental catastrophe, the societal structures that were built are being called into question. Amidst this turmoil, discrimination on all levels persists. Discrimination against the planet, against queer behaviour. This chapter delves into the analysis and findings, presenting a detailed analysis of the literature reviewed, how the phenomena of the research question are framed and critically evaluating the existing research. The aim is to systematically examine the key themes and patterns that emerged from the existing research and to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge in this area. By organising the findings into distinct themes, we can better understand the complexities and nuances.

Politics of Responsibility

"Justice is what love looks like in public" is a phrase that repeats itself in my head when I think about all the people who are trying to make this world a better place. A phrase from Cornel West (2011) that serves as a reminder for us to always be the voices for the voiceless and speak up against injustices in society.

This chapter on the politics of responsibility focuses on the parts of the state of research and methodologies, where it has been made clear that the Western society's moral compass has different directions. Seeing different theories on power and which forms shape the current society. Foucault's concept of "biopower" showed how power operates not only at the level of individual bodies but also over entire populations, shaping societal norms and institutions (Macey, 2009). In the chapter on natural and normal the benefit of keeping binaries is high and that the realm of what is natural and normal is vague. have seen Genova (1994) talk about the different typically 'male' attributes that can be found in nature and thus is what translated naturally to a societal framework. For example, how "males of many species bite, claw, bruise, tread, or otherwise assault receptive males during the act of intercourse; indeed, in some species male attack is necessary for female ovulation to occur." (Genova, 1994, p.10) and essentialist views of human biology and reproduction the claim that heterosexuality is inherent in human nature and is necessary for the continued existence of the species, continues (Gupta & Rubin, 2020). Foucault explores how systems of power produce and reinforce dominant discourses that define what is considered "natural" or "normal" behaviour. Systems of power sustain, explained by Luhmann's system theory. His theory provides a framework for understanding how complex social systems operate, adapt, and reproduce themselves.

The connection between the destruction of the planet and the discrimination of queer behaviour. Ecofeminist scholars like Carolyn Merchant (2006) argue that the exploitation of women and nature are interconnected processes driven by patriarchal and capitalist ideologies and that the mechanistic worldview of capitalism views both women and nature as resources to be controlled and exploited.

The research question of how these phenomena can be described as crimes against nature seems to gain clarity.

Concepts such as environmental ethics, eco-feminism, and the ethics of morality, which provide guidance on how humans should relate to and treat the natural world. By examining these ethical perspectives, explore how notions of responsibility towards nature intersect with the topic of understanding the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour as crimes against nature.

The influence of queer theory echoes throughout the "history of political activism" as Watson (2005, p.73) mentions. "'Queer' became articulated in terms of transgression (both assigned and adopted) as a means of resistance. Taboo breaking, 'monstrosity', and the anti-normal were celebrated as transformative identities (ultimately highlighting and undermining the normativity of heterosexuality and binary gender identity) and 'being queer' became characterized by critique of the taken-for- granted, day-to-day mundane activities that constitutes 'normal being'." (Watson, 2005, p.73).

The separation from nature laid the groundwork for its domination. As humans began to quantify their agricultural yields, profit-oriented economics emerged. Françoise d'Eaubonne (2020) linked planetary destruction to the profit motive inherent in male-dominated power structures. This shift led to the elevation of mathematics and reason as ultimate truths, casting off women, nature, the body, and marginalised groups in what became known as the "cult of reason." The rise of male power enforced a gendered division of labour, relegating women to domestic roles due to the physical risks of field labour, such as miscarriages. The accumulation of wealth, along with the ideologies of American democracy and freedom, spurred the colonisation of Indigenous lands and the enslavement of African people. These actions were often justified by the belief in a transcendental, monotheistic God, which was deeply entwined with these expansionist ideologies (Carfore, 2021).

Understanding the politics of responsibility towards nature, in this thesis the climate crisis and queer behaviour, involves analysing how political institutions, policies, and actors shape environmental decision-making and action. This includes examining the roles of

governments, international organisations, corporations, and civil society in addressing environmental challenges and promoting equality and inclusion. The chapters of patriarchy and capitalism show how the priorities that governments and societies set, influence the state of the world. Priorities such as economic growth and making money are all well intended for the growth of our technological future, but not well executed when it comes to creating hierarchies and exploiting people for this goal.

Morality often includes concepts such as justice, fairness, compassion and responsibility and can be influenced by cultural, religious and philosophical practices, for example. Ritter describes morality as, among other things, " the 'inner self-determination', my insight and intention in the purpose of the 'subjective will' and thus the 'subjective individuality' its right against the general and in relation to the 'right of the world' (Ritter, 2017, p.332).

The intersection of patriarchy and capitalism perpetuates social resistance to change by reinforcing normative binaries such as masculine/feminine and productive/reproductive. These binaries not only limit individual agency but also serve to exclude those who deviate from prescribed gender roles or challenge existing power structures.

The question has been raised, what defines a woman or a man? How are these binaries created and why? In the chapter on breaking binaries, Carfore (2021, p.238) talks about the influence of religion on societies structure, that "the logic of colonisation is based on a hyperseparation between two poles of dualism, or contrasting pair, where one is seen as superior and the other inferior. Examples of these dualisms are man–woman, human–nature, White–Black, master–slave, God– world, reason–emotion, public–private, production–reproduction. Dualisms have been the major forms of oppression in Western thought as they are "closely tied with domination and accumulation." (Carfore, 2021, p.238). Politics of responsibilities can be a spectrum where people find themselves agreeing with the government and societal rules, following them and thus fulfilling their responsibility of being a good citizen. The other side of the spectrum looks like the responsibilities you have towards the individual fields that are targeted in a capitalistic, patriarchal society. Opposing binaries, questioning laws, looking after nature, accepting the differences in people, taking time to live and rest.

By exploring political dynamics surrounding environmental issues, it is important to investigate how power dynamics, interests, and ideologies influence societal responses to the climate crisis and efforts to combat discrimination against queer individuals as part of broader environmental justice movements.

This phenomenon can lead to what Maher & McEvoy (2023) describe as 'carbon guilt,' where individuals feel that their personal failure to minimise ecological harm or to 'live green' is primarily responsible for the persistence of climate change. Maher & McEvoy (2023) argue that this sense of carbon guilt is particularly widespread among the professional-managerial class (PMC) and extends to the broader environmental movement. This perspective conflates material privilege—a level of comfort and security—with the ability to control the material organisation of energy production. As a result, the focus on individual choices fosters unproductive moralism and extreme historicism, misplacing the responsibility for systemic issues onto individual 'consumers.' This obscures the power relations and structural dynamics inherent in capitalism. At its most harmful, this individualised approach to carbon guilt can provoke a backlash against perceived ecological sanctimony or lead to feelings of defeatism (Maher & McEvoy, 2023).

In the chapter on exploitation, how women and minorities are exploited for their labour. To consider is the intersectionality of environmental issues with other forms of oppression and marginalisation, including gender, race, class, and sexuality. Environmental injustices disproportionately affect marginalised communities, exacerbating social inequalities and reinforcing patterns of discrimination and exclusion. By applying an intersectional lens to the analysis and examining how the climate crisis and discrimination against queer individuals intersect with broader systems of oppression and how efforts to address these issues must consider their interconnected nature is crucial.

Barad (2011, p.123) mentions racism and antisemitism, that "this kind of response echoes the problem it seeks to address, underwriting an ethical and moral position engaged in erasure—a lack of accountability for the (unavoidable) constitutive exclusions enacted."

Humans do feel a sense of responsibility when it comes to living. The human need for care and love, yet we created a society which tries to eliminate the notion of emotions and empathy. The creation of culture, opposing it to natural nature. Creating binaries to create hierarchies to create different levels of responsibility. The highest of all is to serve what is right, to serve men and technology. The lower on the pyramid the lower the care for responsibility. Women and minorities along with nature on the bottom. People trying to tilt this pyramid, and flatten the hierarchies get sanctioned. Barad (2011, p.122) writes as an example of this morality dilemma: "Given the usual associations of humans with culture and animals with nature, one might think that forms of violence against animals perpetuated by industrial meat production—that is, the mass extermination of "others" made killable—would qualify in this logic as "acts against nature" worthy of our provoking moral outrage. And yet, it is particular sexual acts that are criminalised and labelled immoral, while the mass

extermination of animals goes unnoticed and unpunished, and is normalised, naturalised, and sanitised as part of the cost of food production."

