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Chapter 6

Hydrofeminism: Or, On Becoming a Body of Water

Astrida Neimanis

We are all bodies of water.

To think embodiment as watery belies the understanding of bodies that we have inherited from the dominant Western metaphysical tradition. As watery, we experience ourselves less as isolated entities, and more as oceanic eddies: *I am a singular, dynamic whorl dissolving in a complex, fluid circulation*. The space between our selves and our others is at once as distant as the primeval sea, yet also closer than our own skin—the traces of those same oceanic beginnings still cycling through us, pausing as this bodily thing we call "mine." Water is between bodies, but of bodies, before us and beyond us, yet also very presently *this body*, too. Deictics falter. Our comfortable categories of thought begin to erode. Water entangles our bodies in relations of gift, debt, theft, complicity, differentiation, relation.

What might *becoming a body of water*—ebbing, fluvial, dripping, coursing, traversing time and space, pooling as both matter and meaning—give to feminism, its theories, and its practices?

hydro ǀ logics

Our cells are inflated by water, our metabolic reactions mediated in aqueous solution.

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— David Suzuki[1]

The oceans are in constant motion . . . thermohaline circulation . . . occurs deep within the ocean and acts like a conveyor belt.

— Environmental Literacy Council[2]

The land biota has had to find ways to carry the sea within it and, moreover, to construct watery conduits from "node" to "node."

— Mark and Dianna McMenamin[3]

Somewhere at the bottom of the sea, there must be water that sank from the surface during the 'Little Ice Age' three centuries ago . . . The ocean remembers.

— Robert Kandel[4]

Sixty to ninety percent of your bodily matter is composed of water. Water, in this sense, is an entity, individualized as that relatively stable thing you call your body. But water has other logics, other patternings and means of buoying our earthly world, too. Not least, water is a conduit and mode of connection. Just as oceanic currents convey the sun's warmth, schools of fish, and islands of degraded plastic from one planetary sea to another, our watery bodies serve as material media. In an evolutionary sense, living bodies are necessary for the proliferation of what scientists Mark and Dianna McMenamin call Hypersea, which arose when life moved out of marine waters and by necessity folded a watery habitat "back inside of itself."[5] Today, when you or I drink a glass of water, we amplify this Hypersea, as we sustain our existence through

other "webs of physical intimacy and fluid exchange."[6] In this act of ingestion, we come into contact with all of our companion species[7] that inhabit the watershed from which that water was drawn—book lice, swamp cabbage, freshwater mussel. But we connect with the sedimentation tanks, and rapid-mix flocculators that make that water drinkable, and the reservoir, and the rainclouds, too. Hypersea extends to include not only terrestrial flora and fauna, but also technological, meteorological, and geophysical bodies of water.

Even while in constant motion, water is also a planetary archive of meaning and matter. To drink a glass of water is to ingest the ghosts of bodies that haunt that water. When "nature calls" some time later, we return to the cistern and the sea not only our antidepressants, our chemical estrogens, or our more commonplace excretions, but also the meanings that permeate those materialities: disposable culture, medicalized problem-solving, ecological disconnect. Just as the deep oceans harbor particulate records of former geological eras, water retains our more anthropomorphic secrets, even when we would rather forget. Our distant and more immediate pasts are returned to us in both trickles and floods.

And that same glass of water will facilitate our movement, growth, thinking, loving. As it works its way down the esophagus, through the blood, the tissues, and to the index finger, the clavicle, and the left plantar fascia, it ensures that our being is always a becoming. An alchemist at once profoundly wondrous and entirely banal, water guides a body from young to old, from here to there, from potentiality to actuality. Translation, transformation. Plurality proliferates.

As a facilitator, water is the milieu, or the gestational element, for other watery bodies as well.[8] Mammal, reptile, or fish; sapling or seed; river delta or backyard pond—all of these bodies

are necessarily brought into being by another body of water that dissolves, partially or completely, to water the bodies that will follow. On a geological scale, we have all arisen out of the same primordial soup, gestated by species upon watery species that have gifted their morphology to new iterations and articulations.

