

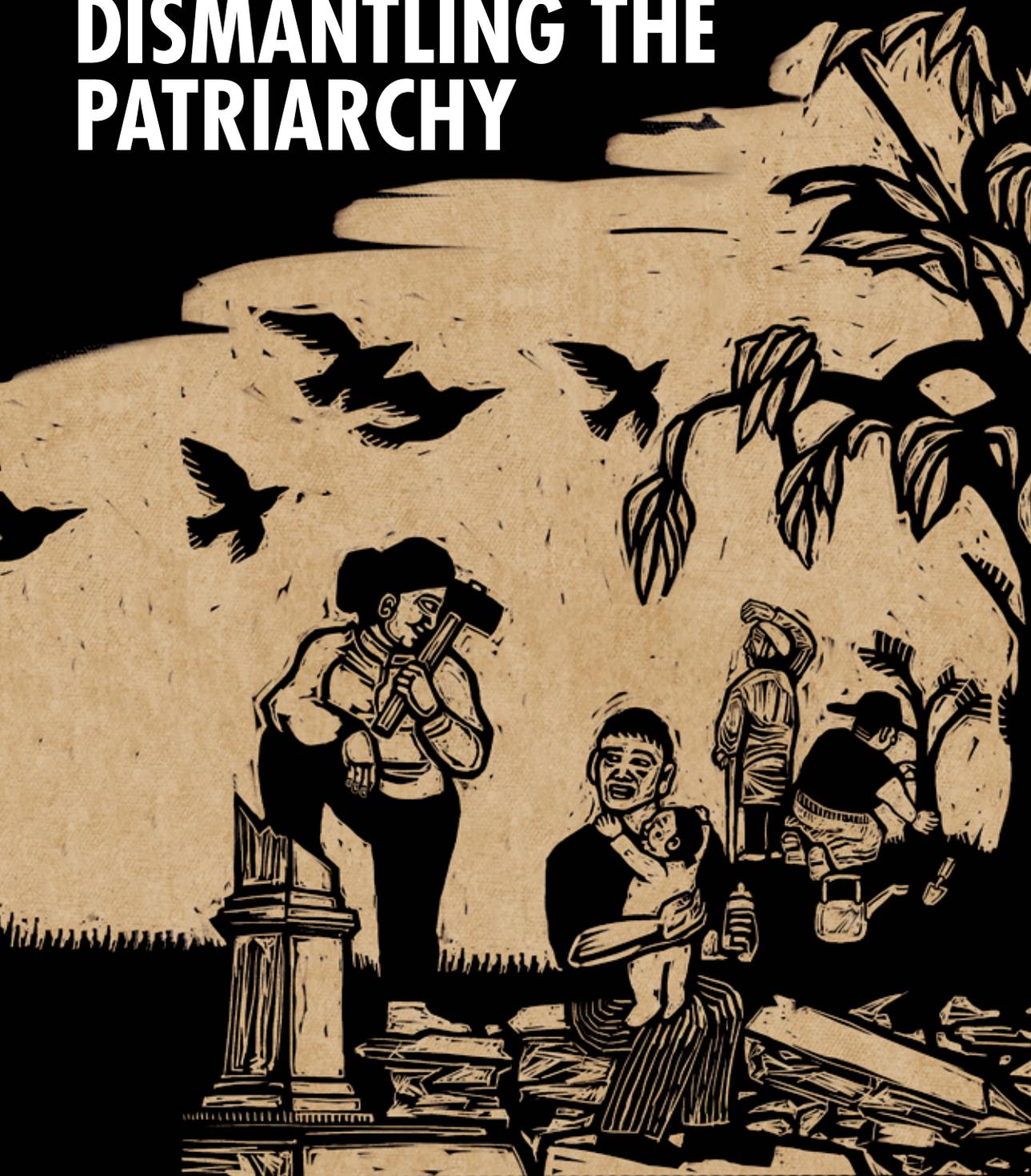
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Issue #140
August 2021
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The National Magazine of Friends of the Earth Australia

www.foe.org.au

GENDER JUSTICE AND DISMANTLING THE PATRIARCHY



Ringbarking Patriarchy
There is no climate justice without LGBTQIA+ liberation
War = peak toxic masculinity

Justice 4 Jari
Reflections on gender (in)justice
Patriarchy, gender and saving the forests



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Welcome to #140 of Chain Reaction! This edition's theme, "Gender Justice and Dismantling the Patriarchy", is a powerful reminder that transforming systems of oppression requires all of us to reflect, act, and dream. In these pages we hear from inspirational activists on their experiences of gender in/justice, and are asked to come into deeper relationship with what "dismantling the patriarchy" means for each of us in our own lives.

In exciting magazine news, the Chain Reaction Collective are going to be re-visioning our beautiful magazine! Do you have thoughts on your favourite sections, or dreams of what Chain Reaction could look like? Send them to us!

As part of these changes, we're inviting new folks to join the Chain Reaction collective, so if you're interested in crafting delicious social change narratives in print media, get in touch.

AND we're excited to introduce "Letters to the Editor" and "Who's Reading Chain Reaction?".

Send us a letter, email, or comment on the blog posts if you're inspired, annoyed, or thought-provoked by the articles you read in these covers. To get to know the people that make up the Chain Reaction community, send us a photo with a few sentences about you, and the answers to the questions "when/where did you first read Chain Reaction?", "what does FoE/Chain Reaction mean to you?", and "what environmental/social justice/alternative world building projects are you working on at the moment?", and we will feature a Chain Reaction reader in the magazine.

For the earth and each other,

Moran

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Friends of the Earth (FoE) Australia is a federation of independent local groups. Join FoEA today, sign up to our monthly newsletters, or donate!



Gas drilling moratorium is gone, but opposition remains

A strong five year campaign saw Victoria adopt a ban on all onshore gas drilling in 2014. While the ban on fracking (hydraulic fracturing, used to access unconventional gas like CSG) is permanent, the moratorium on conventional gas has now been lifted.

Recently, the world's leading energy organisation, the International Energy Agency (IEA), said that the exploitation and development of new oil and gas fields must stop this year and no new coal-fired power stations can be built if the world is to stay within safe limits of global heating and meet the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

We say that the decision by the Victorian government to reopen the state to gas companies is bad news for regional communities, for our farmers and for the climate.

Berrys Creek beef farmer and member of Coal and Gasfield Free Mirboo North, Fergus O'Connor, says, "It is hugely disappointing that onshore conventional gas is now being considered. As farmers, we are dealing with a changing climate on a daily basis and must adapt our farming practices accordingly. It is a well-established scientific fact that the burning of fossil fuels contributes to Climate Change and gas IS a fossil fuel. It's imperative that renewable energy takes over from fossil fuels as soon as possible."

Meanwhile, the good news is that Friends of the Earth has been developing a digital resource called DrillWatch to support impacted communities.

DrillWatch launches on August 11 2021.

Join the online launch event here: melbournefoe.org.au/drillwatchlaunch.

DrillWatch launched on August 22 2021. Get involved: drillwatch.org.au.

Court injunction stopped logging in Errinundra!

Since January this year protests in forests on the Errinundra Plateau in far East Gippsland have prevented logging. The area was one of the few places which weren't impacted by the devastating 2019/2020 bushfires. For nearly 4 months the community and supporters occupied the forests before Environment East Gippsland (EEG) went to court to halt logging in one of the coupes. Logging was stopped, and all the machines have now left the area!

Two areas have been taken off the immediate schedule, and state-owned VicForests told the courts they won't log forests in 'Alla Turca' till next year. Logging had only just started when the injunction came through. The Victorian government had hired private security who were stationed 24/7 in the area to prevent community members and supporters from protesting the logging. Now that the machines have left the camp has been packed down. Thanks to the combined efforts of citizen scientists, EEG and their legal team, direct action and all the public pressure, the forests are safe for now!

Government has a duty to protect young people from climate crisis

A historic case was brought forward by FoEA's member group School Strike

4 Climate Australia, where 8 students and a nun had a major win against the Federal Environment Minister, Susan Ley. The Court ruling found that the Minister has a duty to protect young people from catastrophic climate harm.

The case had sought an injunction to prevent Ley approving a proposal by Whitehaven Coal to expand the Vickery coalmine in northern New South Wales.

David Barnden, a lawyer representing the children, said it was a historic and "amazing decision" with potentially significant consequences. "The court has found that the minister owes a duty of care to younger children, to vulnerable people, and that duty says that the minister must not act in a way that causes harm - future harm - from climate change to younger people," he said outside court. "It is the first time in the world that such a duty of care has been recognised, especially in a common law country."

Speaking for the children, 17-year-old Ava Princi said it was "thrilling and deeply relieving" that the justice had recognised the minister had a duty of care. "My future and the future of all young people depends on Australia stepping away from fossil fuel projects and joining the world in taking decisive climate action."

Anj says all eight have "very personal stories about climate change", including the changing impact of the monsoon season on family members in India and witnessing firsthand the impact of fracking for coal-seam gas.

She said though an injunction was not granted the case was "not over yet". "There will be further submissions on what the duty of care means for the minister's decision and the mine," she said.

In his judgment, Bromberg said the evidence presented to the court showed the potential harm the children could face due to global heating "may fairly be described as catastrophic, particularly should global average surface temperatures rise to and exceed 3C beyond the pre-industrial level".

The ruling comes after more than 50,000 strikers in 50+ locations on May 21 with strikers across the continent striking against dangerous gas investment. The strikers hit the streets to fight for a safe future where money is spent responsibly in renewables, jobs, and First Nations led solutions. #ClassAction4Climate

Full story in the Guardian:
[foe.org.au/cr1407](https://www.foe.org.au/cr1407).

Follow School Strike 4 Climate on social media for more updates.

Corporate Cane Toad Award 2021

Rio Tinto and Mayur Resources were awarded the Corporate Cane Toad Award for their roles in contributing to environmental destruction and/or human rights violations worldwide. The winners were announced at a ceremony in Melbourne after a month of public voting in which over 1000 people voted for the six companies nominated.

Rio Tinto was voted the most toxic company for its decade long failure to clean up mines in Bougainville and recent destruction of Indigenous cultural sites in Australia. Mayur Resources received the second most votes from the public and the Cane Toad Award for pushing to open up a new polluting coal mine in the Pacific. Both are Australian mining resource companies.

"The Corporate Cane Toad Award names and shames Australian corporations implicated in Human rights violations and environmental destruction worldwide. People voted to crown Rio Tinto and Mayur Resources the country's most disgusting award and are demanding

change" said Sam Cossar, Friends of the Earth's Economic Justice campaigner.

"These inaugural Cane Toad Awards help draw attention to the ongoing problems of unethical and unacceptable corporate behaviour, and remind us of how much stronger our laws need to be in protecting human rights, including the rights of First Nations peoples, and the environment" said Luke Fletcher, from Jubilee Australia.

The award comes at a time when Australian companies are facing increased scrutiny over climate change commitments and riding roughshod on communities' right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent both in Australia and overseas.

Friends of the Earth, Jubilee and ActionAid Australia, the organisers of the Corporate Cane Toad, demand new binding rules from the government to ensure companies respect Human Rights, women's rights and the environment.

See the Corporate Cane Toad website for each companies nomination cases details: canetoadaward.org.



Dirt Radio: Tale of two wind farms

A new report suggests that Australia has some of the world's best offshore wind assets, in fact enough to replace our aging fleet of coal fired power plants. Centred in this new opportunity is the Latrobe Valley, home of Victoria's remaining brown coal reserves and power generation. It's never been as simple as switch off coal and switch on renewables. Dirt Radio, FoE's weekly 3CR radio show, talked with Pat Simons from Friends of the Earth's Yes2Renewables campaign to hear about some of the obstacles, and some of the opportunities that wind powered energy generation has for the community.

To listen to the podcast:
[foe.org.au/cr1402](https://www.foe.org.au/cr1402)

Take action: [foe.org.au/cr1401](https://www.foe.org.au/cr1401).

Uranium in Australian drinking water snapshot

Thousands of remote residents exposed to levels of uranium above guideline levels

The recently published WA Auditor Report “Delivering Essential Services to Remote Aboriginal Communities” has raised more concerns regarding water quality in remote Aboriginal communities in three regions of Western Australia: The Goldfields, the Pilbara and Kimberleys.

Problem microorganisms and contaminants listed in the report specify only *E.coli*, *Naegleria Fowleri*, *Nitrate* and *Uranium*. It is likely that a swathe of other “untested” contaminants will also be present in many remote water supplies.

Impacted Western Australian communities - The total number of WA remote residents impacted by uranium above guideline levels in drinking water probably now totals around 500 people (with perhaps an additional 500 - 1000 people in the Northern Territory). There have also been hundreds more people in Queensland and New South Wales exposed to relatively high levels of uranium in their drinking water over the past few years. The majority of people impacted will be Aboriginal.

Uranium in drinking water can be difficult to treat if no alternative supplies can be found. The source of the uranium in impacted communities is sourced from local geological formations and groundwater.

Existing and “Decommissioned” uranium mines continue to leach radioactive water into the environment and will continue to do so for thousands of years. BHP’s Olympic Dam mine has a history including seepage from tailing impoundments into underlying groundwater. Ranger Uranium Mine (where toxic tailings are currently being dumped into pits) has leached contamination into Kakadu National Park, Rum Jungle uranium mine (1954-71) caused Acid Mine Drainage pollution to the East Finnis River where 640,000 tonnes of tailings were discharged damaging 100sqkm of floodplains. Mary Kathleen Mine and Ben Lomond Mine in Queensland have also caused downstream pollution. Anyone downstream of these leaking mine sites could also be jeopardised through exposure to waterways downstream of the mines. Nuclear blasts at Maralinga and Emu Field in the 1950’s also lead widespread contamination of Australia through nuclear fallout, including drinking water reservoirs and water tanks.

Drinking water map: water.australianmap.net

Learn more about uranium issues: melbournefoe.org.au/nuclear_free.

Federal Government puts oceans on the front line.

The Federal Government has announced that a vast area of ocean around Australia will be offered up for offshore oil and gas exploration. This includes 21 areas across six basins covering 80,000 sq km in Commonwealth waters. The area includes a large section of the western coastline of Victoria, from Port Campbell along the coastline that includes the Great Ocean Road and the 12 Apostles. Coastline that represents important sea-country and stories for First Nations groups.

This announcement is at odds with climate science and community opinion. It is also at odds with our commitments made under the Paris climate agreement.

Just last year Friends of the Earth got together with Surfers for Climate and local community groups to say #NoWayOtway and oppose an expansion of drilling in state waters along this same stretch of coastline. Belinda Baggs, Co-Founder Surfers For Climate says that “During a climate emergency opening

up new offshore oil and gas exploration acreage is ludicrous. This ocean is wild, thriving with marine life and hosts an abundance of much needed kelp forests sequestering carbon from our atmosphere. This bioregion and the local economies that rely on it being healthy need to be protected not passed to fossil fools. Time for action before its too late”.

With both State and Federal Governments now looking to expand drilling in the Otway Basin, we now have a dual threat on our hands.

Friends of the Earth will continue to track which companies apply for licenses along this coastline and alert you to opportunities to pressure them. We need to get the attention of members of the federal government based in Victoria, and let them know we don’t want offshore development.

Can you sign our petition to the PM calling for a cancellation of these tenders? foe.org.au/protect_the_bass_strait.



Politicians across Victoria receive People’s Climate Strategy

Friday 18 June 2021 was Act on Climate’s statewide Delivery Day: the day community members met with political representatives from every political party in every region of Victoria to deliver them copies of our People’s Climate Strategy.

From the coast, to the city, to the Murray, community members met with over 50 Members of Parliament to talk to them about the climate impacts they are already seeing unfold, and the local climate solutions they want to see rolled out.

We framed the climate crisis as something that is here and now for people in Victoria—not decades away, or only at the polar ice caps. And with personal stories and local community knowledge, we made climate change relevant to every MP.

Just days after receiving copies, the Leader and Deputy leader of the Victorian Nationals publicly noted the strong community support for tackling the climate crisis. Our message even made it into the federal parliament, with Labor MP Ged Kearney calling on members of the Morrison government to read the People’s Climate Strategy.

Check out Act on Climate’s Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for delivery photos, and the Ballarat Courier article covering the story: foe.org.au/cr1406.

National nuclear dump plan will be challenged in court

Jim Green

After a delay of over a year, the National Radioactive Waste Management Amendment Bill passed through the Senate in June.

The passage of the legislation is being trumpeted as a move towards the establishment of a national nuclear waste dump (or 'facility') near Kimba on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula. But it might prove to be the project's undoing.

To secure passage of the legislation, the federal government had to abandon its attempt to shield its nuclear dump plan from judicial review.

The Barngarla Determination Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC), representing traditional owners of the ear-marked site near Kimba, will launch a judicial review that could scuttle the proposed dump. That legal challenge will be initiated as soon as federal minister Keith Pitt formally nominates the Kimba site, presumably before the end of 2021.

If the federal government thought the dump proposal would survive a judicial review, it would not have fought so hard and long to prevent such a review.

The BDAC said: "It's a good outcome for the Barngarla people, but also all Australians because it affects all Australians. The Barngarla and farmers worked together and the Senate did not agree to pass any bill which removed judicial review. The government gave in to these demands and effectively amended their own bill to reflect what Barngarla, Labor and the cross bench had said we required."