Identity, therefore, plays a crucial role in shaping how individuals perceive and respond to the climate crisis. Sociocultural backgrounds, including ethnicity, nationality, and socioeconomic status, influence one's environmental values and beliefs. For instance, conservative white males in the United States often exhibit climate change denial due to identity-related factors, such as a desire to maintain the status quo and preserve their sociopolitical dominance (McCright & Dunlap, 2011, p.155). Gender identity also significantly affects environmental behaviours. Studies have shown that women generally exhibit greater environmental concern and are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviours compared to men. This difference is partly attributed to traditional gender roles that position women as caretakers and nurturers (Zelezny, Chua, & Aldrich, 2000). This stereotype, seen in the chapter about nature and culture, the natural and the normal.

Intersectional identities further complicate perceptions of the climate crisis. Marginalised groups, including queer communities, often face disproportionate environmental impacts due to systemic inequalities. These groups may prioritise immediate social justice issues over long-term environmental concerns, or they may lack the resources to engage in environmental activism (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013). Queer environmentalism critiques traditional environmental movements for their lack of intersectionality and advocates for an approach that integrates ecological sustainability with social equity (Mortimer-Sandilands & Erickson, 2010). Advocating for policies that address both environmental and social justice issues is essential. Policies should aim to reduce systemic inequalities and ensure that all communities have access to resources and opportunities for environmental engagement. This includes supporting queer-inclusive environmental policies and practices.

Washing the Planet and People

Put the planet in the washing machine, put it on 60 degrees and it will come out as new. What if the solution were this easy? Fit a whole world in a tiny technological tool. Hand problems to this Other thing.

When Sylvia Plath was contemplating the different choices that life had to offer her, she wrote an analogy of a fig tree in her book "The Bell Jar" (1963): "I saw my life branching out before me like the green fig tree in the story. From the tip of every branch, like a fat purple fig, a wonderful future beckoned and winked. One fig was a husband and a happy home and children, and another fig was a famous poet and another fig was a brilliant professor, and another fig was Ee Gee, the amazing editor, and another fig was Europe and Africa and South America, and another fig was Constantin and Socrates and Attila and a pack of other lovers with queer names and offbeat professions, and another fig was an Olympic lady crew champion, and beyond and above these figs re many more figs I couldn't quite make out. I saw myself sitting in the crotch of this fig tree, starving to death, just because I couldn't make up my mind which of the figs I would choose. I wanted each and every one of them, but choosing one meant losing all the rest, and, as I sat there, unable to decide, the figs began to wrinkle and go black, and, one by one, they plopped to the ground at my feet."

The current Western society is always greedy for more. Less is more is only a statement when it comes to fashion, when it should apply it to all life aspects.

In the state of research, we saw the different aspects where Western society decided to mislead people instead of solving the problems. started with explaining how humans decided to categorise things and people and started working with binaries. Valid categorising for a society if it does not create hierarchies within these categories. Knowing this is not the case and differences between Nature and Culture were drawn, putting culture, the male, above nature, the female.

This is where Ortner (1972, p.10) shares that: "the categories of 'nature' and 'culture' are of course categories of human thought--there is no place out in the real world where one could find some actual boundary between the two states or realms of being.". Similarities can be found with Judith Butler's construct of gender. The adaptation of binaries and the performance of gender (Butler, 2004). A human made categorisation. Haraway mentions in 1994 that "Nature never said there are only two genders; culture did that." (Genova, 1994). Categories formed within categories. Ortner (1972, p.10) wrote on the side of culture that: "Every culture, or, generically, 'culture' is engaged in the process of generating and

sustaining systems of meaningful forms (symbols, artefacts, etc.) by means of which humanity transcends the givens of natural existence, bends them to its purposes, controls them in its interest. may thus equate culture broadly with the notion of human consciousness, or with the products of human consciousness (i.e., systems of thought and technology), by means of which humanity attempts to rise above and assert control, hover minimally, over nature."

Controlling over nature, taming it to fit Western society. Growing up in such a society makes you believe that some things we grew up with are *natural* and *normal*. How things are supposed to be. In the chapter *natural* and *normal* many categories are human made to fit a specific societal order. Judith Butler's work in "Gender Trouble" (1990) emphasises how framing gender as "natural" or "normal" restricts the potential for diverse expressions of identity. This perspective critiques the reduction of identity to rigid binaries that often uphold existing power structures.

In the research question I ask how certain phenomena, such as the climate crisis or discrimination against queer behaviour, can be viewed as crimes against nature, considering the inherent queerness of nature and capitalism. Whilst doing the research for this thesis it was made clear that nature is inherently queer and as humans, are part of nature thus making us queer. May that be in regards to sexuality or behaviour in other parts of life. Why are humans so against queer behaviour if it lies in their nature? Continuing in the chapter of natural and normal, having seen that science and religion have played big roles in forming Western societies. Jackson (2006) and Gupta & Rubin (2020) have argued that comments in the direction of heteronormativity being "natural" and "normal" often rely on essentialist views of human biology and reproduction and claim that heterosexuality is inherent in human nature and is necessary for the continued existence of the species. This perspective relies on biological determinism and reproductive imperatives to justify the dominance of heterosexuality within social and cultural norms.

Not conforming to these essentialist views of human biology and reproduction and claim that heterosexuality means you are deviating from the norm and challenging the continuation of humankind. As Ho (2020) has stressed, these essentialist views reject the validity of non-heterosexual and transgender identities and pathologise them as deviations from the supposed natural orders.

Deviants will be sanctioned. Discriminated. More. This might sound like the pilot episode of handmaid's tale but living in a patriarchal capitalist society is not far from this made up dystopia.

One of Butler's criticisms is "the understanding of taking on a gender as a kind of consumerism." (1993, p.83), that capitalism is taking over again, supporting mass consumerism and capitalism. According to Kirsch, queer theory "closely follows the development of current capitalist relations of production" (Kirsch, 2000, p.17).

Greenwashing, pinkwashing, and lobbying are strategies used by corporations and organisations to manipulate public perception, maintain power structures, and advance capitalist and patriarchal interests. Greenwashing refers to the practice of companies exaggerating or fabricating their environmental efforts to appear more environmentally friendly than they actually are. Pinkwashing is the practice of companies or organisations promoting themselves as queer friendly to distract from negative actions or to profit from the queer community. Lobbying involves influencing policymakers and government officials to enact or block legislation that favours specific corporate interests (Lyon & Montgomery, 2015).

Pinkwashing, Greenwashing and lobbying can serve as a shield against criticism by aligning a company with social justice movements, even if their internal practices do not match their public image and by creating a facade of corporate responsibility. Lobbying especially helps maintain capitalist and patriarchal systems by ensuring that policies protect the interests of powerful economic and social groups. This manipulation of public perception helps maintain existing hierarchies and discourages the systemic changes needed for true equity and sustainability (Drutman, 2015).

Michel Foucault's concept of "biopower" explains how societal norms and institutions exercise control not through direct authority but by shaping acceptable behaviors and beliefs. This theory is relevant when examining how environmental and queer issues are regulated by dominant discourses that define "normal" or "natural" behavior.

In light of emerging "hyperobjects" such as climate change and pandemics, there is a pressing need for those in the West to reconsider ideologies and restructure the economic, political, and social systems (Morton, 2013). Hyperobjects are a concept introduced by the philosopher Timothy Morton (2013) to describe *entities that are massively distributed in time and space* and defy the usual ways of understanding. They are things that are so vast and complex that they challenge the ability to fully comprehend them. Morton uses the term

"hyperobject" to help explain certain phenomena and objects that are crucial to understanding ecological and global issues, particularly in the context of the Anthropocene—the current geological era characterised by significant human impact on the Earth's geology and ecosystems. Hyperobjects are not confined to a single location or time period. They exist on a scale that transcends human perception and lifespan. For example, climate change, which spans centuries and affects the entire planet, is a hyperobject because it cannot be pinned down to a specific place or moment. Hyperobjects influence and are influenced by a myriad of other entities and processes. They highlight the interconnectedness of systems and challenge the notion of isolated objects or events. For example, climate change is linked to economic, political, and ecological systems in complex ways. Understanding hyperobjects changes how we perceive and interact with the world. It challenges us to rethink traditional approaches to problem-solving, as conventional methods may not be adequate for addressing issues like global warming. Hyperobjects require us to consider new ethical, philosophical, and practical approaches that acknowledge their vastness, complexity, and interconnectedness. They push towards a more holistic and systemic thinking, encouraging a deeper awareness of the implications of actions across time and space. In summary, hyperobjects are a conceptual tool that helps us grapple with the immense and interconnected challenges of the Anthropocene, urging to expand perspectives beyond immediate and localised concerns.