On a more human scale, we gestate in amniotic waters that deliver to us the nutrients that enable our further proliferation. Our waste is removed by similar waterways, and we are protected from external harm by these intrauterine waters, too. Gestational waters are also themselves (in) a body of water, and participate in the greater element of planetary water that continues to sustain us, protect us, and nurture us, both extra- and intercorporeally, beyond these amniotic beginnings. Water connects the human scale to other scales of life, both unfathomable and imperceptible. We are all bodies *of* water, in the constitutional, the genealogical, and the geographical sense.

Water as body; water as communicator between bodies; water as facilitating bodies into being. Entity, medium, transformative and gestational milieu. All of this enfolding in, seeping from, sustaining and saturating, our bodies of water. "There are tides in the body," writes Virginia Woolf.[9] We ebb and flow across time and space—body, to body, to body, to body.

feminism ⁞ leaks

We ourselves are sea, sands, corals, seaweeds, beaches, tides, swimmers, children, waves . . . seas and mothers.

— Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément[10]

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Woman's writing . . . draws its corporeal fluidity from images of water . . . This keeping-alive and life-giving water exists simultaneously as the writer's ink, the mother's milk, the woman's blood and menstruation.

— Trinh T. Minh-ha[11]

In me everything is already flowing.

— Luce Irigaray[12]

Thinking about embodiment in ways that challenge the phallogocentric Enlightenment vision of discrete, atomized, and self-sufficient, Man has been a long-standing concern for feminist thinkers. Particularly within the French feminist tradition of *écriture feminine*, the fluid body of woman is invoked as a means of interrupting a philosophical tradition that both valorizes a male (morphological, psychological, symbolic, philosophical) norm, and elides the specificity of "woman."

At the same time, accounts such as Hélène Cixous's, Luce Irigaray's, and Trinh T. Minh-ha's have been criticized by other feminist thinkers for their purported incarceration of women within a biologically essentialist female and normatively reproductive morphology. Cixous and Clément's "Sorties," for instance, connects the female body to the sea, in that both are gestators of life. Irigaray, in her love letter to Friedrich Nietzsche, continuously admonishes him for forgetting the watery habitat that birthed him, and to which he owes a great debt.[13] Both Minh-ha in *Women, Native, Other* and Cixous in "The Laugh of the Medusa" invoke the "mother's milk"[14] or the "white ink,"[15] which seems to reductively connect the woman writer to a lactating

female body. Is not, then, the "fluid woman" just another way of invoking the phallogocentric fantasy of "woman as womb"?

The last century of (primarily Western) feminist thought has cultivated the view that to reduce a woman to her (reproductive) biology is problematic, first, because of the troubling symbolic meanings—passive, empty vessel, hysterical, contaminating—that persistently imbue this biology. Moreover, within the social, political, and economic contexts in which this thought has circulated, compulsory reproduction has generally foreclosed rather than facilitated meaningful participation of women outside of the domestic sphere. But why should this history predetermine any appeal to biological matter as necessarily antifeminist or reductionist? The desire of water to morph, shape-shift, and facilitate the new persistently overflows any attempt at capture. Is not "woman" similarly uncontainable? After all, "woman's" beings/becomings in these texts are not determined in advance—even as she may be, like water, temporarily dammed by dominant representations and discourse. As watery, woman is hardly (statically, unchangeably) "essentialist." She too becomes the very matter of transmutation.

In an effort to circumvent the trap of biological essentialism, the texts of Irigaray, Cixous, and Minh-ha have also been read as merely metaphores of gestation: women's fluidity births new ways of thinking, writing, being.[16] But surely, the watery body is no *mere* metaphor. The intelligibility of any aqueous metaphor depends entirely upon the real waters that sustain not only material bodies, but material language, too.[17] And are we not *all* bodies of water? In *Marine Lover*, while Irigaray's descriptions highlight woman's aqueous embodiment, she posits no clear separation of the man's body from the amniotic waters he too readily forgets. Irigaray's male interlocutor in this text is birthed in and by a watery body—yet this water is also an integral part

of his own flesh: "Where have you drawn what flows out of you?"[18] And, while what her lover thinks he fears is drowning in the mother/sea, Irigaray subtly reminds him that what he should really fear is desiccation, drought, thirst. No body can come into being, thrive, or survive without water to buoy its flesh.