Barngarla Traditional Owners are seeking donations to facilitate the legal challenge. If you can help, please search Barngarla at gofundme.com, or this link will take you straight there: <https://tinyurl.com/barngarla>

The Morrison government excluded traditional owners from a 'community ballot' held in 2019. So the BDAC engaged the Australian Election Company to conduct a confidential postal ballot open to all Barngarla Traditional Owners. Not one of the respondents voted in favour of the nuclear dump.

The Morrison government's willingness to impose a nuclear dump despite the opposition of traditional owners stands in stark contrast to SA Labor's position that Traditional Owners should have a right of veto over nuclear projects given the sad and sorry nuclear history of this state stretching back to the atomic bomb tests.

Premier Steven Marshall has chosen to support his federal colleagues rather than supporting traditional owners and other South Australians opposed to the dump. A Friends of the Earth Australia media release said: "Marshall's support for a nuclear waste dump that is unanimously opposed

by Barngarla Traditional Owners is unconscionable, crude racism and we call on the Premier to support Traditional Owners – and all South Australians – instead of shamefully falling into line behind his federal colleagues.

The Friends of the Earth media release continued: "Repeated claims that most of the nuclear waste is medical in origin are dishonest. Claims that 45 jobs will be generated are deeply implausible."

SA legislation

The SA Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Act was an initiative of the SA Olsen Liberal government to prevent the imposition of an intermediate-level nuclear waste dump in SA. The state legislation was strengthened by the Rann government in 2002.

Marshall should take his lead from former Premiers Olsen and Rann by fighting Canberra's push to dump nuclear waste in SA and the push to override state legislation.

The SA Nuclear Waste Facility (Prohibition) Act mandates a state Parliamentary inquiry in response to any attempt to impose a nuclear waste dump in SA and the Premier should initiate that inquiry immediately.

The dump will likely be the thin edge of the wedge – indeed several Coalition Senators linked the passage of the Amendment Bill to the development of a nuclear power industry in Australia.

Measured by radioactivity, well over 90 percent of the waste is long-lived intermediate-level waste that the federal government wants to store above ground at Kimba until such time as a deep underground disposal facility is established. No effort is being made to find a location for such a facility so this long-lived waste would remain stored above ground in SA *ad infinitum*.

Nearly all intermediate-level waste is currently stored by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) at its Lucas Heights site, 30 kms south of Sydney. It should remain there until a suitable disposal facility is available.

Claims that ANSTO is running out of waste storage space are dishonest. Indeed those claims have been rejected by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), the national nuclear regulator. In parliamentary testimony, ARPANSA head Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson stated: "Waste can be safely stored at Lucas Heights for decades to come."

The Morrison government's plan to move intermediate-level waste from secure above-ground storage at Lucas Heights to far less secure storage at Kimba is absurd and indefensible.

The Howard government had the common sense to abandon plans to co-locate intermediate-level waste with a repository for low-level waste, and Premier Marshall should insist that the Morrison government do the same.

South Australians fought long and hard to prevent the Howard government turning SA into the nation's nuclear waste dump.

We fought and won the campaign to stop the Flinders Ranges being used for a national dump.

We fought and won the campaign to stop SA being turned into the world's nuclear waste dump.

And if we force the Morrison government to abandon the current dump plan, perhaps the message will finally sink in: South Australians have greater ambitions for our state than to be someone else's nuclear waste dump, and we reject the crude racism of the Morrison and Marshall governments.

More information: nuclear.foe.org.au/waste, and No Rad Waste Kimba Facebook page.

Dr. Jim Green is the national nuclear campaigner with Friends of the Earth Australia.

Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) is a federation of autonomous organisations from all over the world. Our members, in over 70 countries, campaign on the most urgent environmental and social issues, while working towards sustainable societies. FoEI currently has five international programs: Climate Justice and Energy; Economic Justice, Resisting Neoliberalism; Food Sovereignty; Forests and Biodiversity; and Resisting Mining, Oil and Gas.

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Action alerts: www.foei.org/take-action

FoE International's web radio station (in five languages): <https://rnr.fm/>

Historic victory: judge forces Shell to drastically reduce CO2 emissions globally.

Friends of the Earth wins climate case against Shell!

For the first time in history, a judge has held a corporation liable for causing dangerous climate change. As a result of legal action brought by Friends of the Earth Netherlands (Milieudefensie) together with 17,000 co-plaintiffs and six other organisations, the court in The Hague ruled that Shell must reduce its CO2 emissions by 45% within 10 years. This historic verdict has enormous consequences for Shell and other big polluters globally.

Roger Cox, lawyer for Friends of the Earth Netherlands, is delighted, saying "This is a turning point in history. This case is unique because it is the first time a judge has ordered a large polluting company to comply with the Paris Climate Agreement. This ruling may also have major consequences for other big polluters."

The verdict stated Shell is responsible for emissions from customers (scope 3) and suppliers, and that Shell must

comply with the judgment immediately, because their current climate policy is not concrete enough.

Sam Cossar from Friends of the Earth Australia said, "This is a landmark victory for climate justice and will impact Shell's operations globally, including here in Australia by requiring their business to be in line with global carbon targets. Our hope is that this verdict will trigger a wave of climate litigation against big polluters, to force them to stop extracting and burning fossil fuels."

Donald Pols director of Friends of the Earth Netherlands concluded, "This verdict is an enormous step forward for the international climate movement. One of the world's biggest polluters has finally been held responsible. This is also a clear signal to the other big polluters that they also have to act now."

Listen to the Dirt Radio Podcast about this momentous decision: foe.org.au/cr1404.

Justice for coal power plant workers killed in police shooting

On 17 April 2021, Bangladeshi police clashed with peaceful demonstrators at the Banshkhali Coal Power Plant in Chattogram, killing seven workers. Friends of the Earth Australia join Friends of the Earth Bangladesh in condemning the use of lethal weapons against peaceful protesters.

The power plant is a joint venture between Bangladeshi industrialists S Alam Group, and Chinese companies SEPCO III Power Construction Corporation and HTG Development Group Company Ltd at Banshkhali Upazila. Power plant workers and villagers had formed a large, peaceful demonstration outside the under-construction Banshkhali Coal Power

Plant demanding the payment of unpaid wages, reduced working hours for the holy month of Ramadan, and better working conditions. An altercation at the site led to police firing live ammunition at the demonstrators. Five workers were killed, and dozens more injured, with two more individuals succumbing to injuries in the following days, bringing the death toll to seven. This is the third incident of violence at the Banshkhali Power Plant project in recent years. Previously, similar incidents led to the deaths of four people in 2016, and one person in 2017.

On 28 April, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)/Friends of the Earth Bangladesh held a virtual

consultation with workers and local community members to discuss the events leading up to the violence at Banshkhali. The community members described how the project owners in association with law enforcement and local gangs had created a climate of fear in the area. False cases were filed to give law enforcement an excuse to harass and intimidate the community members. In the aftermath of the Banshkhali incident, the project owners and the police filed a case against the demonstrating workers and community members for instigating violence, naming thousands of unnamed workers in the case - a tactic used before as well to give law enforcement license to harass, threaten and intimidate the community.

Hundreds of grassroots organisations to oppose the UN Food Systems Summit

Over 300 global civil society organisations of small-scale food producers, researchers and Indigenous Peoples' will gather online (25-28 July) to protest against the UN Food Systems Pre-Summit. The People's Counter-Mobilisation to Transform Corporate Food Systems is the latest in a series of rejections of the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), including a coalition of scientists who petitioned to boycott it.

The People's Autonomous Response to the UNFSS argues that the Summit distracts from the real problems the planet faces at this critical juncture. Resulting from a partnership between the UN and the World Economic Forum (formed by the world's top 1000 corporations), the Summit is disproportionately influenced by corporate actors, and lacks transparency and accountability mechanisms.

It diverts energy, critical mass and financial resources away from the real solutions needed to tackle the multiple hunger, climate and health crises.

Globalised, industrialised food systems fail most people, and the Covid-19 pandemic has worsened the situation. The Global South still reels from Covid-19, unveiling the entrenched structural power asymmetries, fragility and injustice that underpin the predominant food system.

Over 380 million people make up the transnational movements of peasants and farmers, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists, landless, migrants, fisherfolk, food and agricultural workers, consumers, and urban food insecure joining the protest. They demand a radical transformation of corporate food systems towards a just, inclusive and truly sustainable food system. They equally demand increased participation in existing democratic food governance models, such as the UN Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and its High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). The UNFSS threatens to undermine CFS, which is the foremost inclusive intergovernmental international policy-making arena. By exceptionally prioritising a human rights-based approach, the CFS provides a space for the most affected to have their voices heard. Yet the multilateral UN system is being hijacked by corporate interests to legitimise an even more detrimental, technologically-driven and crisis-ridden food system.

Further information:
foodsystems4people.org.

The Buenos Aires blockade site in early June 2021



Rinehart's roadblock in Ecuador

Gina Rinehart's Ecuadorian subsidiary, Hanrine, continues to face ongoing problems in Ecuador. Reports from that country have revealed that a local judge has recently ruled that a 40 day blockade of the main road into the northern Ecuadorian town of Buenos Aires, by Hanrine workers, is violating the rights of local residents.

The judge ordered that Hanrine are given 10 days to lift the blockade in early June. We are waiting to hear if the blockade has been lifted.

According to reports from Rainforest Action Group, hundreds of workers had been camped on the side of the road at the entrance of Buenos Aires for a month, stopping locals from entering the town.

Mining is a "psychological trigger" for many in the Buenos Aires community, who had to endure close to two years of thousands of illegal miners entering their community between 2017/19 looking for gold. In July 2019, thousands of troops were sent in to clear out the Hanrine concession, called Imba 2, after the bodies of miners had been found dumped down mine shafts. Mafia and organised criminals had been vying for control of the illegal mining operations.

In response to recent threats and the trauma of the gold rush, villagers set up a blockade to stop miners from entering their community in early 2021.

The community was opposed to both large scale and small scale mining. They were also alarmed that the Ecuadorian Government had granted large concessions to "anonymous" mining companies in 2017, with no consultation with local residents. The community also called for a Constitutional Injunction to stop Hanrine operating in the area. So unpopular has mining become in the community that a Hanrine mining camp was set alight in September 2020. Hanrine has been making unsuccessful attempts to enter the mining concessions since the massive military operation to remove the illegal miners in 2019.

Australian mining companies are in Ecuador to get access to the country's copper reserves. Australian companies are positioning themselves to mine the copper under the impression that most of the copper will be used in renewable technologies such as electric cars. New public relations spin from mining companies to get support for their mining operations include phrases such as "Raw Materials for Green Technology". It's a shame that such terminology does not take into account the interests of local people opposed to such mining in the land that they hold so dear.

Further information:
rainforestactiongroup.org.

No more violence, no more silence!

Friends of the Earth International's commitment to preventing violence and sexual harassment in our federation.

We strive for a world without violence against women in all spheres of life – at work, in public and in private. Our struggle for system change, based on social, environmental and economic justice, must also be defined by gender justice. We want to live in a world where women and all people live free from violence, harassment or threats.

Violence therefore has no place in our Friends of the Earth federation. We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that women's and all people's right to a life free of violence is respected. We commit to holding ourselves accountable at all levels of our federation, to our national member groups, to the communities we work alongside and to our allied organisations.

How do we understand violence?

Violence and the threat of violence are used as tools of control to maintain patriarchal and other power relations, with women suffering institutionalised, domestic, sexual and verbal/psychological violence and harassment when they step out of their naturalised roles. This is especially true for women of colour, black, indigenous, working class and migrant women, lesbian and bisexual women and trans/non-binary folks.

Examples include:

- Migrant and refugee women who face sexual harassment at the hands of their employers and and, should they report it, institutional violence and xenophobic threats at the hands of the police for being undocumented or so-called “illegal”.
- Black women or women of colour who are sexualised in society and considered to be “at the service” of men as a social group, including colleagues or superiors in the work place who are more likely to pressure them for sex in order to get a promotion or to keep their jobs.
- Women who are sexually abused “because” they were out in the street at night, or wearing “provocative” clothing, or to “correct” their lesbian/bisexual sexual orientation.
- Working class women who suffer increased levels of harassment and physical violence at the hands of the police and military as they have to leave their homes during the Covid-19 pandemic to earn money or buy food to feed their families.
- A dramatically increasing number of women who are suffering domestic violence and femicide as directives to stay at home during the Covid-19 pandemic trap them and their children in unsafe homes alongside aggressors and perpetrators.

Our commitment to non-violence

We are struggling to end violence against women in all its forms; systemic violence that is reproduced in women's bodies and perpetuated through the sexual division of labour.

We will not accept, tolerate or condone any form of violence, threat of violence or harassment against women or against anyone in the federation or in our societies. This includes all those who suffer from violence, the threat of violence and harassment due to their ethnicity, nationality, economic situation, sexual orientation, gender identity (trans or non-binary people) or special physical or mental health needs.

Our Friends of the Earth International Policy on Violence and Sexual harassment is a key institutional document and tool to support our member groups and regions to put this commitment into practice. It lays out minimum standards and general practices for the prevention, prohibition and deterring of violence and sexual harassment. It is grounded on five fundamental principles that guide its implementation:

- 1. Zero tolerance to violence;**
- 2. Prevention;**
- 3. Survivor centred;**
- 4. Confidentiality and protection;**
- 5. Being time-bound, transparent and effective.**

We believe the best way to respond to violence and sexual harassment is to prevent it from happening in the first place, which is why the Policy uses the prevention of violence as a guiding principle and essential to achieving gender justice and dismantling patriarchy and power relations in the federation. Through political formation, training, the creation of safe spaces, and institutional procedures and practice, this Policy supports us as we actively work towards:

- A working and activist environment where violence and harassment are not tolerated or considered normal or natural;
- Challenging power relations and promoting equality and justice.

Should violence, the threat of violence or sexual harassment occur in our federation, we will respond to accusations with seriousness and respect, based on the principles outlined above and on the basis of the needs and wishes of the survivor. A step by step procedure will be followed to ensure that these principles are upheld and that decisions are made in accordance with our commitment to gender justice and dismantling patriarchy.

View FoEI's “no to violence and sexual harassment” manual: foe.org.au/cr140_10, or poster: foe.org.au/cr140_11.



NO MORE SILENCE, NO MORE VIOLENCE!



OUR ORGANISATION IS A SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN

DID YOU KNOW?

Friends of the Earth International has a zero tolerance Policy on Violence and Sexual harassment. This means that the federation will not accept, tolerate or condone any form of violence or harassment against women or against anyone in the Friends of the Earth member groups or in our societies.

TYPES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE:

Verbal Non-verbal Physical

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?



Feminist Frontlines: Covid-19, the crisis of care and the need for a just feminist recovery

Written by the FoEI Gender Justice Dismantling Patriarchy Working Group 2020: Celia Alldridge, Dipti Bhatnagar, Isabelle Geuskens, Ivana Kulic, Kirtana Chandraskeran, Kwami Kpondzo, Mai Taqeban, Marília Gonçalves, Natalia Salvático, Peruth Atukwatse, Rita Uwaka, Sam Castro, Silvia Quiroa.

Feminist frontlines: the crisis of care

This global crisis has affirmed our belief that the centrality of life is and should be our most important value. We know that care is essential for life, both human and nature. The crisis has made visible the *interdependence* between human beings and the *ecodependence* of humans on nature and non-human life that ecofeminism and feminist economics teach us.

Covid-19 has exposed the magnitude of the care crisis in our societies: a crisis that has developed over centuries through the failure of the patriarchal, racist, capitalist system to care for peoples, nature and territories, and its reliance on the work and bodies-territories of women to make up for and fix the damage caused by the capitalist (neo)colonialist system of exploitation. Through the sexual division of labour, women have been and continue to be socially responsible for, and burdened with the care of families, children, the elderly, the sick and communities in their homes and as workers in front line services of health, aged care, child care, education, entertainment, etc.

In **Mexico**, care, cleaning and cooking tasks are carried out by women who carry out this care work for an average of 59 hours a week (unpaid).

In the current crisis, many women around the world who are confined to their homes with their families (including our colleagues and comrades) have taken on even greater care and domestic work responsibilities as they homeschool their children and look after other family members, while continuing their professional and activist work remotely.

In **Australia**, women are spending 80.8% more time on unpaid housework each day than men. In **Argentina**, women with partners and children spent an average of 10 hours a day on domestic work, versus single mothers spending 9 hours 54 minutes (equals practically the same). In **Brazil**, half of all women have started caring for someone during the pandemic (rising to 62% of women living in rural areas). 41% of women who have continued to receive a salary during lockdown are working more (paid work + care work). While in the **UK**, the percentage of mothers responsible for 90% - 100% of childcare during lockdown has increased from 27% (before lockdown) to 45%.

This workload has had and continues to have a severe impact on women's mental health. In **Argentina**, the majority of women questioned reported negative moods during isolation, with worries about family health and lack of income. 52% of mothers with partners don't spend any time doing sports. 58% of single mothers don't spend time on the internet or social media.

Globally frontline health workers, of which women make up the majority, are facing even greater exploitation with inadequate financial compensation, including for the risks they take and the responsibilities they have for others, lacking protective equipment and clothing and with extremely high levels of anxiety for themselves, their patients and their families.