Queerness can be considered part of a hyperobject when viewed through the lens of its complex, pervasive, and interconnected nature within societal structures. While Timothy Morton (2013) originally conceptualised hyperobjects in relation to environmental issues like climate change, the framework can be applied to other vast and interconnected phenomena. Queerness encompasses a wide array of identities, experiences, and expressions that cannot be confined to a single definition or perspective. It challenges binary notions of gender and sexuality, reflecting a complexity that transcends individual experiences and spans across cultures and histories. Greta Gaard advocates for a shift from a domination-based, extractive economy to partnership-based, community-oriented societies (Gaard, 2015). Rather than seeking salvation beyond this world (in heaven), it is crucial to focus on creating a better world here and now, fostering a "heaven on Earth" (Carfore, 2021, p.241).

While many individual people already identify those false constructs and take actions such as reducing personal carbon footprints or participating in local environmental projects, it can contribute to positive change, but they often have limited impact on addressing the root causes of complex, global challenges. What it seems to need is a system change. Ortner

(1972, p.28) agrees and says: "The result is a vicious circle: various aspects of woman's situation (physical, social, psychological) lead to her being seen as "closer to nature" while the view of her as closer to nature is embodied in institutional forms that regenerate her situation. The implications for social change are similarly circular: a different cultural view can grow on, out of a different social actuality, a different social actuality can grow only out of a different cultural view." Socially constructed identities can be internalised and perpetuated over time, leading to systemic oppression. It's crucial to recognise that these social constructs are not immutable. Identifying these false constructs is the first step in overcoming oppression (Carfore, 2021).

"Haraway undertakes the task of imagining a new nature for a new world order. Just as Edward Said demanded that we stop orientalizing, i.e., creating a face for the other and then pretending that the face we created was always already that of the other, Haraway insists that we stop naturalizing, i.e., normalizing the conditions that science constructs." (Genova, 1994, p.7).

The way individuals perceive the world varies greatly based on different perspectives and experiences. Historically, the prioritisation of rationality and economic growth was intended to strengthen democratic systems. However, this focus often came at the expense of exploiting other nations and people, thus overlooking the fundamental democratic values of equality, freedom, human rights, accountability, pluralism, and civic participation (Evans, 2002). This oversight reveals how democratic ideals have sometimes been put second to economic ambitions, reinforcing global inequities and systemic injustices.

In a capitalist society, individuals face the additional challenge of finding time for voluntary work and political activism. This is particularly true for those who are marginalised or labelled as "the Other," as they navigate the oppressive structures of patriarchy, binary norms, and discrimination. These barriers make it difficult for people to advance within hierarchical capitalist systems, as they contend with both systemic discrimination and personal obstacles.

Without systemic policy changes, individual efforts to address environmental and social issues can seem inadequate and lead to feelings of helplessness and burnout. This sense of futility can trigger counterproductive behaviours. Daggett (2018) argues that climate change denial and destructive behaviours are often compensatory reactions to deep-seated anxieties related to race, gender, and the climate crisis. These anxieties are perceived as threats to traditional Western masculinity and power, which can result in authoritarian impulses and the rise of associated socio-political movements.

The need for systemic change is echoed by Plumwood (1993), who highlights how dualisms in stern thought contribute to social and environmental oppression by creating hierarchies that favour one group over another. Her work underscores the importance of dismantling these binary structures to foster more equitable and sustainable practices. Thus, addressing these deeply rooted societal issues requires a multifaceted approach that integrates individual action with comprehensive policy reforms and challenges entrenched power dynamics.

Ultimately, addressing systemic issues like the climate crisis and discrimination requires action from governments and institutions with the power to implement meaningful change. This includes policy reform, resource allocation, and enforcement mechanisms that prioritise environmental protection, social justice, and human rights. When governments neglect these priorities, individuals often feel disempowered and unmotivated, resulting in paralysis and disengagement from activism. This sense of helplessness highlights the crucial role of public policy in fostering or hindering grassroots movements.

To combat this disempowerment, increasing public awareness about the interconnectedness of human actions and their impacts on communities and the environment is essential. Educating people about these connections can inspire action and highlight the importance of collective responsibility. Encouraging empathy and solidarity with diverse communities, especially those marginalised or affected by environmental injustices, can foster a sense of shared humanity and interconnectedness. Sharing stories of resilience, community cooperation, and environmental activism can motivate individuals to extend their concern beyond their immediate circles and embrace broader societal and environmental issues.

The African philosophical concept of uBuntu provides a valuable perspective on the relationship between humans and nature. Often translated as "I am because we are" uBuntu emphasises the interconnectedness, interdependence, and intrinsic value of all life forms. Unlike the individualistic worldview that predominates in Western societies, uBuntu recognises the mutual design of human society and the natural environment. It advocates for harmony, respect, and reciprocity in the relationship between humans and nature (Cornell, 2014). By adopting principles of uBuntu, societies can move towards a more holistic approach to addressing systemic issues, integrating empathy and interconnectedness into the core of environmental and social policies.

In the methodologies section the importance of community was mentioned. Harding's third part in her threefold characterization was that the concept "of "knowers" are not individuals but are rather communities and more specifically science communities and epistemological

communities. "Communities, not individuals 'acquire' and possess knowledge" (Longino 1990:14; see also Campbell 1998; Longino 1993, 2002; Nelson 1990, 1993; Walby 2001)." (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006, p.37)

Creating opportunities for community engagement, collaboration, and collective action can empower individuals to work together towards common goals. Community-based initiatives, volunteer programs, and grassroots organisations provide platforms for people to connect, share resources, and address local environmental challenges collectively. By fostering a sense of belonging and collective efficacy, these efforts can mobilise collective responsibility and action.

Encouraging ethical and moral reflection on individual and collective responsibilities towards future generations and the planet can inspire people to consider the long-term consequences of their actions. Philosophical discussions, ethical frameworks, and religious teachings that emphasise stewardship, intergenerational justice, and ecological ethics can provide moral guidance and motivate people to prioritise the common good over short-term self-interests.

Morality plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours related to the phenomena, such as the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour viewed as crimes against nature. Morality provides a framework for evaluating the ethical dimensions of human-nature relationships and societal dynamics (Garner, 1990). It addresses questions of responsibility and accountability for the consequences of human actions on the environment and marginalised communities. The frameworks shape attitudes toward the intrinsic value of nature, the rights of marginalised groups, and the ethical treatment of non-human beings, guiding decision-making processes and policy development.

In the chapter of patriarchy and capitalism, the work of Louis Althusser, who incorporated structuralist ideas into the analysis of capitalist production relations and the ideological formation of individuals, was interrogated. He introduced the concept of "interpellation. These ideological apparatuses shape individuals by instilling specific notions of normality, authority, and values, thus embedding them within society. By internalising gender roles, consumer behaviour, and perceptions of work and property, these apparatuses help sustain patriarchal and capitalist structures (Babka & Posselt, 2024). Patriarchal and capitalist structures that get reinforced with new inventions and different points of views.

In the chapter of power plays, the outcomes of such social structures were mentioned, and Eco-Modernism was discovered. This environmental philosophy argues for the decoupling of

human progress from environmental impacts through technological innovation and economic development. Proponents believe that advanced technologies can address environmental challenges without requiring radical changes to societal structures (Grunwald, 2018).

Shift of Societal Fears (Fear of the Unknown)

"Octavia Butler argues that the need for hierarchy is the fatal genetic flaw in human beings." (Genova, 1994, p.7) One crisis haunts the next, an interplay of choosing which one to focus on. The housing crisis is pushing social inequalities further, a climate that turns, voting polls that turn to the right. The shift of societal fears is taking a turn again. Throughout history people were worried about different happenings, whether it was famine, war, terrorism, economic crisis, drugs, there are different phenomena in focus on which people worry about. The fear and *difference* of queerness has come up since the first movements around the 1950's.