Similarly, Minh-ha suggests that woman's writing draws from the wellspring of her reproductively oriented fluid forces (menstruation, lactation)—yet all bodies have reservoirs to be tapped.[19] We might ask: if the fluids of otherwise gendered bodies were acknowledged rather than effaced, how might such attentiveness amplify the creative—and even ethical and political—potential of these bodies? Rather than alerting us to some "essentialist" difference between masculine and feminine (or normatively reprosexual and nonreprosexual) embodiment, such aqueous body-writing might invite *all* bodies to attend to the water that facilitates their existence, and embeds them within ongoing overlapping cycles of aqueous fecundity.

The fluid body is not specific to woman, but watery embodiment is still a feminist question; thinking as a watery body has the potential to bathe new feminist concepts and practices into existence. What if a reorientation of our lived embodiment *as watery* could move us, for example, beyond the longstanding debate among feminisms whereby commonality (connection, identification) and difference (alterity, unknowability) are posited as an either/or proposition? Inspired by Irigaray, we will still affirm that the rhythms of the fluid woman belong to what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has called "the species of alterity"[20] (for this alterity also safeguards plurality). But Irigaray also reminds us that no body is self-sufficient in its fluvial corporeality; we have all come from the various seas that have gestated us, both evolutionarily and maternally.[21] Water, in other words, flows through and across difference. Water does not ask

us to confirm *either* the irreducibility of alterity *or* material connection. Water flows between, as both: a new hydro-logic. What sort of ethics and politics could I cultivate if I were to acknowledge that the unknowability of the other nonetheless courses through me—just as I do through her?

To say that we harbor waters, that our bodies' gestation, sustenance, and interpermeation with other bodies are facilitated by our bodily waters, and that these waters are *both* singular *and* shared, is far more literal than we might at first think. Neither essentialist nor purely discursive, this watery feminism is critically materialist.

membrane, viscosity

Probably the most important feature of a biomembrane is that it is a selectively permeable structure . . . [which is] essential for effective separation.

— Wikipedia[22]

"Viscosity retains an emphasis on resistance to changing form.

— Nancy Tuana[23]

Bodies need water, but water also needs a body. Water is always sometime, someplace, somewhere. Even in our aqueous connections, bodies and their others/worlds are still differentiated. The question, then, of "what is" is never sufficient. *How* is it? *Where* is it? *When* is it? Speed, rate, thickness, duration, mixture, contamination, blockage.[24] If we are all bodies of water, then we are differentiated not so much by the "what" as by the "how." But what are the specific mechanisms of this differentiation?

Attention to the mechanics of watery embodiment reveals that in order to connect bodies, water must travel across only partially permeable membranes. In an ocular-centric culture, some of these membranes, like our human skin, give the illusion of impermeability. Still, we perspire, urinate, ingest, ejaculate, menstruate, lactate, breathe, cry. We take in the world, selectively, and send it flooding back out again. This selection is not a "choice" made by our subjective, human selves; it is rather always, as Nietzsche has taught us, an impersonal expression of *phusis'* nuances—affirmative material energies striving toward increasingly differentiated forms.[25] Selection traverses other more subtle membranes, too—those that are either too ephemeral or too monumental to be perceived by us as such, yet that choreograph our ways of being in relation: a gravitational threshold, a weather front, a wall of grief, a line on a map, equinox, a winter coat, death.

Nancy Tuana refers to this membrane logic as "viscous porosity." While the concept of fluidity emphasizes traversals across and between bodies, viscosity reminds Tuana that there are still *bodies*—all different—that need to be accounted for. Viscosity draws attention to "sites of resistance and opposition" rather than only "a notion of open possibilities" that might suggest one indiscriminate flow.[26] Despite the fact that we are all watery bodies, leaking into and sponging off of one another, we resist total dissolution, material annihilation. Or more aptly, we postpone it: ashes to ashes, water to water.