According to **UN statistics**, and on a global level, women make up 70% of all health care workers and 85% of all nurses. In **Australia** and **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, women workers are especially exposed to virus' as workers on the frontlines of health services, as cleaners, retail and hospitality staff, carers of the elderly, children and those with special needs (jobs that are already insecure and low paying) In **Brazil**, women are 85% of nurses, 85% of carers of the elderly and 45.6% of doctors (UN Women statistics).

Working class women and in particular single mothers are forced to choose between confinement in the home or working to feed their families, at the risk of catching the virus. In **Cameroon**, social isolation made it difficult for women, who constitute nearly 80 percent of informal sector workers, to support themselves and their families. In **Brazil**, 40% of women questioned said the pandemic and social isolation have put their households at risk (trouble with paying bills, etc). Of these, 55% are black women. In the **UK**, 23.7% Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) mothers are struggling to feed their children (compared to 19% white mothers) and more than 4 out of 10 BAME women say they would struggle to make ends meet in July - August.

This impossible dilemma has had and continues to have a severe impact on mental health. In the **UK**, BAME women have the highest levels of anxiety and lowest levels of life satisfaction compared to white men and women during the pandemic. This is particularly true for black women, women of colour and migrant women, including those who work in other people's homes, as cleaners, maids, nannies and other domestic services. In **Hong Kong**, women domestic staff from the Philippines and Indonesia fear for their jobs, fear for their health (because they have inadequate protective clothing) and are even more exploited than normal because they can't leave the family's house they live in (and therefore work on their days off and are reliant on their bosses for all needs).

At the same time many other working class people, including the LGBTQIA+ population and people with special physical and mental health needs, have lost their employment altogether, have suffered a significant reduction in household income, or struggle to access what they need to survive. In **Argentina**, 75% all women questioned reported reduction in household income, and 94% trans women reported the same (although a small number of trans women replied). In the **UK**, 63% of women with special physical needs struggled to access groceries and necessities from shops, while 6 in 10 fear missing out on medicine and 53% report high levels of anxiety.

While the pandemic has revealed deep racist and gendered divides, the far right political class has also used the pandemic to further restrict bodily

autonomy and human rights globally. Women's bodies and territories once more have become a battleground for fundamentalist, conservative political authorities and religious leaders, who have declared women's reproductive autonomy "non-essential" as they close down abortion services and drastically reduce women's access to pre-natal care and other sexual and reproductive care.

In the **US**, the states of Ohio and Texas ordered the shut down of abortion clinics in March 2020 on the justification of "non-essential surgery". In **Uganda**, access to maternal care has also been curtailed by the travel restrictions imposed by the government and several pregnant women are reported to have lost their lives. In **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, a woman died of sepsis because (it is believed) she needed urgent help with pregnancy complications but doctors didn't want to do treat her before her Covid-19 results were received. They then changed shifts and she wasn't given adequate care. In **Australia** regional abortion clinics have closed across the country.

Women are also suffering a brutal rise in violence and femicide across the world and the directives to stay at home in all or our countries are trapping many women and their children in unsafe homes alongside aggressors and perpetrators.

There are reports of a significant rise in violence against women in countries across all regions and in the majority of countries, including Brazil, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Canada, China, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, France, India, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, UK, United States, Zimbabwe...

For example, there was a 30% increase in complaints in **Cyprus** and **France**, a 50% increase in complaints in **Brazil**, **Argentina**, 39%, some regions of **Mexico**, 30%, and in **Colombia** there has been a reported increase in calls to the 155 line for domestic violence of 175 % in 2020, compared to the same period in 2019: more than 90 % of these calls correspond to women.

In **El Salvador**, between March and May 2020, there were 158 cases of domestic violence and 341 reports of sexual violence, in addition to 26 femicides between March 17 and June 2, 2020 (perpetrated by partners). Meanwhile, in **Honduras**, in times of pandemic, 10,000 women reported being victims of physical violence (according to the national emergency system). And in **Kenya**, there been increasing reports of sexual and gender-based violence with cases of FGM and child marriage also reported.

Many women have nowhere to go and no avenue to seek help (even in "normal" circumstances and in most countries, there are not enough safe houses, support services and investments in prevention and support). It is much harder to organise collective support for women survivors of violence when public services have been significantly reduced and "non-essential" workers are quarantined at home. Many safe houses and shelters are closing or not accepting new residents during this crisis, and police – where they are considered part of the justice system for women – are moved to duties around enforcing lock-downs.

Women and the LGBTQIA+ population in the majority of countries are now experiencing increased violence in their homes, in the streets and public spaces. They are at increased risk of violence and harassment at the hands of the police and military, particularly women of colour and indigenous and migrant women. Many of our countries are rapidly sliding into becoming police States with the effective suspension of democratic processes and the concentration of power in executive branches that is being used – under the guise of the pandemic – to push through conservative right wing agendas that ultimately will further harm people and the planet.

In **Liberia**, a series of attacks on women in their homes or as they ventured out for food during the lockdown were recorded by young men patrolling the streets during social isolation. In **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, there was a 2 month curfew between 8pm and 5am. This led to a violation of human rights with fear and control of population guaranteed through deployment of the police and special units on the streets with heavy automatic weapons. In **Zimbabwe**, three women were arrested following a protest demonstrating the government's failure to address hunger amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. They were held for 36 hours and they underwent torture, rape, and physical assault. They were then released on bail, but the violence against them has yet to be properly investigated, they still need proper medical attention for their injuries, and they are still to face charges.

This crisis has made visible and more acute the inequality and systemic oppressions of patriarchy, racism, class oppression, (neo)colonialism, ableism, heteronormativity and capitalism that structure our societies and our relationships with each other and with nature. It is these mutually reinforcing oppressions that have contributed to this crisis and determine whether we live or die during it.

In **Northern Macedonia**, a Roma woman died because the hospital insisted on waiting for the Covid 19 test results and wouldn't let her wait in the hospital due to strong discrimination against Roma people, even though she has reported severe bleeding. She died because help was offered only when she collapsed (by which time it was too late). In **Brazil** the first person to die of Covid-19 in Rio de Janeiro state was a black, working class woman who worked as a maid in a house whose owner had come back from Italy with the virus. The woman worker who died couldn't afford not to work. Also in **Brazil**, a study of 30,000 cases of Covid showed that 55% who died were black versus 38% who were white. In the **USA**, black people have a death rate from Covid of 50.3 per 100 thousand versus 20.7 per 100 thousand white people.

The response of the majority of world governments has been to prioritise the economy over care, community and nature, with bail outs of capitalist corporations such as airlines and dirty energy and extractivist industries such as fossil fuels and to hope things will return to "normal" once the crisis has passed.

A Just Feminist Recovery

But we refuse to go back to the old "normal": the dominance; the extractivist (neo)colonialism; the patriarchal, racist capitalism; the crisis of care. As feminists and environmental justice activists, we demand an end to violence against women – both domestic and by the State – and against nature and an end to exploitation of women workers. We demand the reorganisation of care work so that the responsibility is shared between men, women and the State – in other words, an end to the sexual division of labour. We also insist on the centering of care and of life which begins with well-funded public health services that are accessible to all.

Our actions now will shape what comes after this crisis. Together with our feminist and other allies, we already have a strong, feminist and "intersectional" vision for the just recovery out of this current crisis and for a just and feminist transition towards the world we want. Together, we know the way forward and we must use this opportunity to fight for and build system change through the dismantling of patriarchy and all systems of oppression and corporate power for environmental, social, gender and economic justice in our territories, communities, countries and internationally. This is the moment to create new paradigms with justice and life at their centre, a new relationship with care – and therefore with women's autonomy, work, bodies, territories. We must nurture the seeds and cultivate a new relationship with each other and with nature. We will not return to **normal**.

In compiling this edition, Chain Reaction asked activists to share their experiences of gender (in) justice and dismantling the patriarchy within the broader environment and social justice movement. This is a powerful conversation to have, in honouring that the patriarchy, sexism, and injustice exists, and continues to exist, within our movements; and to recognise our movements – whichever campaign we're working on – are an integral part of dismantling systems of oppression.

Reflections on gender (in)justice within the environment and social justice movement

Sarah Day

Trigger Warnings: Sexual harassment, sexual abuse, systemic misogyny.

Just as I find it hard to talk about gender justice, it is hard to write about for several reasons. One is the knowledge that it will be impossible to convey the depth and breadth of the problem and be met with the serious response it deserves; the other is the discomfort of the despair and rage that begin to bubble up as soon as I turn my mind to the topic. I realise I keep a damper on this by choosing to walk away from many confrontations. This is also a choice for mental and sometimes physical safety.

I'm also aware that using binary language when trying to talk about gender justice can overlook gender diversity and the fact that many people are dealing with multiple forms of oppression. The experiences I describe here occurred between cis women – mainly myself, a not-straight white cis woman without a disability – and straight white cis men without a disability. I hope I don't make anyone feel excluded with the following words.

And immediately what springs to mind are some memories that cause the fear of broaching this topic. For example, being in a meeting specifically convened to talk about gender justice with long term grassroots environmental and social justice campaigners who care deeply about justice and feeling like I was going to throw up when, as a woman was disclosing her sexual assault to the group, a man was laughing at something on his phone. No one said anything about it.

Another memory, of the last time I tried to have an in depth conversations with a long term campaigner about the gender roles being played out at a particular action. I had mentioned I'd wanted to talk about it in a text and received the reply that these were important concerns that he would like to discuss. Then nothing. When I saw him next and asked if we would discuss them he said he didn't want to. I mentioned his text message and he said that he'd "only said that to keep the peace".

Even writing these anonymous examples feels like some kind of betrayal. I am in awe of the bravery of people who call things out directly.

The reason it feels so hard to talk about gender justice with straight white cis men is how your whole history of humiliation and harm is sitting there beside you while you try and explain why the latest horrible thing is not ok. This history seems to remain invisible no matter how many women disclose their experiences.

You are wide open to attack and in my experience, attack is the usual response, whether that's anger, shaming, denial, joking, brushing off or pretending to care and then continuing to do the same thing. When the person you're talking to is your ally against the injustice and damage taking place in the world, these responses can feel unbearable. So I rarely take the risk.

The invisible history I am talking about is growing up doing domestic chores and following a code of conduct my brother and dad were never asked to; being welcomed to teenage hood by being told I'm both embarrassingly inexperienced and a slut, hearing rumours I am both desperate for a poke and a dicktease; in my twenties losing count of the times my breasts and thighs are groped, my bum slapped and squeezed, my hand pulled and head pushed towards dicks by both strangers and boyfriends and being angrily called a bitch for not responding favourably; being slapped in the face, screamed at and wanked in front of in public; being sexually assaulted more than once and not telling anyone because it was obviously my fault; in my thirties finally telling close friends and finding out that nearly every one of them has been sexually assaulted. Feeling lucky compared to what has happened to them.

Environmental and social justice organisations don't exist outside the patriarchy, so it shouldn't be a surprise that gender injustice persists within them. But it does cut deeper when it happens and is not addressed or even noticed.

Some of my experiences feel too small to be worth mentioning but it's the endless drip feed that wears you down. Some of them are bigger. Whenever they occur, big or small, I get the same sick feeling of suppressed rage and overwhelming doubt – is this ok or not? A big deal or not? Should I say something? What's the right way to do that? Will that just make things worse?

I am talking about a colleague who arrived four years after me proudly telling me he's getting paid \$10,000 p.a. more for the same job, and remembering back to when I'd started on the lowest salary band, writing (a real letter) to the chairperson to ask if my skills and experience had been taken into account and receiving no reply.

Being told to do the wrong thing by a new manager who doesn't understand my job, him pointing in my face, going red with rage and yelling, "that is a direct order".

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Contact Moran at chainreaction@foe.org.au.

Having a member of the management committee of the organisation I worked for tell extensive lies about me – someone I'd barely interacted with outside of meetings. Him telling me to meet him in a café and being told by him I'll have to "lose some skin". Being called into a meeting and pretend-sacked by him and two other committee members, despite having resigned three weeks before. Him trying to prevent me being paid out long service leave. Never being asked if the lies were true or given an apology.

Saying yes to a project on the explicit condition that I would not be required to work with a person I chose to no longer, due to the impact his chaos and agro behaviour had on my work and mental health. That person taking control of the project. When asking how this situation would be managed, being told everyone just needed to cooperate and I should hand the project over to him.

These brief descriptions are just the tip of icebergs of bullshit. The exact same bullshit I hear from friends, colleagues, activists constantly.

I studied and volunteered since my early twenties to gain enough skills and experience to get the job I really want – working to protect forests. For a long time I assumed I wasn't being taken seriously because I didn't have the skills and experience of those around me. But nearly 20 years later, even with the conveyed legitimacy of being paid to do this work, there's plenty of times I'm not taken seriously, plenty of the times by younger less experienced men.

I now purposely do environmental and social justice work, paid and unpaid, with groups of incredible, encouraging, supportive, strong, inspiring, exceedingly cooperative people in which the vast majority of the group, and those making the decisions, are not straight white cis men. The contrast is startling. No one's mood dominates the atmosphere. Everyone is taken seriously. Everyone is listened to and given equal say. We know we all have different skills, experience and perspectives to share.

I am heartened by the changes I see in environment and social justice movements in the last few years with many new people getting involved who just won't accept the behaviour that wasn't even recognised as problematic when I got started twenty years ago (you'd hope so, hey!). It is incredible to see women and non-binary folks call things out, come forward, speak up and take on roles up the front.

This is not to say that these movements haven't always been full of incredible, brave and strong

people pushing against this internal tide. And maybe lots of us (I did) felt like we had to spend our energy almost exclusively on trying to stop one particular injustice or ecocide in order to have any impact at all.

I've come to realise that the patriarchy, the ecocide and all other forms of oppression must be taken on together because they are inextricably linked and are sucking us of power and motivation as well as being unjust and deadly.

I am aware that these words are nowhere near as powerful as the rage I feel because the patriarchy is masterful at inculcating fear and doubt and undermining worth – all of which I feel as I write.

I'm aware that I'm in a very privileged position and benefit from the oppression of other people, that in this country, where I live on stolen Dja Dja Wurrung land, allyship with the fight of First Nations people for Sovereignty, self-determination and care of Country is the foundation of the better future we all fight for. It's the foundation of any future at all.

Sarah Day is a forest campaigner who has worked in diverse environmental and social justice organisations and was the FoE Community Campaigner for the 2018 Victorian election forest campaign.



Gender injustice and environmental injustice are intersectional

Alana Mountain

Trigger warnings: Sexual harassment, systemic misogyny.

As I begin to write this piece about how gender and environmental injustices are intersectional, memories begin to flood my mind, as well as deeply philosophical positions on how the violence against our earth is a reflection of the violence which has existed within our human race; especially that of women and gender diverse people for thousands of years.

To flesh out the connection between the two I am going to share some first hand accounts of violence I have experienced whilst being a peaceful protester in the forests of Victoria.

Throughout the years of my involvement in the forest movement, I have experienced some prime examples of gender violence as well as bearing witness to my friends subjected to the questioning of their gender by loggers. At one of my first blockades in East Gippsland, I was berated by a male logger. He was very angry when he arrived at 4:30am to an established camp and a tree-sit connected to a tripod, lashed to the gate. He walked through screaming and kicking things. He picked up my camp chair and threw it into the fire. I had a flashback to this Australian children's book I used to read about the Yowie's. His behaviour was akin to the evil earth eating gremlin in a fit of rage, hellbent on getting his way.

Later throughout the morning, he continued his taunts and foul commentary. He told me that he bet I was "f*cking all the men at camp", that I was the "camp whore". I arked up at him and said you are being disgusting and your commentary is out of line. He then proceeded to tell me I was a "moody b*tch and you are probably on your rags". Without knowing me, this man, with a strong sense of entitlement to destroy our native forests which sustains life on our planet, had used language which was extremely misogynistic and degrading. He referred to my sacred bleed as "rags" and called me a whore...all because I was there to take a stand against the destruction of the environment.

Later in the week, when I was in town picking up supplies, he stalked me in a supermarket yelling things up and down the aisles. Luckily I possess an inner strength that cannot be shaken by some pathetic toxic male flexing his ego. I think it angered him more that I wasn't afraid of him. A young woman, standing in the way of him and his criminal job, unflinching to his anger. His only tool he could

think of to deploy against me...When there is a lack of education, you find that violence is a tool drawn upon to assert your dominance. I doubt these loggers are enrolled in behavioural violence or de-escalation workshops facilitated by VicForests.

I have been sworn at, kicked, berated and stalked. I have had a giant log truck driver purposefully drive into me and another woman. All of this was carried out by men. When you take a look at the statistics in Australia, of how violence occurs against women, it is no surprise it exists and extends to the logging community. Here we have people, violently destroying mother nature and when confronted with opposition, they are violent. Violence breeds violence. And toxic masculinity within the logging industry breeds violence against women and gender diverse people.

I have sat around many campfires and listened to stories of people who have encountered similar experiences. These conversations are so important to have, to share, to expose the nature of those who are responsible for killing our planet as well as support one another through it to heal. Most of the time, this behaviour goes unchecked and unreported to police as they do not care for protestors and rarely listen to the voices of women or gender diverse people who experience abuse. There is so much prejudice and ignorance occurring within our systems of governance towards gender and environmental crimes. To take a stand and band together against both is to dismantle the patriarchy, to challenge the system that oppresses us and our voices calling for an end to the violence against our planet and our people.