The Fear of the *Other*.

Edward Said's book Orientalism (1978) highlights the processual construction of cultural otherness within colonial and post-colonial contexts.

The *Other* can take on many faces. In a patriarchal society, the woman can also be seen as the *Other*. In a patriarchal society, it is unsurprising that a monotheistic God is male-identified. These characteristics of a monotheistic God reflect Catherine Keller's assertion that males are seen as separative selves, while femininity is considered more soluble or relational (Keller, 1986). Whilst this feeling of being a God may be pleasant, the fear of having this taken away creeps in. The interconnection of psychology, ideology, and society establishes the Western male God as the ideal male ego, assumed to be morally superior and the unquestioned norm, thereby structuring society around patriarchal values. "Society is structured around this norm—as patriarchy." (Carfore, 2021, p.240).

"Entanglements are not a name for the interconnectedness of all being as one, but "ents are relations of obligation—being bound to the other—enfolded traces of other- ing. Othering, the constitution of an "Other," entails an indebted- ness to the "Other," who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the "self"—a diffraction/dispersion of identity. "Otherness" is an entangled relation of difference (*différance*)." (Barad, 2011, p.150). Barad's concept of entanglements describes connections between beings as relationships of mutual obligation and co-constitution, rather than as a unified whole. "Othering" produces differences, but these differences involve interdependencies where the self and the other are

materially and relationally intertwined. "Otherness" is thus a dynamic relation of difference, not a separation, reshaping how we understand identity.

The fear of queerness, historically and in some contemporary contexts, comes from a variety of factors, including cultural, religious, and social influences. Queerness often gets levelled with the notion of femininity, thus not only being paired with the face of the *Other* (women) but also with being queer in their sexuality and deriving from the heteronormative norm. These intersectional crossroads show together the inequalities our societies have created.

Judith Butler, in "Gender Trouble" (1990) critiques societal binaries that serve power structures, stating that deviance is a label applied by those in power to maintain social order. Queer ecology challenges heteronormativity.

Throughout history, societies have established norms and expectations regarding gender roles, sexuality, and relationships. Queerness, which challenges these norms by deviating from heterosexual and cisgender identities, can evoke fear and discomfort among individuals who adhere strictly to traditional gender and sexual binaries. Many of these established norms stem from religious contexts.

Belief systems shape the world we as human beings inhabit. Presently, 4.3 billion people, or 55 percent of the global population, believe in a monotheistic God. When God is perceived as male, characteristics associated with power are often attributed to masculinity. This psychological tendency leads individuals to unconsciously assign qualities of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence to male figures in the real world. Because God is a figure that is not encountered in everyday life, these assumptions frequently remain unchallenged (Carfore, 2021).

"The logic of colonization is based on a hyperseparation between two poles of a dualism, or contrasting pair, where one is seen as superior and the other inferior. Examples of these dualisms are man–woman, human–nature, White–Black, master–slave, God–world, reason–emotion, public–private, production–reproduction. Dualisms have been the major forms of oppression in Western thought as they are "closely tied with domination and accumulation." (Carfore, 2021, p.238).

Both these fears are deeply rooted in the unknown and represent significant challenges to traditional norms and future stability. The fear of queerness confronts established notions of gender and sexuality, disrupting heteronormative and binary frameworks. Simultaneously, the fear of the climate crisis encapsulates existential dread over environmental degradation and the uncertain future of the planet. These fears, while seemingly disparate, intersect

through a shared apprehension of the unknown and an inherent resistance to change within societal structures. Ignorance and misinformation about queer identities and experiences contribute to fear and prejudice. People who are unfamiliar with or misinformed about queerness may perceive it as abnormal, unnatural, or threatening, reinforcing negative stereotypes and attitudes. In this context stereotypes and stigmatisation of queer individuals in media, literature, and popular culture have perpetuated fear and misconceptions about queerness. Portrayals of queer people as deviant, predatory, or mentally ill reinforce societal anxieties and contribute to discrimination and violence against queer individuals. This fear of queerness can also stem from a desire to maintain power and control over marginalised groups. In patriarchal societies, for example, the dominance of heterosexual masculinity is often upheld through the marginalisation and oppression of queer individuals, who are seen as threats to traditional power structures (Connell, 1998).

The intersection of patriarchy and capitalism perpetuates social resistance to change by reinforcing normative binaries such as masculine/feminine and productive/reproductive. These binaries not only limit individual agency, but also serve to exclude those who deviate from prescribed gender roles or challenge existing power structures (Eisenstein, 2010).

Power structures and hierarchies can have different sources. Being born into one or "working one's way up" are just two common examples that people use. "Octavia Butler argues that the need for hierarchy is the fatal genetic flaw in human beings" (Genova, 1994, p.7).

Queerness challenges conventional understandings of sexuality, gender, and identity, leading some people to fear what they do not understand or cannot categorise within existing frameworks. Fear of the unknown can manifest as hostility, prejudice, or avoidance towards queer individuals and communities. In many societies, queerness has been historically criminalised or pathologised through laws, medical diagnoses, and social norms. Fear of legal or social repercussions for deviating from heterosexual and cisgender norms can deter individuals from expressing their authentic identities and contribute to internalised homophobia and transphobia. The fear of queerness is often linked to societal discomfort with deviations from perceived norms of gender and sexuality. Historically, heteronormativity has been upheld as the "natural" and "normal" state, marginalising any expressions of queerness as aberrant or threatening. This fear manifests in various forms, including discrimination, stigmatisation, and institutionalised violence against queer individuals. The unknown aspects of queerness challenge rigid gender binaries and traditional family structures, prompting resistance and backlash from those invested in maintaining these

norms. Such fears are not merely individual prejudices but are deeply embedded in cultural, legal, and social institutions that perpetuate heteronormative ideologies.

Parallel to the fear of queerness, the climate crisis engenders a profound anxiety rooted in the unknown. The uncertainty of future environmental conditions, the scale of potential devastation, and the inadequacy of current measures to combat climate change contribute to a collective sense of dread. The climate crisis demands a radical rethinking of the human relationship with the natural world and challenges the sustainability of current economic and social practices. This fear is compounded by the often abstract and distant nature of climate change, making it difficult for individuals and societies to grasp its immediacy and scale fully. The inertia in addressing the climate crisis reflects a broader reluctance to confront the unknown and make necessary systemic changes (Norgaard, 2011).

"I often see universities addressing the call for more diversity and inclusion by placing diverse individuals into patriarchal structures and positions of power without questioning patriarchal dominator ideologies" (Carfore, 2021, p.236).

The fear of change, something other than people are used to. Without going into theological territory, it is important to mention that the current worldview and society has been heavily influenced by religious beliefs and views. One of such is the heaven/hell binary. The belief that earth is just a temporary place to live before either going to heaven or hell (Botero et al., 2014). Carrying out crimes against nature is allowed as earth is just a pre-stage of heaven and hell, perpetuating the wasteful culture that humans have created. With fear people oftentimes encounter either 2 sets of responses. The first one is paralysis and the second is action. Similar to a fight or flight reaction, when confronted with "life threatening" situations or phenomena, people become perplexed and feel helpless, then turning to old ways which give them comfort but usually does not help the problem.

The other side of the coin can be seen with Pascal's reflections on human finitude and mortality underscore the fragility and impermanence of human existence. This perspective can foster environmental awareness and humility, encouraging individuals to recognise the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living beings. By acknowledging the finite nature of human life and the Earth's resources, individuals may be motivated to adopt more sustainable and respectful practices towards the natural world. Pascal often emphasised the vastness of the universe compared to the smallness of human beings. He pointed out that humans are trapped between the infinities of the incredibly large (the cosmos) and the incredibly small (atoms), highlighting the limited and fragile place in the grand scheme of things, similar to Barad (Campos, 2018).

Both fears—of queerness and the climate crisis—highlight a broader societal resistance to change and the unknown. This resistance is often rooted in the comfort of familiar structures and the perceived threat posed by alternative ways of living and thinking. The fear of queerness disrupts conventional understandings of identity and relationships, while the climate crisis necessitates a departure from established economic and consumption patterns. In both cases, the unknown represents a loss of control and predictability, driving resistance and perpetuation of the status quo.

Fear of a Better Future.