At what point is the past overtaken by the present? What marks the definitive shift from one species to a "new" one? Where does the host body end and the amniotic body begin? Our bodies are thresholds of both past and future. The precise material space-time of differentiation is

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only a matter of convenience, but any body still requires membranes to keep from being swept out to sea altogether.

There is always a risk of flooding.

adrift in the more-than-human

We are in this together.

— Rosi Braidotti[27]

The problem was that we did not know whom we meant when we said "we."

— Adrienne Rich[28]

The mostly watery composition of my body is not just a human thing. From the almost imperceptible jellies in the benthos of the Pacific, to the Namibian desert catfish hibernating in the mud; from mangrove to ragweed; from culvert to billabong to the roaring Niagara; cushioned between fractocumulus cloud and deep earth aquifer, we are all bodies of water.

In acknowledging this corporeally connected aqueous community, distinctions between human and nonhuman start to blur. We live in a watery commons, where the human infant drinks the mother, the mother ingests the reservoir, the reservoir is replenished by the storm, the storm absorbs the ocean, the ocean sustains the fish, the fish are consumed by the whale. The bequeathing of our water to an other is necessary for the custodianship of this commons. But when and how does gift become theft, and sustainability usurpation?

"Trickle down": while species extinctions are occurring at around 10 percent per decade, aquatic species face a higher threat of extinction than birds or mammals. Much of this oceanic swan song is due to the automotive fluids, household solvents, pesticides, mercury, and other toxins that make their way from human home to culvert to sea. Most affected are those animal bodies that dwell at or near the bottom of an aquatic habitat—such as fish eggs and filter feeders—where pollutants tend to settle.[29]

"Currency": resources such as salt and sand have long been harvested from the sea for human use, but marine organisms—tunicates, cnideria, mollusks—also provide us with pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, food additives, depilatories. For example, antigens derived from eleven pounds of sea squirts can supply enough anticancer drugs to satisfy the world's demand for a year. Flows of power are inaugurated between marine life, human bodies in pain, and Big Pharma. Into which currents and what currencies are the sea squirts being commandeered?[30]

"Liquidity": the "human" has probably been around for five to seven million years, but sharks are at least 420 million years old. In recent decades, many shark species have been threatened by a black market finning industry that nets over US$1 billion a year. A single whale-shark fin can sell for ten thousand dollars.[31] Cash in hand, they say, is the most liquid asset.

The seeping of the biological into the cultural, of the more-than-human into the human, happens in more ways than one. Watery bodies sustain other bodies, but biological life buttresses our language, our ways of making sense of the world, as well.[32] Hydro-logics suggest to us new ontological understandings of body and community, but how might feminism ensure that this

aqueous understanding of our *interbeing* become not another appropriation and usurpation of the more-than-human world that sustains us?

To say that *my body is marshland, estuary, ecosystem, that it is riven through with tributaries of companion species, nestling in my gut, extending through my fingers, pooling at my feet*, is a beautiful way to reimagine my corporeality. But once we recognize that we are not hermetically sealed in our diver's suits of human skin, what do we do with this recognition? What do we owe, and how do we pay?

ecotone

I like places and times that are pregnant with change.

— Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands[33]

Inorganic life is the movement at the membrane of the organism, where it begins to quiver with virtuality, decomposes, and is recombined again.

— Pheng Cheah[34]

As transition areas between two adjacent but different ecosystems, ecotones appear as both gradual shifts and abrupt demarcations. But more than just a marker of separation or even a marker of connection (although importantly both of these things), an ecotone is also a zone of fecundity, creativity, transformation; of becoming, assembling, multiplying; of diverging, differentiating, relinquishing. Something happens. Estuaries, tidal zones, wetlands: these are all liminal spaces where "two complex systems meet, embrace, clash, and transform one another."[35]

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An ecotone is a sort of membrane, too: a pause, or even an increase in velocity, where/when/how matter comes to matter differently. If we consider membrane logic as belonging to the species of the ecotone, we are again made aware of the rich complexity of the hydro-logics that sustain us. The liminal ecotone is not only a place of transit, but *itself* a watery body. In other words, an ecotone has a material fecundity that rejects an ontological separation between "thing" and "transition," between "body" and "vector." The watery membrane, then, is no passive prop for the ontologically weightier bodies that traverse it. In Gilles Deleuze's terms, this event-full zone could be called "inorganic life."[36] But saturated with lively water, inorganic life is organic, too. The virtual is also actual. These and other pairs begin to creep.