I remember reading a book with an ancient Hopi prophecy that says, "when the women give their blood back to the earth, men will come home from war and earth shall find peace." I think back to the comment of the logger, about my sacred bleed being 'rags' to him. How this creation of damaging language has been used to oppress and shame women, their wisdom and the potency of their bleed. How this intersects with the forest movement and other labels and descriptions which have been created to make out every day people, with jobs, intelligence and passions to be 'dole bludging hippies'. Expressions created by men to oppress people and their wisdom who love and care for the earth.



Natalia Salvatico / Friends of the Earth Argentina, illustrations for the Feminist Popular Education Manual "Sowing Gender Justice for the Dismantling of Patriarchy", Friends of the Earth International

When we generate conversations around the sacredness of the earth, around dismantling patriarchy and fighting environmental vandalism we are also creating unity and inclusivity amongst us. Men, women, non-binary, gender fluid and diverse...it doesn't matter what you identify as because we all are just humans fighting for our mother and fighting to reclaim the earth as our temple to express and explore our human-ness.

When we create safe spaces at blockades or activist training events, we address and educate one another about gender, sexual and reproductive health, mental wellbeing, First Nations justice, sustainability and the list goes on. We practise non-violent direct action because we are educated that there are better, more productive ways to fight for what you believe in! Our core principles and human values surrounding how we treat one another intersects with our values of how we treat and fight for the earthagain because we know that violence breeds violence.

I'm sitting on Tuangurung country currently, and there is logging occurring only 50 minutes from me. My understanding of how our First Nations people connect to spirit and the land guides me and brings me home to myself. Reminiscing on my days of forest activism, my dream has remained consistent: and that is to witness people come into

a deeper space of reverence for our planet. I want to see them honour this connection and allow it to ignite a flame within. To become a torchbearer out of the darkness of how we have come to exploit the natural world. To rewrite the narrative of the human race, to heal our lineages. To deconstruct the constructions of over 5000 years of oppressive patriarchy. To extinguish harmful language and violence supported by our governments when they continue criminal industries unchecked.

When people are permitted to exist free from hatred for being different and without constantly being persecuted for defending their basic human rights, when we are free to exist equally and safely on a thriving, healthier planet, that is when we shall have justice.

Alana Mountain is an avid forest activist in so-called Victoria living on Wurundjeri country. She is also a healer and womb witch.

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What does patriarchy and gender justice have to do with saving the forests?

Chris Schuringa

Trigger warnings:
sexual harassment, systemic misogyny.

I've asked myself this question many times. It's a great conversation starter. It's a conversation I've had with the fiercest and best people I know. It's a conversation that I've found challenging and that I've welcomed. But it can also be one that I dread and that can be exhausting.

Sometimes this conversation will be over the phone, just me and a friend swapping stories. Sometimes it will be a passionate debate in the car on the way out to a forest blockade. Sometimes we ask, will we be safe here?

I feel lucky and so empowered that most of my friends, and the people who I work with in all aspects of forest defence are fierce women, non-binary, and gender-diverse folk.

I've heard a lot of their stories, and I've got my own to tell. Stories of people standing around for hours holding ropes, and never being taught how to tie the final knot. Of sitting by a communal fire listening to men explain things to each other, without ever getting a word in. The constant feeling of having to prove yourself to be taken seriously, of second guessing yourself.

It's like there are these weird invisible rules. You don't really know why or how they got there, but they pop up in the weirdest places. They extend even to the things we own. People ask if my 4WD is my boyfriend's.

On the surface these stories, these comments, these rules, seem small. Water off a duck's back. But they aren't standalone. They're layered, intertwined, and weighted. One on top of the other, and deeply rooted to something much bigger, and much more sinister.

It's not uncommon to witness and be the target of gender-based violence and harassment from loggers at forest blockades. It's always a pretty awful experience in whatever form or degree it's thrown at you or the people you care about. I guess you start to build up a thick skin to it as it becomes more expected, but it still hurts.

The stuff that cuts me straight to the core is when the very question, "what does saving forests have to do with the patriarchy", is asked by people I love and respect, but they don't want to listen to or understand my answer. Friends, family, fellow activists, colleagues. That same excuse. *They're separate. One has nothing to do with the other. You're overreacting.*

Young activists blockading threatened forest in Victoria.



Then suddenly it's not a conversation I'm up for having, and it's easier to say nothing. But then all those horrible things we experience get to keep flying under the radar. Or maybe I'll say something, but it doesn't give any justice to the people I love and care about who experience the violence and oppression of what it means to live in our society every day.

So, what does conservation have to do with patriarchy and gender justice?

Forest blockades can often feel like a radical escape from society. I'm suddenly plunged into this community, mostly of like-minded people. We're all there for a purpose, and it feels good. But sometimes it can feel like the opposite. Sometimes I've never felt the reality of gender injustice more.

You end up spending 14 days straight with Dave or Todd or Paul or whoever speaking over the top of you. Or ignoring you. Or staring at you in a way that makes your skin crawl. You can't just leave and go home. The blockade is your home, but you feel like you don't belong. You don't have a say. Dave lives here now too, whether you like it or not.

I feel lucky that most of the time I'm with people I love and trust, and that makes all the difference. Maybe the question instead is... will the Todd's and the Dave's and the Paul's be outnumbered? That is a question that's a lot easier to answer. A bit more straightforward and makes me feel safe in the meantime.

Stopping the destruction of forests does feel like an act of resistance against the patriarchal and colonial nature of society. Treating the forests as a resource to exploit feels deeply rooted in patriarchy. Putting your body on the line to stop that feels powerful.

Blockades can feel like a chaotic, hopeful, exciting glimpse into a world that's a lot safer and fairer and free. The grit, determination, and bravery to pull off a forest blockade, is nothing short of amazing. It's where I get some of the most incredible feelings of agency.

So why is there so much resistance to acknowledging the problems, and putting in the work to make these spaces safer and ultimately better? Why are we still having to justify our answers to the question; what does forest protection have to do with the patriarchy, when the experience of gender injustice is deeply felt and experienced, but also challenged within the forest movement?

If we aren't tackling gender injustice at forest blockades with the same dedication and selflessness we harness to fight for the forests, then I feel like we'll keep being part of the problem. It's everyone's shared responsibility, but cis-men especially, to use the same strength, and fortitude that we put into the campaigns we care about to start those conversations. In return, we need to listen hard to the answers, rise to the challenge, and start acting.

Chris Schuringa is a campaigner with GECO and other grassroots groups fighting for protection of forests from logging.

Interview with Anna Brozek

Anna Brozek is an independent photographer and activist based in Tasmania. Chain Reaction caught up with them to chat about their latest project, and patriarchy in the forests.

Chain Reaction: You've been putting together a film that explores patriarchy within forest blockading in Tasmania - tell me a bit about that project, and what your inspiration was for making it?

Anna: I've been working closely with a talented filmmaker on this project, Matt Newton. He approached me with the idea with two decades of experience in forest activism, and a resounding inspiration that soared from the peaks of the global conversations taking place over the last year, surrounding injustices that women, everyday and everywhere, face.

Women on the frontlines of environmental activism are often subject to a special sub-class of manipulation tactics, different threats, different language. This can come from anybody; unfriendly neighbours, employees of logging and mining companies, from police and all levels of government. Grace Tame's words, "behaviour ignored is behaviour endorsed" has been a driving statement for this project, which aims to expose the extent to which our society and political 'leaders' ignore, condone, and themselves enact the use of language as a weapon, to tarnish the environmental movement as a whole, and target us as individuals. I've experienced this first hand, and know others have endured worse. It was a no-brainer to join Matt in exploring this unique intersect and hearing from those who carry an inextinguishable resilience, despite our failure as a society to respect and treasure the sacred feminine.

CR: How do you see gender justice conversations playing out in activist spaces, particularly blockades?

Anna: In the last 8 weeks, I have witnessed over 170 people come through a small space, from where the latest big push in the resistance to protect takayna/Tarkine is happening, this time from a potential tailings dam. Most have never been involved in direct action before, or operated in a space where consensus-based decision making is practiced. Things like introducing our preferred pronouns at meetings spark conversations in themselves, often after the initial moment of perplexity at being given the explicit choice to express their gender in any which way they see fit! In the blockades I've joined, neutral language and power distribution among equals has been carried throughout, and supports those going through the natural process of re-learning how to communicate without assumptions of gender or otherwise and imposing ideals onto

others. People who lovingly take the time to explain some of the endless nuances of gender justice and how it effects them, are perfect role models of true allies, and there seems to be no shortage of them in these spaces.

"They Say I'm a Terrorist" (Anna's film) is a work in progress, and will continue to follow the environmental movement and the visceral passion and strength that run within it.



Photo: Anna Brozek; Locked on in takayna



Photo: Anna Brozek; Gender justice in takayna's forests

There is no climate justice without LGBTIQ+ liberation

Phil Evans and Zianna Fuad

The green on the rainbow flag was originally there to represent nature and the environment. When Gilbert Baker - an American artist - originally designed the flag at the request of Harvey Milk back in 1978 each of the colours were symbolic: hot pink for sex, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sunlight, turquoise for magic/art, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit. That flag has evolved over time to better represent our diverse community, including making more visible the struggle of First Nations and people of colour. And that is a good thing. The climate movement needs to do the same, and work already is underway by First Nations and people of colour activists, and by groups like Original Power, Seed Mob, Democracy in Colour, and others in the space - but there is much more to do.

The idea of climate justice has become almost ubiquitous with any protest or action that promotes action on climate change. But climate justice is more than a hashtag - it is a praxis. It is a way of operating, and point of view that informs all aspects of activist work. Does simply using a hashtag really do justice to people of colour working to dismantle systemic racism? Does simply including a slogan on a banner work to dismantle patriarchy and other interlinked forms of oppression?

People who are LGBTIQ+ are already active in grassroots environmental and climate justice struggles, but so much more can be done to ensure that the climate and environment movement is a safe(r) space to organise, and one that values LGBTIQ+ organisers, and promotes that LGBTIQ+ liberation and climate justice are the same struggle.

The same colonising forces that have dispossessed lands here and abroad, and promoted extractivism at all costs are the same forces that spread homophobic and transphobic laws and attitudes around the globe. Anti-capitalism has long been important to many in the fight for LGBTIQ+ liberation. It is recognised that capitalism rewards conformity and abhors diversity. Capitalism and colonialism can thus be seen as twin threats to diversity in gender and sexuality in a similar way that it threatens country and culture in its quest for profit.

Building safer space for LGBTIQ+ people involves dismantling all the oppressions that are maintained by patriarchal power structures. People from First Nations can be LGBTIQ+. People living with disabilities can be LGBTIQ+. People from the working class can be LGBTIQ+. People of colour can be LGBTIQ+. People seeking asylum and refugees can be LGBTIQ+. Sometimes, even just existing with dignity and



support in these already oppressed communities is not a privilege that LGBTIQ+ people enjoy.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has repeatedly stated that marginalised people will bear the brunt of climate impacts. People who are part of the LGBTIQ+ community are more likely to experience financial hardship or homelessness. Increasing extreme weather events will be felt hard by those with less economic security.

According to LGBTIQ+ Health Australia,¹ 22% of LGBTIQ+ people aged 18 and over reported having experienced homelessness. Trans and gender diverse people reported higher rates of ever experiencing homelessness: 34% of trans-men, 33.8% of non-binary participants and 31.9% of trans-women. This economic situation is one of the reasons that LGBTIQ+ people are on the frontline of climate impacts.

Every flood, fire, heatwave, storm, or other extreme weather event - that is only increasing with climate change - agricultural systems and food prices are impacted, people sleeping rough are hit hard, and often any assistance packages set out require stable addresses or access to government portals. Sometimes those same government and charity systems that provide assistance exclude people and their identity, and can be traumatic to deal with. Societal circumstances make us resilient and survivors - this makes us good organisers and activists. Building community spaces that welcome us, make us feel safe, not only will help drag down the horrific mental health, and suicide crisis in our community, but enrich change making communities with creative, vibrant activists who are well equipped to understand intersectional struggles - and this is fundamental for real action for climate justice.

Natalia Salvatico / Friends of the Earth Argentina, illustrations for the Feminist Popular Education Manual "Sowing Gender Justice for the Dismantling of Patriarchy", Friends of the Earth International

Steps to take to create safer spaces for LGBTIQ+ people when organising and campaigning for climate justice:

Educate yourself about LGBTIQ+ struggles and share knowledge and resources.

There is a rich history in the struggles we have faced, and many lessons to learn about what strategies and tactics have been used. It is also helpful to understand current struggles or threats to people's rights. It's respectful to not rely on LGBTIQ+ people in your life to educate you, rather you can find great sources written by LGBTIQ+ people sharing their experiences and politics online.

Challenge harmful perceptions and actions, especially if you're straight and cis-gendered.

Everyone must play an active role in creating safer spaces, especially if you're cis and straight and have benefitted from freedom in these systems. Be a better ally by calling-out negative or uninformed comments about the LGBTIQ+ community and explain that you find them offensive. Then if you feel comfortable, call-in the person by sharing some resources that could be explored more deeply.

Never assume identity - invite people to share if they feel safe to do so.

When organising in spaces (digital and real world), don't assume people's gender identity with pronouns - invite people to let people know their pronouns, if they feel safe to, in any introductions. Lead by example - even if you are cis-gendered. This goes for sexuality too. If you make a mistake, correct yourself and move on.

Use inclusive language - in meetings, and in your campaigning, and organising materials.

Look at any documents or policies you have and remove any gender binary references - like he/ she - so people feel included when entering and learning about a space. Avoid using heteronormative terms or analysis, like "mum and dad investors", or ordinary families, that often invoke a heteronormative image.

Be deliberately inclusive.

Organisers need to stop pushing people who 'don't look straight enough', or different, to the back of photos, or out of public facing roles. No more "fezzas to the back" or just cis-gendered (often cis-male) spokes people. Aesthetic freedom is often vital for people's gender expression and safety - be proud of your crew's diversity.

Turn up and be good comrades.

It was awesome to see so many environmental groups turn up for marriage equality. But, just as only stopping coal will not end the climate crisis, marriage equality was not the fait accompli of LGBTIQ+ liberation. Both the struggles continue, and they are inextricably linked. Always look for new ways to listen, show up and act in solidarity with your LGBTIQ+ comrades!

Listen to Phil and Zanna on Dirt Radio:
foe.org.au/cr140_21.

References

1 foe.org.au/cr140_12



FoE folk painting an LGBTIQ+ banner to hang outside the FoEM office window.

Queering the Earth, and Earthing the Queer

Z & M

M: Let's ask some radical questions. What would it mean to say the Earth is queer? Why might the earth be queer? How can we see, feel, taste, and sense this "ecoqueerness" all around us?

Z: This earth is fluid, nuanced, vital, uncategorizable; beyond binaries, borders or beliefs. It's the gayest, amorphous, most unknowable collection of beings, bacteria, elements and gases. To even begin to label or categorise something so complex and so diverse is a great loss, and the failings of Western patriarchal arrogance.

Western culture loves dualisms; heaven/hell, nature/human, mind/body; on one hand we see Nature as pure and holy, and then as dangerous and untamed. To be queer is to break boundaries, to live the questions, to challenge the prescriptions of binaries and the confines of traditional institutions. It's both a re-wilding and primitive remembering; queerness as biodiversity and biodiversity as resilience.

The stories we tell about the more-than-human world matter, and now more than ever, it is worth examining the origins of those stories. As Donna Haraway, in *Staying with the Trouble* says, "It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts...". Queering the earth enables us to imagine an infinite number of possible natures. The Earth ain't just a Mother, it's beyond anything we can comprehend. Resist the patriarchy and accept its delicious complexity.

M: Queerness opens senses to worlds beyond boundaries, barriers, boxes. Queerness invites us to take a deeeep breath, and let the world seep into our souls, our bodies, our songs. To dissolve the boundaries of what we *think* is real, and imagine something so much realer: the gentle touch of a fern leaf, or the blasting ache of sunlight. Queerness invites the polarity of us/ them, male/female, earth/human, lover/friend to melt away until we can bathe in the sweetest of senses: connection.

For if I say I am more than a single box and I will seek to travel beyond the limits of my body and of names society gave me; and if I say in this journey I will become *different* and *change*; then - well, *then* - I might uncover miraculous things beyond the edge of a map that isn't there. *Then*, I might discover that the trees and the animals are not so different from me after all. That the galaxies far, far away are as much my kin as the dust I just brushed off my skin. And maybe, just maybe... I might be able to feel all

this and yet not be required to name it and box it, close it and interrogate it. Maybe, I can just let the wonder of life be, in their wonderful unknowns, messy entanglements, and crazy connections. For maybe queerness is nothing more than the permission to breathe beyond barriers and love beyond skin.

Maybe. And yet maybe, it is something so much more.

Z: We often talk about ecofeminism. Why is this powerful? What does eco-queerness bring, beyond the ecofeminist discussion?

The idea that women and nature are inherently linked is a tacit acceptance of their mutual exploitation. Our ecofeminist mentors show us that the marginalization of women and the destruction of biodiversity go hand in hand.