Daggett (2018) argues that climate change denial and associated climate-destructive behaviours are, to a significant degree, compensatory reactions to underlying racial, gender, and climate-related anxieties that are experienced as challenges to this traditional white Western masculinity and power. The compensatory behaviours, she argues, manifest as authoritarian desires and their associated socio-political movements. The defence of fossil fuel interests under petro-masculinity can be seen as a form of resistance to environmental sustainability initiatives. This resistance mirrors societal opposition to queerness and other non-normative identities, illustrating how entrenched power structures resist transformative change that threatens their stability. The concept can be framed as a crime against nature, where the aggressive defence of fossil fuel consumption leads to significant environmental harm (Nelson, 2020).

They fear losing the societal superiority that results from their being white and, among the men, from their being male. The fact their views may be myopic, inaccurate, or offensive in myriad ways does not diminish their fundamental importance to those who maintain them. Perhaps, their idealised, mythologised national past also includes petro-masculine conceptions of petroleum-driven industry, white supremacy, and dominance over the feminised Mother Earth (Nelson, 2020). Encouraging people to take responsibility for broader societal and environmental concerns, beyond their immediate self-interests, requires a multifaceted approach that addresses psychological, social, and structural barriers.

Societal fears change and develop, the current being the climate crisis and for others the fear of queerness. Daggett's (2018) research paper about petro-masculinity, shows that many individuals who defensively deny or downplay climate change likely do so to maintain existential stability, warding off feelings of dread and associated guilt over their own petroleum usage or other harmful climate-related behaviours. This ingrained prejudice against women, whether conscious or unconscious, has perhaps been exacerbated by fears concerning shifts in sex and gender roles and associated social power structures, such as

increased rights for queer individuals and the growing influence of the #MeToo movement (Nelson, 2020, p.284). This narcissistic crisis can lead to scapegoating and compensatory violence, including grandiose, omnipotent acts against devalued others (Daggett, 2018). The intersection of these fears underscores the need for a more inclusive and adaptive societal approach. Embracing the unknown, whether in terms of gender diversity or environmental sustainability, requires a shift in cultural narratives and institutional practices. It calls for fostering resilience and adaptability in the face of uncertainty and recognizing the interconnectedness of social and ecological systems.

Red String and Intra-Action

"What if we were to recognize that differentiating is a material act that is not about radical separation, but on the contrary, about making connections and commitments?" (Barad, 2011, p.150).

Barad suggests that differentiation is not about isolating or separating entities but about creating meaningful relationships and commitments. This view shows that distinctions arise through connections, highlighting the interconnected nature of the world and our responsibilities within it. Through Barad's term of intra-action, my interest in all connected games of the universe have been started. Not only are humans all intertwined but actions are too. Choosing one form for a society can lead to many different results. To quote Bell Hooks (1989, p.22), the feminist movement should be a "liberation struggle"; a struggle to "exist apart from and as a part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all forms. must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression."

Everything, everywhere, all at once. Ecofeminism criticises the interconnected systems of patriarchy, capitalism and environmental degradation and highlights the disproportionate impact on women and marginalised communities (Puleo, 2017). In parallel, queer theory disrupts normative ideas about gender and sexuality, challenges binary thinking, and reveals the fluidity and diversity of identities (Watson, 2005). Barad's (2011, p.125) notion of "*intra-action* (in contrast to the usual 'interaction which presumes the prior existence of independent entities/relata) marks an important shift, re- opening and refiguring foundational notions of classical ontology such as causality, agency, space, time, matter, discourse, responsibility, and accountability."

Barad's concept of "intra-action" challenges the traditional idea of "interaction," which assumes entities exist independently before coming into contact. Instead, intra-action

suggests that entities and their properties emerge through their relationships and processes of entanglement. This perspective reshapes foundational ideas about causality, agency, and responsibility by emphasising interconnectedness and the co-creation of reality, rather than seeing things as fixed and separate.

With the body of this thesis we have had an insight in many different disciplines, showing the intra-connectedness of the issues and phenomena. One of the bigger theories revolved around philosophy and Niklas Luhmann's systems theory on governmentality. His theory provides a robust framework for understanding how complex social systems operate, adapt, and reproduce themselves. Luhmann's theory is rooted in the concept of autopoiesis, a term he borrowed from biology. It describes the ability of a system to reproduce and maintain itself through its own operations. In social systems, this means that they define their own boundaries, elements, and operations. Social systems communicate and operate based on a set of internal rules and structures that are self-generated and self-maintained. His view on communication shifts the focus from individual actions to the processes and structures of communication that sustain the system (Luhmann, 1989).

In a similar sense Michel Foucault has talked about biopower. He raises the question what the types of power are that actually affect people in daily life? Power, according to Foucault, has undergone a fundamental transformation in the st in the last 100 years. Power today doesn't have a stable centre that can be identified and stopped, power is an unstable network flowing in all directions all at once. His concept of capillary works through the current Western society, power is executed through us, the advertising see, surveillance, cultural norms, persuasion, suggestion, the things people share online. define what is normal and abnormal, who should be accepted and listened to and who should be silenced. Power is diffuse. It is invisible (West, 2018). In the methodologies of Ecofeminism, talked about, whether activist or academic, religious or secular, radical, cultural, or ecowomanist, emphasise the "important connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature." (Adams & Gruen, 2022, p.1). Ecofeminist theory explores these connections empirically, epistemologically, and conceptually/symbolically (and/or culturally) (Eaton, 2005; Lorentzen & Eaton, 2003; Carfore, 2021).

Ecofeminist scholars like Carolyn Merchant (2006) argue that the exploitation of women and nature are interconnected processes driven by patriarchal and capitalist ideologies. Merchant's work emphasises how the mechanistic worldview of capitalism views both women and nature as resources to be controlled and exploited. This systemic blindness is discussed by Luhmann himself in his book "Ecological Communication" (1989), where he argues that environmental issues are difficult to address within existing social systems

because they require a shift in the fundamental codes and operations of these systems. The economic system, focused on growth and profit, often neglects ecological concerns, leading to unsustainable practices.

Barad (2011) argues that all entities are interconnected, challenging the conventional view of individual entities as separate, fixed, and bounded objects. Instead, Barad proposes that entities are entangled parts of phenomena, constituted by material-discursive intra-actions that extend across space and time. This perspective redefines "material" and "discursive" elements, detaching them from traditional human-centred foundations and reconceptualizing them as dynamic and interwoven within broader relational networks.

In the state of research, topics were about dualisms and their polarities. Although polarities form the fundamental metaphysical framework of reality, Plumwood identifies dualism as a more intricate concept. Polarities are present universally and constantly, being all-encompassing and often interconnected. They can be interdependent and sometimes converge, potentially being essential to each other (Carfore, 2021).

Philosophers like Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and Aristotle, along with some Eastern religions, describe reality as an interconnected web of opposing forces. Although these forces seem to be in opposition, they cannot exist independently; each is defined in relation to the *Other*; polarities are defined only in relation with the *Other*—as up can only exist opposed to down, left to right, and self to other, etc..

Hooks' intersectional feminist perspective emphasises the interconnectedness of social identities and systems of oppression, including race, class, gender, and environmental injustice. Hooks' ecological feminism advocates for a feminist ethic of care towards the natural world, challenging patriarchal and capitalist notions of domination and exploitation. By applying care ethics to environmental issues, Hooks' emphasises the importance of nurturing and sustaining relationships with the Earth and all living beings. Hooks' advocacy for decolonizing feminism and environmentalism calls attention to the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and extractivism that underpin crimes against nature. Environmental justice movements must confront the historical injustices and power imbalances that have shaped patterns of environmental harm and ecological destruction. Hooks' insights into decolonial praxis and resistance offer strategies for challenging colonialist narratives and advancing environmental justice agendas rooted in solidarity, reciprocity, and respect for Indigenous sovereignty and land rights (Biana, 2020).

"'Feminism's most compelling epistemological insight lies in the connections it has made between knowledge and power.' (Lennon and Whitford, 1994)." (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006, p.40)

Feminism has revealed the deep ties between knowledge and power, showing that what is accepted as "truth" often reflects the perspectives and interests of those in dominant social positions. Feminism critiques how traditional knowledge systems have historically excluded or marginalised certain voices, especially those of women, queer people and other oppressed groups, and emphasises the need to rethink knowledge production in ways that acknowledge and challenge power imbalances. This insight reshapes the understanding of both knowledge and its role in maintaining or disrupting social hierarchies.