Eco: home. *Tone*: tension. We must learn to be at home in the quivering tension of the in-between. No other home is available. In-between nature and culture, in-between biology and philosophy, in-between the human and everything we ram ourselves up against, everything we desperately shield ourselves from, everything we throw ourselves into, wrecked and recklessly, watching, amazed, as our skins become thinner.

transcorporeal creep

> *The material self cannot be disentangled from networks that are simultaneously economic, political, cultural, scientific, and substantial … what was once the ostensibly bounded human subject finds herself in a swirling landscape of uncertainty.*
>
> — Stacy Alaimo[37]

Tuana reminds us that our porosity is what enables us to live at all, but "this porosity . . . does not discriminate against that which can kill us."[38] Because water is such a capable vector, not

only does life-giving potentiality course through our transcorporeal waterways, but so also does illness, contamination, inundation.

There are things we *do* know: skyrocketing rates of cancer in aboriginal communities downstream from the Alberta tar sands megaproject in Northwestern Canada are directly attributable to the toxic tailings ponds created by the bitumen extraction process. In November 2010, seven months after the Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, the deaths of 6,104 birds, 609 sea turtles, and 100 mammals could be directly attributed to the oil spill—and the death toll continues to rise. Ongoing death and illness in the residents of Bhopal, India, almost three decades after the Union Carbide methyl isocyanate gas leak are directly attributable to persistent groundwater contamination stealthily poisoning all that flows beneath.

But at what point do the sharp edges of our certainty begin to blur? Consider that in addition to fat, vitamins, lactose, minerals, antibodies, and other life-sustaining stuff, North American breast milk also likely harbors DDT, PCBs, dioxin, trichloroethylene, cadmium, mercury, lead, benzene, arsenic, paint thinner, phthalates, dry-cleaning fluid, toilet deodorizers, Teflon, rocket fuel, termite poison, fungicides, and flame retardant.[39] Reducing direct exposure to toxins cannot negate the fact that our bodily archives have deep memories, our flesh fed by streams whose sources are beyond our view.

As Stacy Alaimo notes, transcorporeal threats are often invisible, and risk is incalculable. The future is always an open question, and our bodies must be understood as flowing beyond the bounds of what is knowable. Aqueous transcorporeality therefore demands of us a new ethics—a new way of being responsible and responsive to our others. On this "ever-changing landscape of

continuous interplay, intra-action, emergence, and risk,"[40] even as we insist upon accountability, we must also make decisions that eschew certainty and necessary courses of action. This is an ethics of *unknowability*.

Moreover, this new ethics must also be itself transcorporeal, transiting across and through diverse sites of contestation. For whom should rocket-fuelled breast milk be an issue, and why? Consider that due to cold temperatures and little sunlight, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) flowing from the industrial and agricultural wastes of far-flung rich, Westernized outposts break down slowly in the Arctic. A thumb-sized piece of *maktaaq*, a staple in the Inuit diet, contains more than the maximum recommended intake of PCBs for an entire week.[41] As a result, Innu women's breast milk is an especially toxic substance, absorbing the liquid runoff of a global political economy that produces vastly divergent body burdens. The inequalities of neocolonialist globalization course through waterways at scales both individual and oceanic. Nursing one's young becomes a complex congeries of questions in which *we all are implicated*, rather than an issue for the biologically essentialized, lactating woman alone. The flows of global power meet the flows of biomatter.

hydrofeminism

> *It is a constant challenge for us to rise to the occasion, to catch the wave of life's intensities and ride it on, exposing the boundaries or limits as we transgress them.*
>
> — Rosi Braidotti[42]

Watershed pollution, a theory of embodiment, amniotic becomings, disaster, environmental colonialism, how to write, global capital, nutrition, philosophy, birth, rain, animal ethics,

evolutionary biology, death, storytelling, bottled water, multinational pharmaceutical corporations, drowning, poetry.