It is assumed that since "women have wombs", they will always possess those nurturing qualities, just like nature. Yet not all women have wombs, and I have a womb and I'm not a woman. I'm a non-binary being, a wild collection of molecules, more bacterial cells than human cells, shifting as quick as a desert dunes. I'm not that interested in motherhood or providing for men and while I am a deeply nurturing person I know my devotion comes more from my animal-body than my socialisation as 'woman'.

Throughout Western cultural history homophobia has been fuelled through narratives of heterosexual monogamy as being the norm, the natural. "Nature intended for a man and a woman to love each other". Well nature can be monogamous but it can also exhibit orgies, hermaphroditism, cloning and very gay behaviour.

For hundreds of years, biology looked past and denied any explanations for homosexuality, transgender, and non-procreative bonding in animals. Well lots of dragonflies are GAY, so are lizards, seals, insects and fish, and weedy seadragons are natural and they are full time gender-benders. Those who traditionally hold more power in society (cis-white-straight men) have made their own qualities standard, and invisibilised entire worlds within worlds.

M: Yet, there is something beautiful in honouring the archetypes and myths that have shaped much our contemporary Western society. I feel in my heart of hearts that there is something to be reclaimed and reworked in our tired-out gender norms.

What are the qualities that we each value and admire in the gender we were socialised into? What are the qualities we value and admire in other genders? How might we inhabit *all* of

these qualities – those we're used to, and those that are different – irrespective of our gender or anatomy? And how might we express the very essence of ourselves *irrespective* of these qualities, recognising we continually change?

M: How might we be able to transition our reverence and playful loving with earth to include the understanding that we are earth, and that earth is queer?

So often earth is gendered - normally as a mother or as female. Gender is a binary, a polarity between two opposites. But at this time of earth-transition, how can we transcend this polarity?

Like us, earth has infinite facets and capacities, existing beyond the gender binary. Earth spans masculine and feminine traits. Sometimes it is useful to distinguish these traits - to say this is feminine/mother tree, this is a grandfather rock. And this distinguishing can deeply honour ancient stories, cultures, and realities of a being. But sometimes, it is useful to play a little further.

What if we feel the essence of each being and community is infinite? What if this rock on which I am lying and conversing with contains rocky-wisdoms that extend into the centre of all things? What if this mountainside contains the essence of fire themselves?

What if fire was neither feminine or masculine, the moon neither a goddess or a god? Perhaps the moon conveys to us infinite qualities and inspirations: fierce, effervescent, strong, emotional, creative, fighting, nurturing. These infinite qualities belong to all of us. These infinite qualities make very little sense when reduced to "man-like" or "woman-like". Rather, these qualities infinitely infuse all of us, just as we are infinitely, and intimately, infused with Earth and Universe.

For me, there is hope in these explorations beyond binary polarity, hope in the edges of possibility. For it seems that in exploring queerness, in whatever form, we are able to sense into the deeper connections of all life. And for me, living and breathing these connections is essential in shifting our collective social consciousness towards our dreams of greater wholeness.

Z: Non-binary people are liminal beings - what does this mean? Why? How can we see/feel/taste/sense this all around us?

The more I step into the liminal, the world between binaries, the more I surrender to complexity, to the shades less seen, the muddied, the unknowable. I am devoted to the Earth because I know I am embedded within it, made from it, perfectly natural.

A great metaphor of our times is that we are going through an *apocalypse* "the lifting of the veil", a time where structural inequalities,

limitations of thought and multiple collapses are bringing us awake into great attention. Sometimes when I need soothing; I like to understand this time in mythic ways, through a larger story... I like to imagine that we are in a particular collective rite of passage.

The three believed stages of a rite of passage are; the severance stage, the threshold/liminal stage, and the reincorporation stage of returning and integration - to come home to community. If we are in this passage it is definitely somewhere in the middle, at the threshold/liminal stage, and I believe we need guides to help us move through this time of deep liminality, urgency, transformation and uncertainty. Gender fluid, non-binary and 2-spirited people exist in liminality, they know how to move between places. They are the perfect mentors and guides for navigating this time.

I'll leave you with these powerful words by Pinar and So from *Queer Nature*;

*"The binary doesn't need to be destroyed, but rather blown open and expanded to reflect the complexity of our ecological and celestial kin. I stand for a queerness that is inextricably informed by interspecies solidarity—by lichen, dusk chorus, swamps, coral and cryptobiotic soil. Queerness is not another venue for the simulation of human exceptionalism and white supremacy that serves the project of settler colonialism. It is a devotional practice of decentering our humancentricism to continually expand our co-liberation and remember that our queerness is a disruptive/ remediative fruit of the earth."*¹

M: These twisty turning passages of words are dendrites of possibilities into what we may dream to be. As we/you leave this page, we offer an invitation: to ask a question, unpeel a layer, bask in the sun and feel yourself *becoming* lizard, climb a tree and allow yourself to *become* tree, to look in the mirror and gaze deep into your eyes and ask: behind the mask, behind the stories, behind the skin, who am I *really*? And in the asking, clasp hands with your kin, your brethren, your lovers, your friends, and allow yourself to embrace and be embraced by the turning of all that is. Allow yourself to just simply be.

Z & M are activists and facilitators breathing in different parts of this stolen continent. They are both revelling in exploring being earth-queer beings.

¹ Follow Pinar and So on their *Queer Nature* facebook page.

WAR = PEAK TOXIC MASCULINITY

Feminist action in the Disrupt Land Forces campaign

Zelda Grimshaw

“You are the mouldy and fetid remnants of a system in decay,” I called out, “the filthy dregs of an obsolete death cult. You are the scum floating on the cesspool of organized slaughter, putrid parasitic worms sucking life from the earth, you are despicable, drooling, depraved architects of mass murder.”

Speaking directly to the profiteers of war as they entered the Land Forces weapons expo in Brisbane last June was highly satisfying. On the third and final day of the arms fair, the Disrupt Land Forces campaign focused on the intense misogyny of militarism, with our ‘Smash Patriarchy – Taste the Rainbow’ day of action. It was my pleasure to be on the mike for some of that day, to revile the war makers and launch the dancing. I had my favourite people all around me: queer, non-binary, trans and cis friends, artists, elders, kids, carnies, punks, hippies — all styles of peace, climate and feminist activists — some of us refugees, some Australian-born, some First Nations folks, all of us united af. The future we imagined together, one full of colour, light, freedom, empathy and love was bubbling all around us, radiant and massive. There on the steps of the Brisbane Convention Centre, as arms dealers, military officials and government trade delegations traversed the long walk of shame before our barricade, we were bringing that future to life. All ages, all cultures, all genders were represented at the barricade, ready to *taste the rainbow*. My words to the war mongers were fierce; my love for the people around me even fiercer. We danced in the rain and we sang together, raging against one of the most entrenched and widespread systems of human oppression; yeah, the patriarchy.

Disrupt Land Forces was an intersectional, decentralized, antimilitarist campaign run by women. The campaign began late in 2020 and built through 2021 with a series of direct actions, public meetings and webinars that culminated in a seven day ‘Festival of Resistance’ to disrupt a huge military expo at Brisbane Convention Centre last June 2021. Our disruption of the arms dealers began by surprise on May 27, a day earlier than we had planned, when a young woman d-locked herself onto a Ripley cannon mount at the loading dock of the Convention Centre. Three others jumped up and after a few phone calls and a lot of running, a hundred of us were occupying a truck, a tank (a Rheinmetall Autonomous Combat Warrior) and the entire street. It was a spectacular and unexpected launch to our Festival of Resistance. Over the next week we ran

workshops, communed by zoom and sacred fire with activists in West Papua, blockaded several weapons factories and for three full days at the Land Forces weapons expo we spoke A LOT of truth to the power of the war profiteers. The police had to bring ear plugs.

Women of all ages and cultures, from refugee, settler and First Nations families, cis and trans together stepped up to smash the patriarchy in a zillion ways at Disrupt Land Forces. Women ran the legal briefings and coordinated the observer teams. Women ran the dance, theatre, music and printmaking workshops. Women delivered the nonviolence training and led the creative disruption sessions. Women organized vigils, dance parties, brass bands, wild performances, debriefs, court support, protest supplies, a mobile rebel kitchen, a parade, poetry, tank occupations, butoh

War = peak toxic masculinity

Feminists have pro-actively resisted conscription, militarization and the arms trade since Australian women successfully opposed the draft in World War One. Toxic masculinity, sexual assault, misogyny and racist objectification are core values in our military institutions, and they reach their peak in war. All humans will be better off when we can separate masculinity and manhood from weapons and violence.

End the war on women!

Women and children are the most heavily impacted by war and its toxic aftermath. Today, wars are raging against indigenous peoples in West Papua, the Amazon, the Phillipines, Myanmar, Kurdistan, Palestine, Yemen and Sudan. Rich men get richer through the arms trade, while the poor, the indigenous, women and our children are impoverished, dispossessed and harmed in multiple ways. Let’s end the war on women. Let’s “take the toys from the boys”.



Vigil for the 66 children lost in Gaza Palestine, held as part of Disrupt Land Forces.

interventions and cacerolazos. We were so far in the faces of the war makers we even got up their noses. Two senior women, Margie Pistorius and myself, were the core organisers for Disrupt Land Forces. We built momentum for the campaign through several pre-blockade actions between October 2020 and June 2021 at the offices and factories of five strategic targets. Our focus was squarely set on five weapons companies that are both exporting to Indonesia for use against West Papuans, and expanding their footprint in Australia. For future reference, these companies are Boeing, Elbit, Thales, Rheinmetall and EOS Australia. Boeing is the second richest weapons maker in the world (\$34 Billion USD from weapons in 2019) and the overall biggest supplier to the Australian government. Boeing sells attack helicopters and 'counter-insurgency' aircraft to Australia and Indonesia. Elbit is a recent beneficiary of Victorian people's money to develop new weapons - which are 'battle tested' on Palestinian people — and supplies integrated helmets for Boeing's helicopters that enable a pilot to focus missiles on a 'target' just by looking at it/them. Thales, alleged builder of the alleged \$90 billion worth of alleged submarines that Australia doesn't need, also sells weaponized vehicles to Indonesia's Special Forces, Kopassus. Rheinmetall sells heavy tanks and the bullets and missiles to go with them to Indonesia, while in Queensland they are leading the push (using public money) to create 'the khaki state'.

EOS Australia makes Remote Control Weapons Systems (RCWS) that sit on top of Indonesia's Thales vehicles and can be operated with a 'plug and play' interface, using 'fire and forget' missiles. Tank drivers don't ever have to look at the people or homes they are firing at — the EOS RCWS makes killing safe and comfortable. Boeing, Elbit, Thales, Rheinmetall and EOS. Remember those names, friends. We're not done with them yet.

Smashing patriarchy and dismantling the military-industrial death machine are pretty much the same mission. Whether you see patriarchy as the base material of inequality or as the icing on the cake of colonization, the ideology of male supremacy is an ingredient in every other form of domination. As campaigners we often focus our attention on a particular expression of power, such as the felling of the earth's rainforests, the climate lies propagated by fossil fuel magnates, the imprisonment of refugees, or rape in the Defense Minister's office. It is strategic and important to focus our paths towards peace and justice, to channel our energies, within discrete campaigns, so that we are not living in a state of overwhelm and exhaustion. At the same time, we can recognize that all of the mechanics of destruction intersect with each other. There is no such thing as a single issue. Patriarchy, militarism, extractivism, dispossession, capitalism, white supremacism, climate breakdown - they are all connected. So are we.

Justice 4 Jari

Auntie Rissah Vox

**Trigger warnings:
Domestic violence, assault.**

My Grandson Jari was a victim of domestic violence over a four year period. He was eventually murdered by his on-again off-again partner who ran him over whilst drunk driving at 110km/hr, in a 50km/hr zone outside Huonville High School (Tasmania).

Jari was born here in Tasmania. But his paternal Grandmother's Country is the Wemba Wemba peoples on the country known as North Western Victoria.

The legal process has been flawed from before Jari was killed. A month before Jari was murdered the woman attacked Jari with a knife whilst he was holding his four year old son. The police attended, and took Jari and his son to his mum (and my daughter), Faith's, place citing "There's a disturbance at the house and it is best if Jari and his boy stays at his mum's until the perpetrator has calmed down."

We realise now that it seems when men are the victim in a domestic violence situation, cops list it as a "disturbance", not "domestic violence". Hence the lack of services and support specifically for men dealing with family violence.

The night the woman attacked Jari the police did not do a mandatory child protection order (there were other children in the house). Nor did the police gather evidence from that night, because months later Faith found the slashed pants Jari had been wearing that night, folded neatly in a drawer in the room he used to sleep in.

So these two things - the lack of child protection notification, and not gathering evidence - have been addressed to the Integrity Commission in Tasmania, and the Commission has agreed there has been a case of misconduct by Tasmanian Police.

I see it as obvious that violence has no gender, and I would like to see more service and support available for people of all genders who are surviving through domestic violence.

In regards to colonisation? Well, we live under an invaders law. The legal processes since my Grandson's death has further traumatised my entire family, and members of our community. The legal process is flawed and obviously corrupt. The woman who murdered my Grandson received just seven months jail all up for: driving dangerously, driving three times over the limit, leaving the scene of an accident, plus 122 breaches of family violence orders and two assault charges. If this woman had murdered my Grandson pre-invasion, well justice and payback would have been dealt with by now. There law and there's Lore.



Auntie Rissah with her Grandson Jari.

Since Jari died we've come to realise that although Jari was a man, in being a victim of domestic violence he was gender oppressed. The legal process has trouble recognising this, and there is little support for men experiencing gender violence.

Normally I wouldn't write about "men" or "women" because I know there's more genders. But Jari was a young man, and this is why my daughter and myself are talking about the gender imbalance in the justice system when it comes to men experiencing domestic violence. I am very aware that violence has no gender. Ok.

Through Jari's death we would like to see more support and services in regards to domestic violence and the victims of all genders. We'd like to see mandatory sentencing for false allegations. We'd like to see Justice4Jari, and Peace to return to our family.

#Justice4Jari

Auntie Rissah has been a peacekeeper for the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on and off the parliamentary triangle for 16 years. Jari was her eldest Grandson.

Nifty Neville; Catch Him If You Can

John Merkyl

Wilkarr Kurikuta (aka Nifty), a Wangan Jagalingou Ngemba man from Northern Queensland, is sitting on a plastic chair on the edge of the Gumbaynggirr forest camp when I arrive for the evening yarning circle around the campfire. He tells me the cops came out and told him he'd be breaking bail if he went beyond that point, effectively excluding him from the fire and its conversations.

'I don't care, brother. I'll wait a while for it to get dark. If they come back, I'll just do the wallaby. See if they can catch me.'

He flashes a wicked smile, but the weary tone of his voice contains the patience of a lifetime of dealing with police who can be tetchy at best, and openly violent without consequence if they feel like it. Last week Nifty joined the Gumbaynggirr posse when they followed the logging contractors from Nambucca, three hours up into the New England, to Wild Cattle Creek, where they locked on to heavy machinery to stop a new intrusion into rainforest country. When he was cut free eight hours later, he was arrested for trespass.

'They don't tell me when I'm trespassing on Aboriginal Country. They can say it if they want, but I don't have to listen.'

I looked up a map of Wild Cattle Creek, and saw it was north of where my brother lives in the high mountains, near Earth's most ancient forests,

which are called the Gondwana forests, and date back to when India and the southern continents were the one supercontinent, Gondwana.

I left Nifty to join the yarning circle, where the elders had invited a young tour guide - out of work, and in exile from the coronavirus in Victoria - to do the yarn. His subject was Terra Nullius, and with Wilkarr relegated to the outer, I sat uneasily through his talk about the colonial doctrine of an uninhabited land. White Australia is far too comfortable with seeing indigenous families on the fringes of everything we do - if we see them at all, and small mission towns like Nambucca have been amongst the worst. But here at the Gumbaynggirr camp, they're right in the centre, where they should be, so I took a little comfort from that.

If I paint Wilkarr as an indigenous warrior, full of the soul of the forest, driven by the spirits of his ancestors, you might think I'm reaching for some version of a movie hero, but in a very candid way, without ego, he tells me that these are exactly the things that urge him on.

'This is my responsibility to my ancestors. I listen for their voices, and this is what they tell me I gotta do. They speak to me when I'm here in the forest, and tell me to just keep on going.'

I can relate to this. I've had many moments, especially when I was younger, when I've communed with the ghost of my father for advice on some stubborn hitch in my soul, but for Wilkarr it seems like there's not just one, but a chorus of ancestral voices that swell inside him to point the way to his next action, with his parents and little sister always somewhere close by.

A few days before I arrived at the camp, Gumbaynggirr custodians had been trying to conduct a ceremony that would usher the spirits of the fallen trees out of the forest as they came past in their logging truck hearses, but the trucks wouldn't slow down until Nifty put himself on the road to force their hand. The angry drivers nudged at his back, but he held tight, and blew out long notes on his didgeridoo - perhaps to his ancestors in the forest around him.



Nifty and Maddie stop work at Wild Cattle Creek last year.

We need to be looking at the bigger picture

Anisa Rogers

What if many of our activist campaigns are an unachievable dream, that will ultimately have little impact on transforming the human destruction of the planet? Myself, and many others, feel this is the case; that we need to be looking at the bigger picture – consumption and economic growth.