Discussion

Summary of Findings

Over the course of this thesis I have asked the question how certain phenomena, like the climate crisis and the discrimination against queer behaviour, can be explained when nature is inherently queer and capitalism is ruling as a societal form of governance.

Key findings have been put into subsections in the analysis part of the thesis. Starting with politics of responsibility as it is one of the bigger themes which has responded through the different categories. The chapter on the politics of responsibility explores the complex interplay of power, morality, and societal norms, emphasising the need to address injustices in society. Cornel West's phrase "Justice is what love looks like in public" highlights the importance of advocating for the marginalised and speaking against societal injustices. The text discusses theories like Foucault's "biopower," which examines how power shapes societal norms, and Luhmann's systems theory, which explores how social systems operate and adapt.

Politics of responsibility also discusses the concept of "carbon guilt," where individuals feel responsible for ecological harm, concealing systemic issues built in capitalism. This perspective can lead to frustration and defeatism, ignoring the broader power dynamics at play. By applying an intersectional lens, the chapter highlights how environmental injustices disproportionately affect marginalised communities, reinforcing social inequalities. The chapter calls for a critical examination of how power, ideologies, and societal structures perpetuate environmental and social injustices.

Washing the planet and people talked about the mechanics behind greenwashing and the lobbying that has been going on in society. Technological Solutions vs. Systemic Change. With the opening metaphor of a washing machine, it symbolises the misguided belief in simple technological fixes for complex global issues. This reflects a tendency to offload responsibility onto technological solutions rather than addressing systemic issues.

The chapter discusses how societal structures have historically categorised individuals and nature into binaries (e.g., nature/culture, male/female) to maintain hierarchies and control. This aligns with theories from scholars like Ortner and Butler, who critique how these binaries perpetuate inequalities. Nature, in our research question and proven throughout history, is described as inherently queer, challenging the notion that heteronormativity is

"natural". Binaries and hierarchies have been created and sold as what is normal and natural.

In the chapter, critique capitalism and patriarchy for fostering exploitation and environmental degradation, I am arguing for a shift towards more sustainable and inclusive systems. This involves questioning the prioritisation of economic growth over democratic values and environmental sustainability. Foucault's concept of "capillary power" and Althusser's "interpellation" illustrate how power operates through societal norms and institutions, shaping individual identities and behaviours. These structures support patriarchal and capitalist ideologies, reinforcing the status quo. The chapter emphasises the importance of moral and ethical considerations in shaping perceptions and behaviours towards the climate crisis and discrimination. It calls for a framework that values ecological and social justice over economic gains. Highlighting the role of community engagement, the chapter stresses the importance of collective action and solidarity in addressing these global challenges. Concepts like uBuntu offer a holistic approach, advocating for interconnectedness and reciprocity between humans and nature. Addressing "hyperobjects" like climate change requires rethinking traditional approaches and embracing new paradigms that integrate technological innovation with cultural shifts towards sustainability and inclusivity.

In the third chapter of the analysis, there is a focus on societal fears and the fear of the unknown. The chapter discusses the shift in societal fears, focusing on the fear of the unknown, the *Other* and its impact on societal structures and beliefs. Fear of queerness has persisted since the 1950s and is intertwined with broader anxieties about the "*Other*," as articulated by Edward Said in "Orientalism," and further developed by Homi Bhabha.

The fear of the "*Other*" extends to women and queer individuals, perceived as threats to patriarchal and heteronormative norms. These fears are rooted in a desire to maintain power and control and are reinforced by cultural, religious, and social influences. The belief in a monotheistic male God, as discussed by Keller and Carfore, supports patriarchal values and structures societal norms around binaries like man-woman and human-nature.

Barad's concept of "entanglements" emphasises that othering is an interrelated process involving an obligation to the "*Other*". This reinforces the idea that societal norms are maintained through exclusionary practices that perpetuate inequalities. The fear of queerness challenges established norms of gender and sexuality, disrupting binary frameworks and evoking resistance. Queerphobia is deeply rooted in cultural, religious, and

social norms, as explored by Morton (2013) and Carfore (2021), which enforce binary understandings of gender and sexuality.

Similarly, the fear of the climate crisis stems from its existential threat and the uncertainty of future environmental conditions. Climate change denial, particularly among petro-masculine groups, is driven by a desire to maintain the status quo and a fear of the socio-economic shifts required to address environmental issues (Nelson, 2020). Daggett's (2018) concept of "petro-masculinity" illustrates how resistance to environmental sustainability is linked to defending traditional power dynamics. This resistance is similar to opposition to queerness and other non-normative identities. It reflects a desire to maintain societal superiority and control, often fueled by fears of losing power associated with whiteness and masculinity.

Both fears highlight societal resistance to change and the unknown, reflecting a reluctance to abandon familiar structures. The chapter analyses the research of our literature, that societal resistance to change is deeply embedded in cultural, legal, and social institutions that uphold heteronormative ideologies. Both fears—of queerness and the climate crisis—highlight the broader societal reluctance to embrace the unknown.

The literature indicates that conservative white males, in particular, resist acknowledging climate change due to their investment in fossil fuel-driven economies and traditional gender roles (Kahan et al., 2007). Similarly, the marginalisation of queer identities is perpetuated by entrenched cultural and religious ideologies that resist fluidity and diversity in gender and sexuality (Butler, 1990).

The findings from the analysis reveal a complex interplay between environmental degradation, queer identities, and the capitalist framework. This aligns closely with existing theories in queer ecology and ecofeminism, which argue that the exploitation of nature and marginalised identities are intertwined. For instance, Karen Barad's concept of "crimes against nature" underpins this intersectionality, emphasising how societal and environmental injustices are mutually reinforcing.

The last chapter of the analysis, I followed the red string that led us through this thesis, the start of it all and how things end. Focusing on the idea of *intra-action* as introduced by Karen Barad (2011, p.150), she suggests that "What if we were to recognize that differentiating is a material act that is not about radical separation, but on the contrary, about making connections and commitments?". This idea is central to understanding how everything is intertwined, including human actions and societal structures.

Barad's theory is complemented by ecofeminism and queer theory. Ecofeminism critiques how patriarchy and capitalism contribute to environmental degradation, disproportionately affecting women and marginalised communities. Carolyn Merchant highlights how these systems exploit both women and nature by treating them as resources to be controlled. Queer theory adds another layer by challenging binary and normative ideas about gender and sexuality, emphasising the fluidity and diversity of identities.

Philosophers like Michel Foucault and Niklas Luhmann further explain these dynamics. Foucault's concept of biopower suggests that power is a diffuse network, influencing society through norms and cultural expectations rather than a centralised authority. Luhmann's systems theory describes social systems as self-reproducing entities that focus on maintaining their own operations, often overlooking ecological concerns due to a focus on profit.

This chapter also addresses dualisms and polarities, noting how concepts like male/female and human/nature are defined in relation to each other. Bell Hooks' intersectional feminism highlights how systems of oppression are interconnected, advocating for a feminist ethic of care towards the environment and putting emphasis on the need to decolonise feminism and environmentalism.

Theories and research call for recognising the interconnectedness of societal issues and embracing a shift in cultural narratives and institutional practices to foster resilience and adaptability in facing environmental and social challenges.

The research question examines how phenomena like the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour can be viewed as crimes against nature. The findings highlight the immense impact of capitalist patriarchy is playing in these issues. By framing both environmental and queer oppression as products of the same systemic forces, the research underscores the need for integrated approaches to social and environmental justice.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

It is important to discuss how findings contribute to or expand existing theories related to queer ecologies, ecofeminism, petro-masculinity, and eco-modernism.

The findings align with existing theories on power and social categorization. Foucault's theories on biopower and Luhmann's system theory offer robust explanations for how societal norms are sustained and propagated. Additionally, the concept of ecofeminism effectively links the exploitation of nature and marginalised communities, particularly women and queer individuals. The identified themes resonate with previous research by Butler on gender performativity and Ortner on the nature-culture dichotomy, reinforcing the argument that societal norms are constructed to maintain power hierarchies.