This is potentially quite a controversial idea that I'd like to discuss in our environmental activist community, and it critiques campaigns such as those for renewable energy targets, the stopping of logging, declaring a climate emergency and others. In many ways these campaigns have value, doing important work of fostering the communities of activists stepping up and doing something, as well as creating meaningful conversations and actions. But they don't directly address consumption, economic growth and inequality, and in such an affluent country like Australia, that is where our impact really lies. They don't address capitalism and the destructive parts of human nature that both perpetuate and are perpetuated by it.

For the purposes of this article I define capitalism as the economic system that is driven by the imperatives of private profit, capital accumulation and growth, perpetually increasing productivity and spreading these imperatives in new locations and parts of societies.

Of course centring capitalism and other destructive human behaviours in a long term view of change isn't a new idea. People have been thinking and talking about it for decades, including many people in FoE. I am one of many people both in FoE and the broader movement that thinks we need to be reminded and spend more time focusing on this.

In Australia, like most of the world, we have a government still stuck in the idea that we need jobs and growth, and within this paradigm most of our small reformist wins are next to insignificant. Even if we replace our fossil fuels with 'renewable' energy, stop or slow logging, or declare a climate emergency we need to ask ourselves how will our efforts be part of the bigger picture and longer term goal of replacing capitalism with something better? After all, renewable energy still causes great destruction to people and places when made at scale, stopping logging is a decision the government might reverse, and corporations will definitely keep logging in the majority world countries to feed our growing consumption, and will a climate emergency declaration lead to meaningful action, or continue adding to opportunities of green washing?¹

We know that competition for private profit drives the thinking of most of the big decisions in our society, I don't think I need to make that argument here. The environment movement and especially FoE has a reasonably widespread understanding of the problems inherent to capitalism, though if you want a reminder or need convincing check out these resources (Naomi Klein,² Just Transition zine,³ Yin Paradies,⁴ Eric Olin Wright,⁵ and many more).

Two questions that I think need to be addressed are; whether it is pragmatic or possible to end capitalism and create something better? And also, what's the best way doing just that? In this article I will attempt to answer these questions as a way of thinking through how we might centre bigger picture thinking into our campaigning.

To the first one, yes it is undeniably possible to end capitalism and create something better. Humans have lived without capitalism for most of our history, many communities are coming close right now (it's pretty hard to be completely separate with global capitalism, but check out the Zapatistas⁶), and indigenous, peasant and many other communities around the world are telling us about the amazing knowledge, practices, value systems and ways of organising that can flourish without capitalism. We can bring the technologies that have been developed under capitalism with us – as long as those of us with too much are happy to have less; to live simply so that others can simply live. The neuroplasticity of the human brain is incredible, and while we can be very selfish and destructive, we can also be also cooperative, rational and responsible. Ultimately our society is made up of the actions of each human, and as past revolutions, strikes, civil disobedience and community activism have shown us, we can recreate the world how we want to. It takes a lot of work and conversations to do it well, but it is certainly possible.

The second question is: what is the best way of moving past capitalism towards something better? This can be a very divisive question, and there are many contradictory answers. Many more critical conversations on this topic are needed, where we are open minded and leave our egos at the door. And while we are having these conversations, we can continue trying out many different ideas. Importantly, for all our change making campaigns, conversations and actions, we need to keep our ultimate goal of a sustainable, equal and just post-capitalist world at the core.

For those of us working on reform, is it reform that is helping that goal or hindering it?⁷ For those of us working on revolution, what are we creating to fill the hole of the status quo once it's gone? Are those of us working on different strategies supporting each other or blocking each other? How is the way we work propping up capitalism and perpetuating capitalist and colonial values? The way we make change defines the change we create, and we can be doing better.

Reformist campaigns can be useful for talking to the mainstream and making small changes, especially when they give more room for marginalised groups to survive and therefore make change. However, I think we need to make sure they are all actively situated within the larger goal of ending a growth dependent profit driven economic system and making economics once again subsumed by the values of the community where the goods are being produced and consumed. We also need to work on making sure those community values centre equality and equity, sustainability and justice and come from the community rather than being imposed upon it, and to make sure we have shared understandings of these values. Yes, this will take a lot of work but we can't get there by pretending the issue is smaller than it is. We need to ground whatever we can bring in the larger struggle, encourage everyone to step up as much as they can, and work on providing community support to allow everyone to do that.

Natalia Salvatico / Friends of the Earth Argentina, illustrations for the Feminist Popular Education Manual "Sowing Gender Justice for the Dismantling of Patriarchy", Friends of the Earth International



One idea that might help ourselves remain embedded in anti-capitalist critique is for many of us within the movement to spend less time doing paid work. Yes, some paid work can potentially work towards our end goal, but more often than not it is co-opted by capitalist values, even in NGOs. Over the decades the environment movement has gotten more money, and while in many ways this is a great thing, it can be argued that more money has led to a de-radicalisation of the movement and a loss in its ability to speak and fight against the hand that feeds it. After all, a large part of this money comes from philanthropists and government grants. Even the organisations that get a large part of their donations from individual donors can end up spending more time and energy following the money in terms of strategy and outcomes, rather than focusing on pushing back against capitalism in our lives.

A lot of the really important work we need to do, including movement critique, reflection and strategy, and internal individual reflection and work cannot be paid in an economic system that concentrates money where the profits are - at least not on the scale we need it to happen. If all people wanting to do full time change making can't be paid to do it under this system, we probably need be more creative.

Another reason for less time spent on paid work is that any full time job, whether it is directly or indirectly connected to creating a better world, is exhausting - and especially for those who work more than full time. To have nuanced conversations, sit in discomfort, think deeply about the complicated reasons things happen, we need time and energy.

Instead of having some activists paid and others not, we could explore using the money and the resources we do have to make sure everyone has a basic level of comfort to be able to engage in social change work. This could look like stipends, making cooperatives, supporting

each other to have meaningful part time jobs, mutual aid funds, and so many other things. But it starts with honest conversations about money in our communities, who has it, who needs it, and how does it co-opt us under capitalism. We need to discuss and practice ways to do less paid work, especially supporting each other so that it is not just those from the middle or upper class that have that option, and make it available to everyone, especially marginalised groups. Living simply is a big part of this, and learning from the skills of those with less resources on how to do so. Sharing things, scavenging 'waste', supporting each other to take money from capitalism while minimising co-option, making sacrifices without perpetuating martyrdom, and finding security and subsistence in our community rather than individually are all places to start (and build on all of the ways this currently exists).

We need to continue learning how capitalism works, what destructive parts of human nature support it, and how we can fight against both those things. We need to understand co-option, especially how things like green capitalism work, and how to mitigate for power. We need to resist the horrible things that are happening while creating and building upon community institutions that meet our needs outside of capitalism. We need to work on our individual and collective trauma and continue healing. We need a lot more people to put in a lot more time. Could that include you?

Finding out ways to challenge capitalism without being co-opted is going to need a lot of ideas and conversation, as well as action. So please jump in and discuss, especially if you disagree. Disagreeing respectfully is something we need to practice, it helps us get to better ideas, so please tell me where you think I'm wrong or have missed things! And get in touch if you want to be part of ongoing conversations on this.

Anisa does anti-capitalist pro-utopia change work on the Kulin Nations, with a focus on environmental and social justice direct action. They are a National Liaison Officer (NLO) for FoEA. They have Cornish, English and Scottish heritage, are obsessed with reading history, and come from a loving middle-class family. Hypocritically they love the Marvel Cinematic Universe, which most likely only capitalism could have created.

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Camp Nunguu and the North-East Coast fight for forests

Zianna Fuad

This is a small story about a motley crew of caring souls that have risen together to reject the destruction of public state forests across Gumbaynggirr homelands. To begin I want to acknowledge, with deep respect and regard, that this is Gumbaynggirr land that holds a multifaceted story of horrific abuses, displacement, and dispossession and a longer lineage of care, connection, resistance and cultural renewal.

Newry State Forest is a beautiful, biodiverse public native forest near Bellingen, NSW. It is one of the largest, unburnt pieces of forest in NSW after the black Summer bushfires, home to koalas and many other threatened species on a path towards extinction. The forest borders on Jaaniga Reserve and Bollanolla Mountain and is the sacred homelands of the Gumbaynggirr nation and contains significant cultural sites and song lines. One of the most potent is Nunguu Mirral (Kangaroo Special Place) that Newry State Forest looks towards, marking the range between this forest and the sea.

Without consent from Gumbaynggirr people, Forestry Corporation NSW (FCNSW) intends to

industrially log this forest, putting local waterways, air, health and culture at risk. Rising up with local Elders, Gumbaynggirr Custodians, locals and environment groups have come together in a historic fight for the future of this forest, building a community blockade at the entry of Newry, named by Gumbaynggirr elders as Camp Nunguu, the camp of the Golden Kangaroo.

The camp has been growing since April this year, with hundreds of people dropping in over those months to show their support. While Forestry Corporation has suddenly gone quiet after finishing the roading, we have grown into a flourishing community space to upskill, inspire and connect people to country and culture as they ground on Gumbaynggirr land.

Uncle Micklo who teaches Gumbaynggirr language classes at camp shares, *"The ancestral beings gave us our lore, our culture, and taught us how to live in harmony with the land.*

Everything was precious - we needed these places to survive. If they keep going like this we won't have forest left. This forest needs to be a sanctuary for our people and other animals."

Resistance to native forest logging has made a

Senior Gumbaynggirr Elder Uncle Bud stands in front of Camp Nunguu sign that he named after the golden kangaroo.



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strong come-back over the last few years, with groups uniting to protect the Kalang Headwaters and Nambucca State Forest. A beautiful suite of diverse tactics with a generous community and guidance from Elders has meant that all camps have flourished, achieved wins and gained national media attention.

Last year, after a four month camp at Nambucca State Forest and the day after our first lock-on, the machines left Nambucca State Forest with over half the marked trees standing, leaving habitat for a small coastal koala colony we'd recorded through citizen science.

Sandy Greenwood, Gumbaynggirr custodian, actor and forest defender shares, *"This is a hard fought victory made possible by the tireless effort, spirit and energy of our elders, Gumbaynggirr custodians, local community and allies over the past few months. We have sent a strong message to the NSW Forestry Corp that their relentless destruction of sacred country will be met with fierce resistance. Our ancestors fought hard to protect country and it has been their presence and protection that has given us an enormous strength to continue this fight."*

We live in the so-called "wood bowl" of NSW with nationally significant breeding colonies of koalas. We cannot have both unless these forests are left standing. We are tired of sounding the alarm about the value of forests for our waterways, climate and the survival of koalas and other threatened species. We are tired of reflecting the Government's own Koala Inquiry back in their face. We are tired of watching Gumbaynggirr voices continuing to be ignored, as waves of industrial logging disrupt more people from connecting with their country.

The thing that makes it all okay is that we are making waves and growing strong; forming those relationships that are bonded around one cause and will arise to any other future cause that threatens Gumbaynggirr land. Whether it's mines or McDonalds - industries and big business have learnt before not to choose the Bellingen valley if they want to succeed.

The fact is; this community doesn't need native forest logging to survive. Forestry Corporation employs fewer people in our Shire than our local IGA, they make less than \$28 per hectare, fill our roads with log trucks and ruin most of our local roads and riverways. So, for good reason, they are met with resistance at every forest they enter.

Last year, Forestry Corporation was issued a 40-day stop work notice from the EPA after

investigations into operations at Wild Cattle Creek exposed the illegal felling of two giant, old growth trees. It was citizen scientists that found and reported those breaches and Forestry Corporation NSW have not touched those compartments since.

Just five days after the Wild Cattle Creek suspension, the EPA issued Forestry Corporation another stop-work notice at South Brooman State Forest near Batemans Bay, this became another one of over 15 investigations of logging breaches found across NSW last year. Having proof that Forestry Corporation NSW were illegally logging and ignoring their own weak environmental protocols was another nail in the coffin for their image of "sustainable harvesting". It's worth noting that by law they only need to wait for a koala to get out of a tree, and be on the ground, until they chop the whole thing down.

In brighter news, it's the incredible groundswell of community action that has risen to defend Gumbaynggirr forests (and some natural blockading from La Nina) that has kept them out of the entire Bellingen valley this year.

So no matter what we are served, we continue to stand on the frontlines playing music, sharing food, practicing our climbing, learning language and feeling what it feels like to sleep quietly in a forest untouched.

Waruuguuma Jagun Yida - Protect Country Always!
Follow Newry Native Forest Blockade on Facebook for further information and updates.

Natalia Salvatico / Friends of the Earth Argentina, illustrations for the Feminist Popular Education Manual "Sowing Gender Justice for the Dismantling of Patriarchy", Friends of the Earth International



Banning the Bomb, Smashing the Patriarchy

Extract from Chapter One –
*“Terminally Unserious”: Ideologies
and Oppressions of nuclear weapons.*

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Ray Acheson

As a feminist disarmament activist, I have come to believe that more than anything else, the association of weapons with power is one of the foremost obstacles to disarmament. And, as feminist scholars have articulated time and again, that this association is gendered.

Gender refers to the socially constructed expectations and norms about how we are supposed to perform as women, men, and others, or in relation to sexual orientations; i.e. concepts of masculine and feminine and the normative demands of how to behave in order to “properly” represent the bodies we inhabit or are perceived to inhabit. It comes from a particular—and unfortunately, very dominant—understanding of masculinity. This is a masculinity in which ideas like strength, courage, and protection are equated with violence. It is a masculinity in which the capacity and willingness to use weapons, engage in combat, and kill other human beings is seen as *essential* to being “a real man.”¹

Feminists have long explored the ways in which gender norms, particularly militarized masculinities, drive conflict and violence, and the acquisition and proliferation of weapons. These scholars and activists argue that the association of power and strength, coded as masculine traits, with the accumulation and use of weapons, has a negative impact on disarmament and peace.² Militarized masculinity harms everyone. It harms those who do not comply with mainstream gender norms—queer-identified people, non-normative men—and it harms women. It requires oppression of those deemed “weaker” on the basis of gender norms. It also assumes men to be inherently violent and inclined to participate in violent acts—and thus also more expendable.³ And it makes disarmament seem weak. It makes peace seem utopian. It makes protection without weapons seem absurd.

When it comes to nuclear weapons, there are several dimensions to the connection between patriarchal power and militarist masculinities that contribute to the difficulty to advocating for nuclear disarmament. We can start with the “ubiquitous weight of gender” throughout the entire nuclear weapon discourse and the

association of nuclear weapons with masculinity described by Carol Cohn in her ground-breaking work in the 1980s. She described the “sanitized abstraction and sexual imagery” including metaphors that equate military and political power with sexual potency and masculinity—such as “vertical erector launchers, thrust-to-weight ratios, soft lay downs, deep penetration, the comparative advantages of protracted versus spasm attacks,” and discussions about how “the Russians are a little harder than we are.”⁴ She and Sara Ruddick suggested that this type of highly sexualized language serves to “mobilize gendered associations and symbols in creating assent, excitement, support for, and identification with weapons.”⁵ It is also “a way of minimizing the seriousness of militarist endeavors, of denying their deadly consequences.”⁶

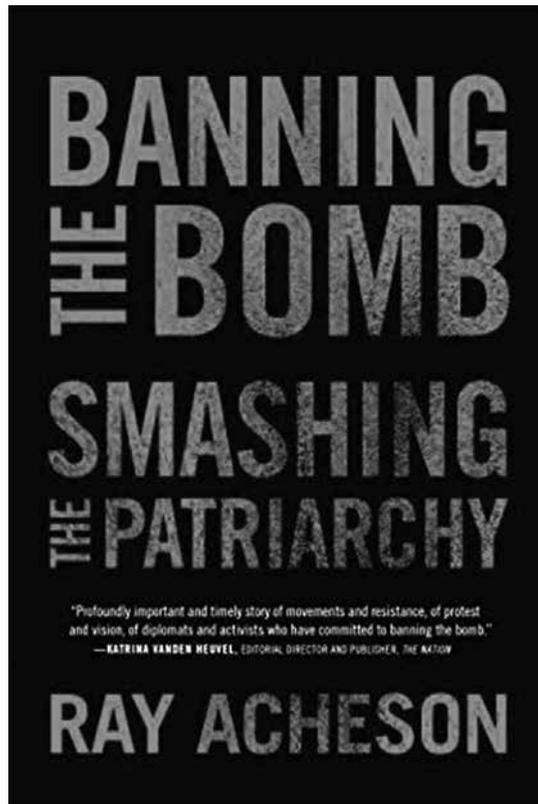
In later years Cohn, along with Ruddick and Felicity Ruby, expanded the inquiry into the sense of masculine strength afforded by nuclear weapons, tying this into some of the broader feminist analysis about violent and militarized masculinities discussed above. They listened to a nationalist leader after India’s 1998 nuclear weapon tests explain, “We had to prove that we are not eunuchs.” They argue this statement is meant to “elicit admiration for the wrathful manliness of the speaker” and to imply that being willing to employ nuclear weapons is to “have the balls” or to be “man enough” to “defend” your country.⁷ This link between masculinity and the power of force persists today. Think of Trump “becoming presidential” by launching missiles at Syria⁸ or of Kim Jong-un and his massive parades of missile hardware in a literal showcase of “mine is bigger than yours.”⁹ Think of Theresa May giving a resolute yes to the question of whether she would be willing to “personally authorize a nuclear strike that could kill 100,000 innocent men, women and children.”¹⁰ It is, after all, women leaders as well as men who are conditioned to prove their capacity to lead by a “manly” show of force.

Simply adding women to the situation is not sufficient to achieve nuclear disarmament. And “men,” as a category are not specifically or exclusively the problem. Gendered norms, in

particular violent or militarized masculinities, are the main problem. The structural imbalance of power amongst gender identities is also the problem. A recent study published by New America paints a portrait of the nuclear policy field in the United States, dominated as it is by cisgender heterosexual white men who compose a self-described “nuclear priesthood” that espouse normative masculinized perspectives on security and weapons. Seeking a place at the table within this space, women (mostly white, cisgender women) tend to be inclined to try to gain favor with and impress the priesthood, seeing it as an important challenge to fit in and prove that women are “not afraid of nuclear weapons”.¹¹

To actually challenge policies and practices of the elite decision-making class, it is imperative to create space—inside but also outside of existing institutions—where women and others of diverse gender identities, races and ethnicities, backgrounds and experiences—who are willing and able to approach the issue from different perspectives, including feminist and human security perspectives—can be fully engaged. A lesson from feminist, queer, and Indigenous struggles, among others, is that appealing to the establishment for rights or equality or a seat at the table is at best insufficient to achieve change, and at worst serves to reinforce existing injustices by just making problematic institutions or processes appear more palatable or equitable without changing anything those institutions do. For true alternative perspectives to be treated as relevant, credible, and expert—to the same extent as the dominant, toxic, militarized masculinity perspectives—we don’t just need diverse participation in mainstream institutions. We must consider and create alternative spaces and relationships to engage in meaningful processes. Just as Indigenous struggles refuse to center or appeal to whiteness and queer struggles refuse to center or appeal to the cisgendered or straight community, we need to work with others whose beliefs are outside of the dominant, mainstream narrative of nuclear weapons to generate a new sense of what is normative and credible.¹² This is important for the story of the nuclear ban and for nuclear abolition more broadly, because changing what people view as credible and normative about nuclear weapons is vital to achieving change in nuclear weapon policy.

This issue of credibility is key. The association of weapons and war as a symbol of masculine strength makes it harder to open up discussions about disarmament or collective security. In an extremely gendered way, proponents of abolition are put down as unrealistic and irrational, as “emotional” or “effeminate”.¹³ The attempt by nuclear-armed and nuclear-supportive states to



undermine nuclear disarmament proponents by asserting a monopoly on rationality and legitimacy is deeply patriarchal. As much feminist scholarship explains, social constructions of gender ascribe contrasting characteristics to masculinity and femininity that are seen as mutually exclusive and in which the “masculine” attribution is valued more highly than the “feminine”. Descriptors such as strong, rational, serious, and truthful tend to be associated with masculinity; while descriptors such as weak, irrational, emotional, and imaginary tend to be associated with femininity.¹⁴

This gendered discourse around nuclear weapons seems to make it more difficult for people to envision, articulate, or accept different security structures that do not rely extensively on weapons and military might to “protect” the “nation” or its people.¹⁵ This has implications for how some of those opposed to nuclear weapons conceptualize their arguments against the bomb. The security framework surrounding nuclear weapons means that arguments in favor of their elimination by those who want to be considered “credible” by the mainstream academic or policy elite rely on demonstrating that a world free of nuclear weapons brings security. This can become problematic, where arguments in favor of nuclear disarmament tend to rely on commitments to design and develop other technologies of violence. These arguments suggest that nuclear weapons are not needed because so-and-so’s

conventional military is strong enough, or because a country can develop autonomous weapons or supersonic glide vehicles or the latest tool to slaughter human beings, instead of possessing nuclear weapons. Thus, the pursuit of disarmament in these contexts becomes tied to the search for reassurance of security through technical, strategic, and military substitutes for nuclear weapons.¹⁶

In this context, policy decisions are still based on conceptions of power imbued with mistrust, threat, fear, and violence. Such policies do not allow for other types of international engagement or relationship between citizens and states; they dismiss alternatives as utopian and unrealistic. This dismissal, not surprisingly, is also highly gendered. When those flexing their “masculinity” want to demonstrate or reinforce their power and dominance, they try to make others seem small and marginalized by accusing them of being emotional, overwrought, irrational, or impractical—in short, by trying to “feminize” them based on conventional gender norms. Women and other marginalized people have experienced this technique of dismissal and denigration for as long as gender hierarchies have existed.

This is more than just an argument or a difference in interpretation. This is an attempt to undermine and discredit the other’s perspective in order to maintain power and privilege. Objectification of others and control of reality, known as “gaslighting” in psychological terms, is as integral to patriarchy as it is to nuclear deterrence as a mechanism to maintain the current global hierarchy.¹⁷ When the majority of states, international and activist organizations all say that nuclear weapons threaten us all and

must be eliminated, the nuclear-armed states say that nuclear weapons—in our hands—keep us safe and we must maintain them indefinitely. When it is pointed out that nuclear-armed states haven’t complied with their disarmament commitments, the representatives of these countries claim that they have. They argue that they have done all they can and now it is up to rest of the world—*those countries without nuclear weapons*—to create the conditions for any further disarmament efforts.

This situation is extremely destabilizing. The political ramifications are that the majority of states and the world’s publics are held hostage to the whim of a handful of governments that claim to know best while playing Russian roulette with our lives and our planet. But it’s not just the reason or rationality of those supporting nuclear disarmament that is denied. It is also the lived experience of everyone who has ever suffered from a nuclear explosion, or mining of uranium, or burial of nuclear waste. This experience, perhaps unsurprisingly, is intimately tied to the experience of racism and colonialism.

Ray Acheson is currently director of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom’s disarmament program in New York City. Ray leads the organization’s work on stigmatizing war and violence, advocating and organizing for disarmament, and raising feminist perspectives on militarism and weapons. Ray represents WILPF within the International Steering Group of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. Ray has been awarded the 2020 Nuclear Free Future Award and the 2018 UN Women Metro New York Champion of Change prize.

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Ring-barking Patriarchy: Towards an Eirenikon – a Peaceable Realm

Butterfly's Children is published by Panacea Books. For more about the world, or to purchase a copy, go to: butterflychildren.com

Eleanor March

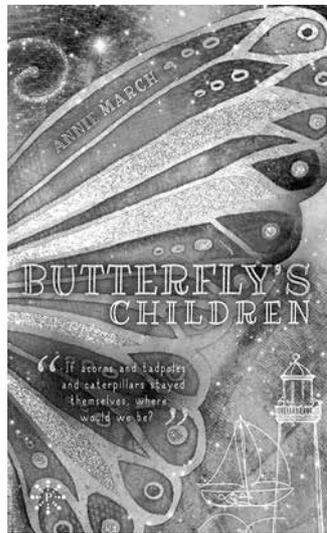
"How do we love all the children of all species for all time?"¹

Bill McDonough's prophetic words have been challenging me for twenty years. Since I'm a storyteller, and imagination is the tool with which I tackle great, impossible questions, I'm writing – or being written by – a trilogy set on the Eirenikon of Thalassa, a planet seven light years from Earth and four hundred years in the future (Earth is now Sequoia, 'beautiful beyond dreaming and a model of biospheric and human reciprocity for the galaxy and beyond').

The first step towards envisioning the kind of planet I yearn to bequeath my grandchildren was to ring-bark patriarchy. Invoking the divine right of novelists, I created Redound Syndrome (RS) and Universal Male Contraception (UMC). RS is an exoplanetary virus, seeded in all Thalassans, which triggers fatal endocrine meltdown in perpetrators of violence. In the first outbreak, one in thirteen women, one in five men died. War is now extinct. The will to dominance – over human and non-human life-forms – is seen as pathology, with 'power' reconstellating as trust and *eleutheros*, freedom-giving.

Technology, law, economics, politics, religion are ancillary to ecology. *The Ecological Verities and Adamancies of the Eirenikon of Thalassa El-Loba An-Nur La'Hazbva* ground two billion humans in commensal, covalent interbecoming with eleven billion (and counting) non-human species. Thalassa is ecozoic: all life-forms are included in its governance. A balanced ecological footprint is required annually of every person, household, artefact, enterprise and bio-region. Cities compete for the prestige of winning the Shit Prize, awarded for the highest quality and best reintegrated excrement. 'Earthism' – a neologism akin to sexism, ageism, racism – names and damns fundamentalist behaviour against the biosphere.

UMC means women aren't responsible for men's seed; sperm is no longer a weapon; reproduction is a willed, educated and sacramental choice; the cognitive dissonance that thinks like a socialist/Greenie and fucks like a capitalist is obsolete. Sexuality, no longer constrained by fear, blossoms. New relationship templates evolve across the gender spectrum. Sessery, the city of the hierogamy, is dedicated to radically transforming a construct of sexuality historically encultured as violation and powermongering; and is developing a rich language of sexual nuance both sacred and



profane, embodied in *A Thousand Words for Swive*, (to which I would like to contribute two of Ursula K. Le Guin's splendid Kesh words; *banbe* acceptance, inclusion, insight, female orgasm; and *paó* achievement, sowing, male orgasm).¹ *Ammasat* is a tender Thalassan term used between women who have sexually loved the same person; *tamamaragbi* is the equivalent between men. Sex work is a skilled, valued art.

Parenthood, that most challenging and crucial of professions, requires a compulsory three-year training course (as does politics). An annual festival commemorates the anniversary of the day, thirty Thalassan years ago, when amniotic fluid, egg yolks and breast milk were no longer toxic (another historic form of child abuse?) and declared safe for embryos and infants. A time-travelling unicorn called L ciquyill ma'merq rel'azazzærylly has both mothered and fathered offspring. The interstellar Strombians have seven genders, but are not primarily defined by any of them.

Yet *Butterfly's Children*, the first volume of *The Thalassan Trilogy*, isn't 'about' these issues; they're background, and if I've been didactic – carried away by my own moral high ground and the apartheid of good – I've failed. It's the story of fourteen year-old Meriel embarking on a voyage both actual and mythic – on a planet where her freedom and right to do this are absolute, and where her safety from human predation is guaranteed – in search of her name, vocation, parents; and to come to terms with her own ecozoic accountability.

While the book's cornerstones are justice, redemption and the yin-yang of beauty and terror, it revels in high play, creativity, clairsentience, metaphysical knitting and weaving, maps, trees, music, dance, thresholds, crones, metaphysics, magic, islands, lighthouses, sailing and the sea.

I'm homesick for a planet that exists only in my wildest imaginings; where true wealth – commonwealth – is clear air, pure water, rich humus and a brawling, sprawling glory of biodiversity. And where the children of all species – albatross chicks, acorns, tadpoles, young phytoplankton and sprouting mycorrhiza – can live in fullness and peace.

"I'm just Wind Yoe Tashqur, an ageing woman with bones that ache in this freezing weather and a passion for old roses." She paused, winnowing thoughts. Meriel felt compelled by her eyes, Quereshi golden, truthful and very clear in her dark face. "But I'm also a woman with authority vested in her by this biosphere, by my children's children's children. I'm accountable to them. I was an economist before I was ever a footprinter. Do you know the economist's oath? To be responsible for the equilibrium and wellbeing of the whole Eirenikon of Thalassa for thirty-three generations of humans, a hundred lifetimes of eagles, thirty thousand of butterflies or one of Huon pines, whichever is longer."

- *Butterfly's Children*

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Taking Root

Aia Newport

A couple of years ago I got a tattoo of a drawing of roots in the centre of my chest. The practiced hands of a friend stretched my skin and sowed seeds of ink beneath the surface. Roots like veins like a network of rivers, the mark could represent many things. Little did I know it would become a source of grounding and guidance.

“Go to the roots,” I say and tap my chest, an embodied reminder. For me, going to the roots means setting up foundations in my life that feed the roots of things I wish to grow. It means listening to my body and what it needs. It means asking what is at the root of a problem and how it can be addressed.

For a while now I’ve been interested in projects that provide nourishing and empowering foundations (or roots) for people’s lives. In particular I’ve been looking at worker’s co-operatives and their potential to create meaningful employment where workers have control over the work they do. Workers’ co-ops are owned and run by the members of a business, rather than a boss, which gives workers more autonomy than typical businesses. Workers have more control over things such as the direction of the business, the type of clients they work with, their hours, the culture of the workplace and how the profits are spent.

Many modern jobs are spaces of exploitation where business owners make profits off worker’s labour and constantly push the limits of workers to get them to do more work in less healthy environments for less pay and in less time so the bosses can make more money. Finding work structures that empower workers could therefore make a huge difference on the individual and societal levels and change the foundations of our lives.

Listening to my body/values and hearing the excitement to work in a different way, I was ready to give working co-operatively a go. Some friends and I got together and over the last year and a half we founded a Narrm (melbourne) based gardening worker’s co-op called Taking Root that offers garden design, consultation, implementation, maintenance and arbory. As a co-op we’re interested in native and indigenous plants, food forests, waste systems, edible gardens, medicinal plants and creating gardens that work with their specific climates and surrounding ecosystems.

Writing this column in Mparntwe (alice springs) I think of the fossil fuels required to truck in all the food that keeps this settlement afloat.

I’ve even heard that the mangoes sold here are picked near Garamilla (darwin), trucked down to the Woolworths headquarters in Tarntanya (adeliade) and transported back up again to Mparntwe and Garamilla to be sold. It’s strangely impressive how a capitalist perspective and a hyperfocus on profit can make such absurdity appear efficient. This broken food system is one of the many things I hope we will address through the work of Taking Root.

As well as localising food, water and waste systems I also want Taking Root to be a means of encouraging and supporting people to connect to the natural world. Last year I was lucky enough to spend some time in the Bellingen area working in gardens as a wwoof in exchange for accomodation and food. I loved waking with the sun, saying hello to the chickens as I let them out of their python-proof home, having a quick brekkie and getting into the garden to work until the sun was too bitey and all I could do was swim in the dam at the bottom of the hill. Noticing the changes in the weather, gardening alongside bees, snakes and birds and finding whatever needed picking in the garden to base my meals off felt nourishing on so many levels, though it was also hard work.

I’m under no illusion that this permacultural dream is the solution to all our problems as a society. Permaculture, horticulture, living/growing/working on stolen land as a middle-class white person - I am constantly questioning and exploring how to do it all in ways that work against the pressure of capitalist, neo-colonialism rather than with it. For now I know that being connected to food growing processes grounds me. Involving myself daily in these systems I found myself asking how we could do things better - more efficiently, in collaboration with First Nations peoples, in ways that build community, etc.

This curiosity around how things are done is the kind of engaging energy that allows me to imagine ways to bring about the more enjoyable and just world I know is possible. Through my involvement in nature and food processes I am made into a dreamer and a doer. I am soothed, my mental processes slow and I can better observe what occurs both within my body and without, leading me to make decisions that are in tune with the needs of human communities, non-human communities, and ecosystems.

That was the long way of saying I hope that connecting people with food and ecosystems

'Who's Reading Chain Reaction?'

Let's learn more about the Chain Reaction community!
Submit a photo with a sentence about you, and response to the questions: 'when/where did you first read Chain Reaction?', 'what does FoE/Chain Reaction mean to you?' 'what environmental/social justice/alternative world building projects are you working on at the moment?'

Send to chainreaction@foe.org.au.
Include your name and location.

through Taking Root can have many physical, social, political and environmental benefits. I also just love the idea of walking along suburban roads filled with lush, colourful, healthy gardens with fruit ready to pick and birds flying around, who doesn't?

There are many other things I'd love to write about in this column: Taking Root's goal of implementing a sliding scale; the queer and genderqueer membership of the co-op and how rad it is to be facilitating people of many gender expressions to engage in physical, outdoor jobs; the intricacies of living and working on stolen land, the meetings and bureaucracy required to start and run your own co-operative...

For now though, let me try and bring this back to roots. I take a breath and think of what it is I'm trying to convey. I suppose I'm saying that Taking Root, workers' co-operatives and connecting

with nature and food systems all have potential to shift the way we exist with ourselves, each other and the surrounding ecosystems.

For me, changing the way we do basic yet complex things, like work or sourcing food, from the often depletive and extractive systems to more nourishing ones that root us where we want to be and tangle us up together in healthy networks, is powerful. I want to see workplaces, food systems and all kinds of other systems and structures done in ways that allow us to live within our values and empower ourselves and our communities. I think listening to our bodies and what makes them sing can help us get there.

Close your eyes, settle and breathe. Go to the roots.

Aia (they/them) was born on Wurrundjeri country and is of Scottish, Welsh and English descent.



Exploring creative and embodied facilitation practices for activist spaces."

4D Mapping

Dr Sue Stack

From: "Social Presencing Theatre: The art of making a true move" by Arawana Hayashi.

Assumption: We have the capacity to sense into a system, to represent it with our bodies and then sense into the turning points that offer steps towards a highest potential of the future.

We are in the fourth and last of hour of a workshop using embodied practices to explore the issues around putting a cable car and large tourism development on nipaluna/Hobart's much beloved and contested mountain, kunanyi. We are about to do a "4D mapping" exercise that aims to explore underneath the surface of the symptoms and issues - diving into the social dynamics of the different stakeholders. We hope to use our insights in writing submissions to the Hobart City Council (HCC).