The findings corroborate the extensive literature on the intersection of environmental and social justice issues, particularly through the lens of ecofeminism and queer theory. They extend Foucault's concept of biopower by demonstrating how power dynamics not only govern bodies but also shape environmental policies and societal attitudes towards marginalised groups. The critique of capitalism and patriarchy aligns with the works of scholars like Carolyn Merchant and Judith Butler, who emphasise the role of power structures in perpetuating exploitation and discrimination.

The findings suggest a need for an even more integrated theoretical framework that combines detailed insights from ecofeminism, queer theory, and biopower to fully understand the interplay between environmental and social injustices.

Understanding hyperobjects, for example, changes how people perceive and interact with the world. It challenges us to rethink traditional approaches to problem-solving, as conventional methods may not be adequate for addressing issues like global warming. Hyperobjects require us to consider new ethical, philosophical, and practical approaches that acknowledge their vastness, complexity, and interconnectedness. They push us toward more holistic and systemic thinking, encouraging a deeper awareness of the implications of actions across time and space. Hyperobjects are a conceptual tool that helps us grapple with the immense and interconnected challenges of the Anthropocene, urging us to expand perspectives beyond immediate and localised concerns. The findings suggest that traditional theories of environmental and social justice need to incorporate a more intersectional lens, acknowledging the interconnectedness of ecological destruction and social marginalisation.

With theoretical implications, practical ones are just as important in order to explore the real-world applications of our findings, particularly in policymaking, activism, and education.

Practically, the findings highlight the importance of fostering inclusive and intersectional environmental policies that address the needs of marginalised communities. There is a need for policies that not only combat environmental degradation but also promote social justice by recognizing the interconnectedness of these issues. Advocacy and activism should focus on dismantling power hierarchies and promoting a more equitable and sustainable society. Strategies for addressing the climate crisis should not only focus on technological solutions but also on dismantling the socio-economic structures that perpetuate both environmental harm and social inequality. This could involve promoting inclusive and community-based approaches to sustainability and resilience.

Crimes Against Nature - RQ & H

The key points in the thesis involved the inherent Queerness of Nature and Capitalism. How Nature is inherently diverse and non-binary, with complexity and variability that defy strict categorisation. This queerness reflects a fluidity and interdependence among natural systems. Capitalism, with its focus on uniformity, commodification, and exploitation, often suppresses this natural diversity by imposing rigid structures and hierarchies. The two main phenomena of the Climate Crisis as a Crime Against Nature and Discrimination Against Queer Behavior. The exploitation and degradation of natural resources are driven by capitalist motives, which prioritise profit over ecological balance. The disruption of ecosystems and biodiversity reflects a violation of the natural world's inherent queerness, as these systems rely on diversity and balance for resilience and sustainability. Discrimination against queer individuals parallels the capitalist suppression of natural diversity, as it enforces binary norms and hierarchical values that deny the legitimacy of diverse identities and expressions. Such discrimination can be seen as a crime against nature by failing to acknowledge and respect the intrinsic diversity and fluidity inherent in both human and natural systems.

Another main conclusion to draw is from the Philosophical and Ethical Perspectives. Philosophies like uBuntu and the writings of Plumwood (1993) and Irigaray (1985) emphasise interconnectedness and critique the hierarchical structures that capitalism enforces, which often marginalised both ecological and social diversity. Daggett (2018) argues that climate denial and destructive behaviours are compensatory reactions to perceived threats to traditional power structures, further underscoring how these phenomena are intertwined with systemic injustices.

Societal Implications and Resistance make change hard. The resistance to accepting climate change and embracing queer identities often stems from entrenched power dynamics that feel threatened by change and diversity. Social movements and philosophies advocating for environmental and social justice emphasise the need to recognise and embrace diversity as a strength rather than a threat.

Phenomena like the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour can be viewed as crimes against nature when considering the inherent queerness of nature and capitalism. These phenomena arise from systemic structures that prioritise uniformity, hierarchy, and exploitation, which undermine the natural world's diverse and interconnected essence. Recognizing and addressing these issues requires a paradigm shift towards embracing diversity and interconnectedness, both in human societies and ecological systems,

challenging the entrenched power dynamics of capitalism. By fostering a deeper understanding of these interconnections, we as humans can work towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Taking a look at the hypothesis that with the rise of capitalism and patriarchy, the fall of the natural world and the further destruction of the planet are perpetuated and will continue if there is no change in worldview and morality.

My thesis suggests that a shift in worldview and morality towards one that embraces interconnectedness, diversity, and sustainability (as emphasised by concepts like uBuntu) is crucial for addressing these systemic issues. This aligns with the idea that transformative change in ethical and moral frameworks is necessary to counteract the destructive tendencies of capitalism and patriarchy. The research acknowledges the challenges but also highlights the potential for change through collective action, policy reform, and the promotion of alternative worldviews that value ecological and social diversity.

Based on the research and analysis, my hypothesis appears to be supported by the evidence gathered. The rise of capitalism and patriarchy is indeed linked to environmental degradation, and without a significant shift in worldview and moral values, these destructive patterns are likely to persist. This thesis argues convincingly for the need to redefine the relationship between humans and nature and to foster a more sustainable and equitable future.

Challenges, Limitations & Recommendations for Future Research

Limitations were found in a variety of ways. The research had to balance breadth and depth, covering a wide range of topics including petro-masculinity, eco-modernism, queerphobia, and climate change denial. This broad scope sometimes limited the depth with which each topic could be explored, potentially oversimplifying complex issues. Philosophical concepts involve complex interrelations and historical contexts. Ensuring a clear and cohesive narrative while addressing these complexities was challenging.

While a significant amount of secondary data was available, the research heavily relied on existing literature, which may not always capture the most current developments or nuanced perspectives. Additionally, accessing reliable data on sensitive topics like queer discrimination can be challenging due to underreporting and variability in data collection methods.

The study primarily focused on Western contexts, particularly the United States and Western Europe. This focus might not fully represent the global diversity of experiences and perspectives related to the themes discussed. Cultural and regional differences in attitudes toward gender, sexuality, and environmental issues are significant and warrant more detailed exploration. Whilst it was important to include as many perspectives as possible, selections had to be made. As with any research involving social issues, there is a risk of bias. The researcher's perspectives and the selection of literature could unintentionally introduce bias. Efforts were made to include diverse viewpoints, but complete objectivity is difficult to achieve. Future research should include more diverse geographical and cultural perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different theories manifest globally. Comparative studies across different regions could highlight unique challenges and effective strategies.

The interdisciplinary nature of the study, spanning sociology, environmental science, gender studies, and psychology, posed challenges in integrating findings across different fields. Each discipline has its own methodologies and theoretical frameworks, which can sometimes be difficult to reconcile. Further research should delve deeper into the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race, and environmental issues. Exploring how these intersecting identities influence experiences and responses to climate change and social justice can uncover more nuanced insights.

Issues related to climate change, gender, and sexuality are rapidly evolving. New developments, policies, and societal shifts occur frequently, which can render some findings outdated quickly. Keeping the research current and relevant was an ongoing challenge.

Conclusion

The findings from the analysis reveal several interconnected themes around societal structures and their influence on perceptions of both the climate crisis and queer behaviour. Key observations include the pervasive nature of binary categorizations within society, the influence of power dynamics on these perceptions, and the intersectionality of environmental and social justice issues. The theoretical frameworks of Foucault's biopower and ecofeminism by Carolyn Merchant (2006) elucidate how power operates over bodies and the environment, reinforcing dominant discourses that define 'normal' behaviour and justify exploitation.

The findings from the research align with several key theoretical frameworks and existing literature. The intersectional feminist perspective is consistent with Karen Barad's concept of "crimes against nature" and Timothy Morton's idea of ecological interdependence. Both Barad and Morton emphasise the interconnectedness of human actions, nature, and identity, highlighting how queer ecology can disrupt traditional anthropocentric views.

Moreover, the notion that queer identities challenge societal norms and face discrimination is well-supported by sociological theories such as Howard Becker's labelling theory (1963), which posits that deviance is a label applied by those in power to maintain social order. This aligns with the research's findings on the stigmatisation and marginalisation of queer communities.

The research question aims to explore how phenomena like the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour can be seen as crimes against nature, considering the inherent queerness of nature and the influence of capitalism. The findings are significant as they provide a nuanced understanding of the ways in which patriarchal and capitalist systems contribute to both environmental degradation and the marginalisation of queer identities. This dual focus on ecological and social justice underscores the importance of an intersectional approach in addressing complex global issues.

The findings and analysis explore the interconnectedness of societal structures, identities, and environmental issues through the lens of theories like intra-action, ecofeminism, queer theory, and systemic power dynamics.

Karen Barad's concept of intra-action challenges the notion of separate entities interacting with each other, suggesting instead that entities and their boundaries are mutually constituted through their relations. This perspective encourages us to see societal structures and identities as entangled and co-creating, rather than distinct and independent. The

analysis suggests that recognizing these connections is crucial for understanding the complex interplay of social issues and for fostering more holistic approaches to societal change.

Both ecofeminism and queer theory emphasise the fluidity and interconnectedness of identities and structures. Ecofeminism critiques how patriarchal and capitalist systems exploit both women and nature, arguing for a reconceptualization of these relationships that centres care and sustainability. Queer theory disrupts binary thinking about gender and sexuality, revealing how these binaries support broader systems of oppression. Together, these theories highlight how rigid structures not only perpetuate inequalities but also hinder efforts toward more inclusive and sustainable futures.

The examination of power dynamics, drawing from Foucault and Luhmann, reveals how power operates as a diffuse network rather than a centralised force. This view helps explain why systemic change is challenging, as power is embedded in cultural norms and social practices that often go unnoticed. This is similar to the analysis of dualisms, such as male/female and human/nature, demonstrating how these constructs are relational and often used to justify hierarchies and oppression.

Hierarchies, Intersectionality and Decolonisation also play a big role in Bell Hooks' insights of feminism and environmentalism which emphasise the need to address the historical and systemic roots of oppression. By acknowledging the interconnectedness of race, class, gender, and environmental issues, the findings again advocate for an approach to social and environmental justice that prioritises solidarity, reciprocity, and respect for marginalised voices and Indigenous sovereignty.

My analysis suggests that addressing societal and environmental challenges requires a shift in cultural narratives and institutional practices. By embracing the complexity and interconnectedness of these issues, society can move towards more adaptive and resilient solutions that account for the diverse and intertwined realities of human and ecological systems. This approach calls for a reimagining of societal norms and structures, fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future.

The chapter concludes with the notion that the pyramid of hierarchies that humans have created also created a pyramid of discrimination. A planet that is crying and dying, and we start to feel a sense of responsibility, to the world, and us. Is this what connects us all? The want to survive?

After an introduction of the brief topics, an elaborate state of research, an in-depth analysis and the findings, we can conclude that the initial aims to contribute to the discourse on crimes against nature by highlighting the gendered dimensions of the climate crisis and advocating for inclusive and rights-based approaches to environmental policy and governance has been reached.

The findings indicate that both capitalism and patriarchy contribute significantly to environmental degradation and social injustices by promoting hierarchical and exploitative relationships. These systems marginalise diverse voices and hinder sustainable practices, reinforcing the urgency of a paradigm shift towards ecological and social harmony.

This research highlights the need for re-evaluating the socio-economic structures and moral frameworks. Integrating principles of interconnectedness and diversity, can foster more equitable and sustainable practices. This has implications for policymakers, educators, and activists seeking to address environmental and social challenges.

While this thesis provides a critical examination of systemic issues, it is limited by its theoretical scope and the absence of empirical case studies. Further research incorporating quantitative data could provide additional insights into the practical application of these theories. Future research could explore empirical case studies that demonstrate successful implementations of alternative worldviews in various cultural and ecological contexts.

Ultimately, addressing the intertwined crises of environmental degradation and social injustice requires a fundamental shift in how we perceive and interact with the world. This thesis contributes to the ongoing dialogue by advocating for a reimagined future grounded in equity, sustainability, and collective responsibility.

Restating the Research Question and Objectives

This thesis embarked on an exploration of how phenomena such as the climate crisis and discrimination against queer behaviour can be perceived as crimes against nature. approached this inquiry through the intersectional lens of capitalism and patriarchy, challenging the conventional dichotomies and hierarchies that oppose the inherent queerness of nature. The objectives were to critically analyse the socio-political and economic structures that perpetuate these phenomena, explore the interconnectedness of ecological and social injustices, and propose alternative frameworks for understanding and addressing these challenges.

The findings reveal a complex interplay between capitalism, patriarchy, and environmental and social injustices. Capitalism, with its relentless pursuit of growth and profit, often prioritises economic gains over ecological sustainability, leading to widespread environmental degradation. This economic system is intertwined with patriarchal values that reinforce hierarchical structures, marginalising not only non-dominant social groups but also alternative ecological perspectives. The result is a societal framework that privileges power and control over harmony and balance, viewing the exploitation of nature and marginalised communities as acceptable.

The concept of "crimes against nature" is further explained through the analysis of how these systems foster discrimination against queer behaviour. By positioning heterosexuality and binary gender norms as the default, patriarchal capitalism perpetuates social norms that are inherently exclusionary and oppressive. This marginalisation reflects broader patterns of dominance and control that mirror environmental exploitation.

Additionally, the research highlights the potential of reimagining these relationships through the lens of queer ecology and interconnectedness. By embracing diversity, fluidity, and relationality, society can begin to dismantle the rigid structures that contribute to ecological and social crises.

The implications of these findings offer insights into both theoretical and practical dimensions. Theoretically, this research contributes to the growing body of literature that critiques the limitations of capitalism and patriarchy, particularly in the context of environmental and social justice. It underscores the necessity of integrating interdisciplinary perspectives that bridge ecological science with social theory, providing a more nuanced understanding of the systemic challenges.

Practically, the research advocates for transformative changes in policy and practice. Policymakers are urged to adopt holistic approaches that consider the interconnectedness of ecological and social systems. This involves promoting inclusive and equitable policies that address both environmental sustainability and social justice, recognizing the rights and contributions of marginalised communities in shaping sustainable futures.

Furthermore, the findings call for a shift in educational and cultural narratives. Fostering awareness and empathy, there can be cultivation of a sense of shared responsibility and collective action, empowering individuals and communities to engage in meaningful activism and advocacy.

Despite the comprehensive analysis presented in this thesis, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. The theoretical focus of the study, while providing valuable insights, lacks empirical validation through case studies or quantitative data. This limits the ability to generalise findings across diverse contexts and cultures.

Future research should aim to address these limitations by incorporating empirical methodologies that complement theoretical analysis. Longitudinal studies examining the impact of policy changes on ecological and social outcomes would provide valuable evidence for the efficacy of proposed solutions. Additionally, exploring cross-cultural perspectives on capitalism, patriarchy, and queerness could enrich the understanding of how these dynamics manifest in different socio-political contexts. Interdisciplinary collaborations that bring together scholars from fields such as environmental science, gender studies, sociology, and political science could further enhance the depth and breadth of research in this area. Such collaborations would facilitate the development of integrated frameworks that address the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced.

In conclusion, this thesis underscores the urgent need for a paradigm shift in how humans perceive and interact with the world. Challenging the entrenched systems of capitalism and patriarchy, we open the door to more equitable and sustainable futures. The inherent queerness of nature, with its emphasis on diversity, adaptability, and interconnectedness, offers a powerful metaphor for reimagining the relationships with each other and the planet.

The intertwined crises of environmental degradation and social injustice, are called to embrace alternative worldviews that prioritise cooperation, empathy, and resilience. This journey requires collective effort and a willingness to question and transform the norms that have long governed Western societies.

Through this research, I contribute to the growing dialogue on how to create a more just and sustainable world, advocating for policies and practices that align with the values of equity, diversity, and interconnectedness. By acknowledging our shared humanity and the intrinsic value of all life forms, we as humans, can work towards a future where both people and the planet thrive.

When I chose my topic of thesis, I wanted to create something useful. A toolbox for quick research, a spiderweb of information and yet also a breeding ground for more ideas. With every paper I read, more ideas and more subgenres and chapters were created. With the limitations of a master thesis also comes the opportunity to write something compact, something measurable. Rather than striving for traditional measurability, this thesis employs a literature review to explore concepts fluidly, embracing a non-normative, queer approach intended to evoke understanding through interpretative insights. It aims to be queer, to not be graspable and yet make the reader understand. A slight nod after a few passages and a question mark after you have finished a chapter. A thesis for me; something to learn from and to keep me challenged. Research and academia to use in my world of politics and activism and to spread to my surroundings of friends, family and acquaintances.

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