The participants are sitting in a semi-circle. I call out, one at a time, each stakeholder name. There is a slight pause and someone stands up and takes the sign from me and puts it around their neck. The Stakeholder Representative (*rep*) walks slowly into the central space, choosing where to position themselves, which way to face, whether they are sitting, lying or standing, how they are in relationship to others. There is a slowness here, a sensing into. A complete giving over to the process.

The rep makes a shape with their body, saying who they are and a key sentence -

"I am the mountain. I am here. I will always be here. Please respect me."

"I am the first people." The rep sits down to one side of *the mountain*, slumped forward, face down.

"I am the government..." and the rep puts a controlling hand over *the mountain*.

"I am the cable car and I am going to bring some fun into your life!" The rep reaches out over *the mountain* smiling to *the government*.

As each rep enters the central space and adds to the human sculpture there is a sense of an energetic field being created - a 'knowing field.' It has a sense of truth to it.

As recommended by the process, we have included three stakeholder voices that help to bridge three systemic divides - ecological, social and spiritual. These voices are *the earth* (in our case the mountain), *the excluded*, and *our highest aspiration*. *The excluded* says, "I am the trees, rocks, moss, ferns. I don't have a voice," and stands separated from the others behind *the mountain*. *The highest aspiration* rep comes in last and tries to bridge the disconnections between stakeholders but finds it too difficult: "I need space."

Once all the stakeholders are on the field there is a slight adjustment of bodies and expressions - we have formed sculpture 1.

Now for the pause, where we sense into and invite in the highest potential of the future. We are inviting in the next step, the turning point that

might help move the system to a more harmonious whole. It feels that this pause is a pregnant moment, expanding, ripening. Something shifts, there is a breath out. Simultaneously *the cable car* and *the government* step back from their positions over *the mountain*. The others begin to move. The *first people* rep stands up, moves closer to the mountain then kneels down so they are on a level with *the residents*, and *the residents* look at them. There is eye contact. "How can we work together?" *The highest aspiration* is able to make connections between *the residents*, the *first people*, and *the mountain*.

This is sculpture 2. We hold it, sense into it and then each person shares their experience during the turning moment - what helped them shift and what they felt. "I am the mountain. I feel more connected to the beings who have my best interest at heart."

We are astonished in what we have experienced and the nuances and insights that are revealed. It seems to me that an energetic pattern shifted within the knowing field, similar to systemic constellation work. We reflect and cover butchers' paper with themes and patterns, questions, and ideas of ways forward. Most of us will be writing submissions to the HCC planning process, with the deadline 4 days away. (Over 17,000 submissions are received in the largest community participation ever experienced by the council.)

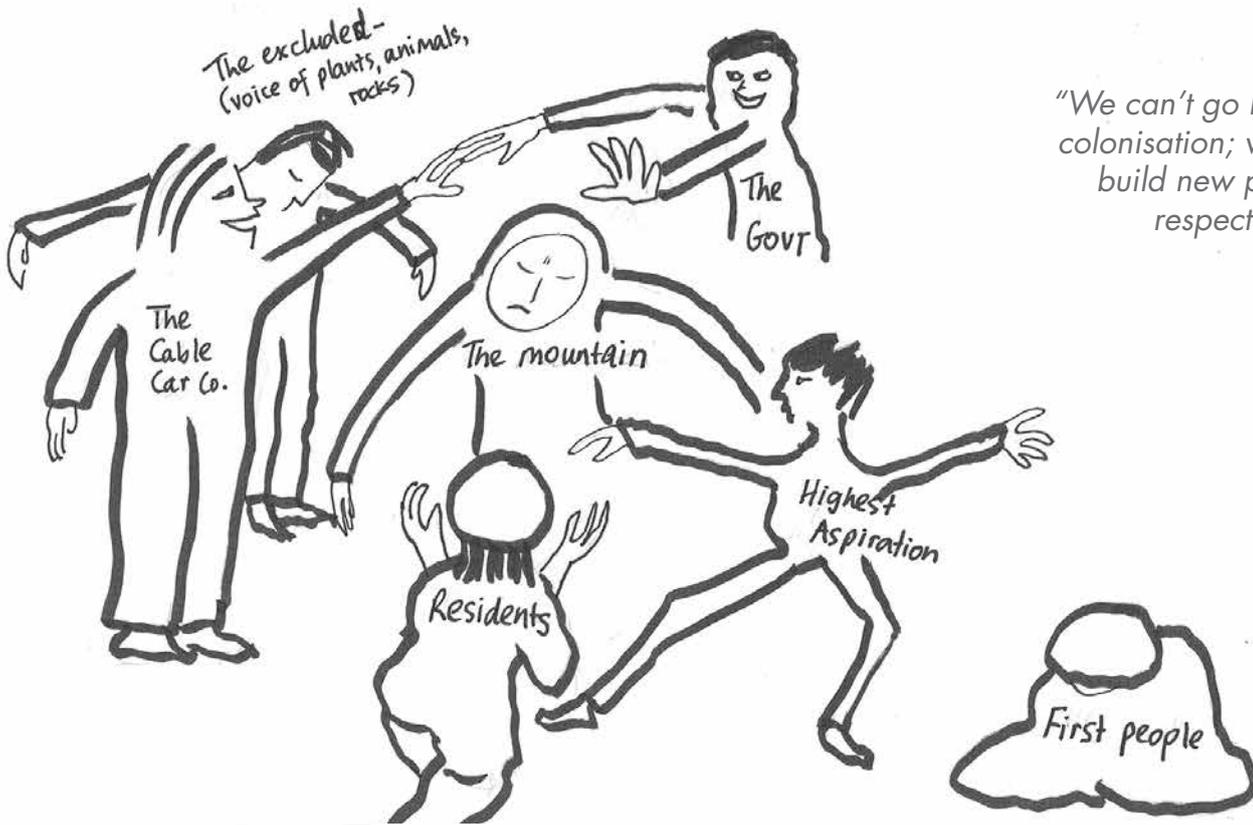
What stands out for me, is how divisive the issue has been - it has divided the community in emotional and aggressive ways, and we need spaciousness from the relentless barrage of the issue. We need to step back. I sense this could be a turning point and opportunity for the Tasmanian community in 'meeting the eye' of first people; of seeing them, understanding, and giving weight to their voices - their long relationship to a mountain that is sacred to them. We need to find processes that give voice to the excluded, to the earth. We need to ask: What does it mean to bring in our highest aspiration? We need more processes like this.

From this process, I find I can write a personal submission to the HCC where I can step into my own power and voice.

The 4D mapping process offers a different way of knowing and relating. It breaks through the debate and enables an empathic and embodied approach, that invites sensing and presencing; helping us recover what our bodies know - to be the eyes, ears and hearts of the system and the earth.

Dr Sue Stack is an educator, researcher, writer and artist experienced in holistic and transformative learning.

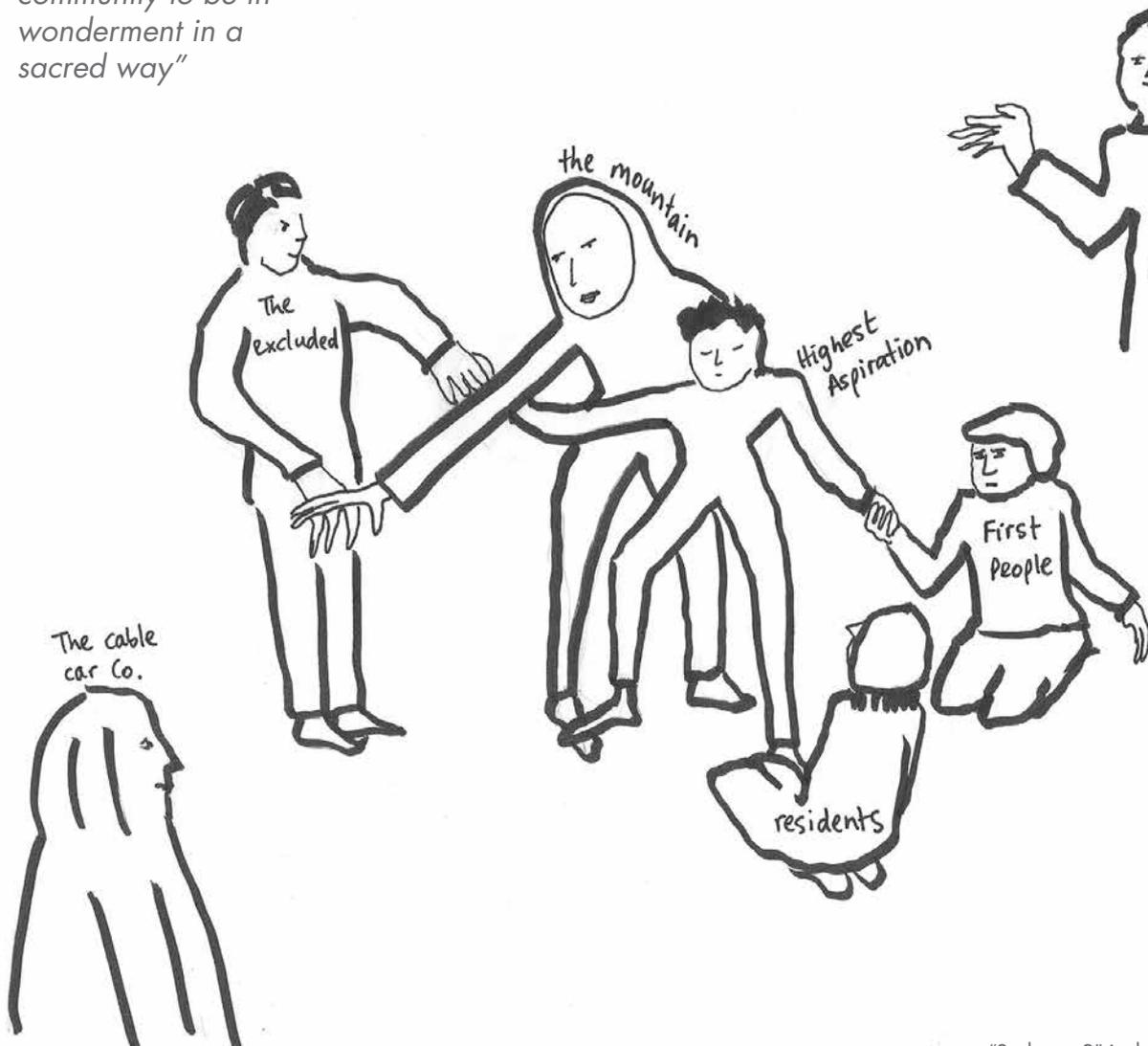
Last edition, Sue invited us to imagine stories of the future. How did you go? You can view her exercise at: foe.org.au/creative_content. Send us through your stories, and you might be featured in Chain Reaction!



"We can't go back to pre-colonisation; we can only build new patterns that respect everyone."

"There is a desire of community to be in wonderment in a sacred way"

"Sculpture 1" in the 4D mapping process; these graphics were drawn from a photo taken of participants in the sculpture.



"Sculpture 2" in the 4D mapping process.

Kerryn Coombs-Valeontis is an eco/art therapist, and writer, and facilitates online study of Ecotherapy. She would rather her poems are useful.

(sapphic) hymn to kali

so nimble with battle-fever
dark arms towers of truth's many hands
see you seizing the enemies of life
by the hair

arc of bountiful breasts swung with war
your cry curdling beaches running red
blades ambush (the air makes way)
on illusion

beautiful are loins girded without fear
swift vengeance for the innocent
vanquishing mother of life taking back
her own

the truth against the world! your rally
defender cutting out tongues of half-truth
oud plucks dance-steps woven on corpses
of the liar

ecocidal

(in memory of polly biggins)

how to make mass-murder
and not have it called homicide
a million murray cod gasp in my lounge-room

each fish, whose fish? how many fish
swim a river to the sea?
how to strangle a river leaving no fingerprint

for the threnody of dying water,
we hang our heads as flies buzz and suck
we don't have a word for this sorry

for poison-blooming puddles we sold,
we will buy them back to the singers
of the river songline
how can we apologize?

the child came to ask for her river back;
her premier asked she do it outside school hours
her mother drove eight hours to the city

"i came to ask for my river back" she told
the lens close up on her request
schools streamed out global torrents

kids swirling confluence of comprehension:
we can kill a river;
begin by putting a price on water

a shared concept of the truth

for greta thurnberg

do the stones have to throw
themselves, releasing their memory in
moss and lichen
might we need the trees to go to war
should we find the entwines
disappeared out of memory
that should not be forgot
where are the keepers of
this slowing earth
approaching midway and warming?

(in these parenthesis)

there is a girl
telling us to panic, telling us the emperor
has no clothes, wielding the blades
of kali, leading an army of colour
pouring fluttering rivers of banners
between skyscrapers
clearing the smorgasbord
of truths, vanquishing the liar,
making room
for a shared concept of truth



Pavement chalking and photography by Suse Scholem. Editing by Elena Burger-Guimares.

VOLUNTEERING AT FOE

Each edition, we hear from a volunteer at FoE about what they do, and why they're passionate about FoE. This edition, we spoke to Mia Ifergan.



What inspired you to work with FoE?

I was living in a grassroots socialist movement in Israel Palestine and moved to Australia where I got into the capitalist grind. A friend told me about FoE and it was a really wonderful space to bring activism back into my life and find community.

What's been your role within FoE?

I helped convene the sustainable cities collective, sometimes. I was also a part of the social media team for the collective. Honestly though, I've picked up lots of different tasks and learnt many new skills - i.e blog writing, and using nation builder (our website platform).

Your funniest, most challenging, or most heartfelt moments with FoE?

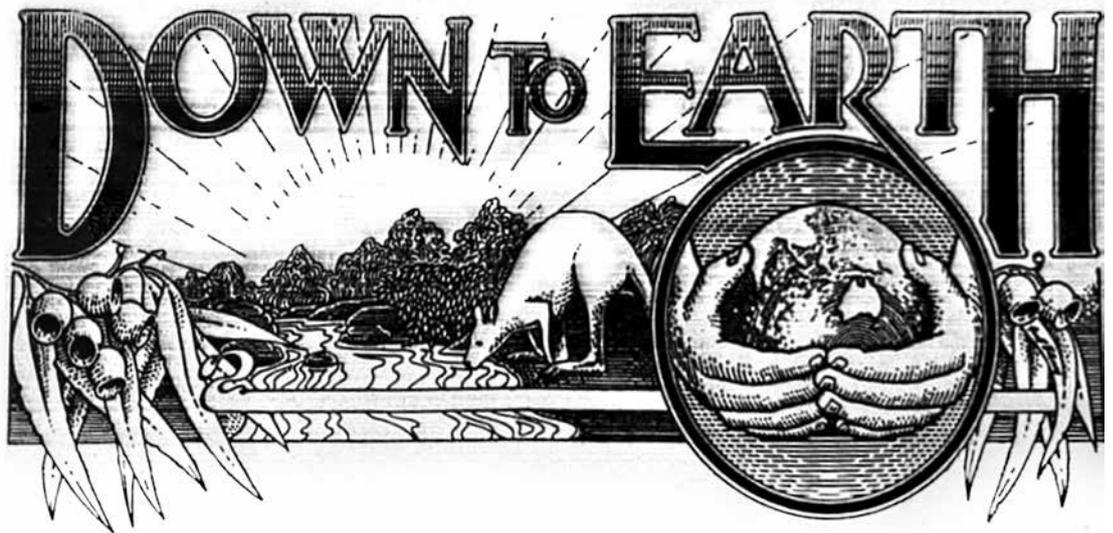
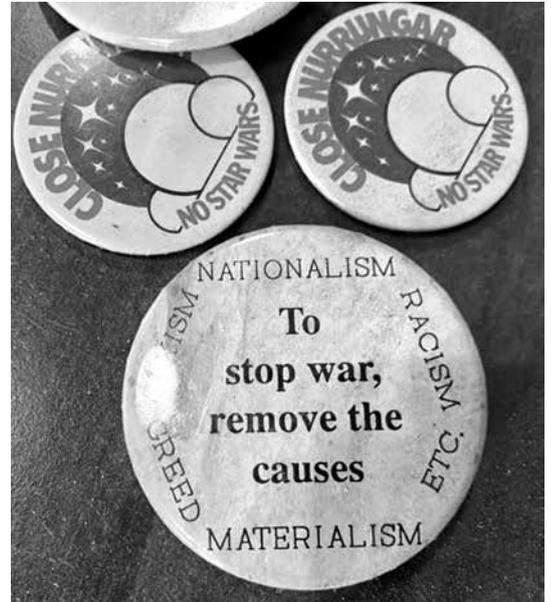
I had many laughs with the collective crew! It was funny to meet them in real life after a whole year of meeting online! It was hard to be creative with our events in lockdown but having the community of the collective was a very supportive space firing a difficult year.

Any skills or inspiration you've gained with FoE?

I've gained confidence in being able to write my opinion. I've gained social media skills and zoom skills! Haha and friends!

To get involved with FoE, visit: foe.org.au/what_we_do.

The FoE attic received a clean out this year. Here are some of the gems – old badges, “Peace News”, and a lovely banner-illustration! Stay tuned for more reveals from the archives each edition... Do you have memories or mementos of FoE “back in the days”? Get in touch (chainreaction@foe.org.au) – we’d love to hear/see them!



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