These are all feminist questions, and they are mostly inextricable from one another. A key priority for feminism today, as Chandra Talpade Mohanty has claimed, is building a transnational, anticapitalist, and anticolonialist solidarity, where local and global thinking and acting are simultaneous.[43] Few things are more planetary and more intimate than our bodies of water. New feminisms thus must also be transspecies, and transcorporeal.

Not only does water connect us, gestate us, sustain us—more than this, water disturbs the very categories that ground the domains of social, political, philosophical, and environmental thought, and those of feminist theory and practice as well. Thinking about our selves and our broader communities as watery can thus unmoor us in productive (albeit sometimes risky) ways. We are set adrift in the space-time between our certainties, between the various outcrops we cling to for security. It is here, in the borderzones of what is comfortable, of what is perhaps even livable,[44] that we can open to alterity—to other bodies, other ways of being and acting in the world—in the simultaneous recognition that this alterity also flows through us.

Current feminisms have their own ecotones, where the "objects" of feminist thought extend rhizomatically into areas one might never have considered "feminist." To follow our bodies of water along their rivulets and tributaries is to journey beyond the cleaving and coupling of sexually differentiated human bodies: we find ourselves tangled in intricate choreographies of bodies and flows of all kinds—not only human bodies, but also other animal, vegetable, geophysical, meteorological, and technological ones; not only watery flows, but also flows of

power, culture, politics, and economics. So if projects that move us to think about animal ethics, or environmental degradation, or neocolonialist capitalist incursions are still "feminist," it is not because such questions are *analogous* to sexual oppression; it is rather because a feminist exploration of the inextricable materiality/semioticity that circulates through all of these bodies pushes at the borders of feminism, and expands it.

By venturing to feminism's ecotones, and leaping in, we can discover that feminism dives far deeper than human sexual difference, and outswims any attempts to limit it thus. Here is gestation, here is proliferation, here is danger, here is risk. Here is an unknowable future, always already folded into our own watery flesh. Here is hydrofeminism. At least this is what becoming a body of water has taught me.

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[1] David Suzuki with Amanda McConnell, "A Child's Reminder," in *Whose Water Is It? The Unquenchable Thirst of a Water-Hungry World*, ed. Bernadette MacDonald and Douglas Jehl (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2003), p. 179.

[2] "The Great Ocean Conveyor Belt," Environmental Literacy Council, http://www.enviroliteracy.org/article.php/545.html, accessed on April 23, 2011.

[3] Mark and Dianna McMenamin, *Hypersea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 5.

[4] Robert Kandel, *Water from Heaven* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), p. 132.

[5] McMenamin and McMenamin, *Hypersea*, p. 5.

[6] Ibid., p. 15.

[7] Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003).

[8] See Mielle Chandler and Astrida Neimanis, "Water and Gestationality: What Flows Beneath Ethics," in *Thinking with Water*, ed. Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, forthcoming).[AU: Can this be updated?]

[9] Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (New York: Penguin Classic, 2000), p. 124. I am indebted to Janine MacLeod for drawing my attention to the tidal imagery in Woolf's work.

[10] Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, "Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays," in *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 89.

[11] Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. 38.

[12] Luce Irigaray, *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 37.

[13] "And isn't it by forgetting the first waters that you achieve immersion in your abysses and the giddy flight of one who wings far away" (ibid., p. 38).

[14] Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other*, p. 38.

[15] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," *Signs* 1:4 (1976), p. 881.

[16] For example, see Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993); or Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (London: Routledge, 1991).

[17] See Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter*, trans. Edith R. Farrell (Dallas: Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, 1993); and Janine MacLeod, "Water, Memory and the Material Imagination," in *Thinking with Water*.

[18] Irigaray, *Marine Lover*, p. 38.

[19] "A woman's ink of blood for a man's ink of semen" (Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other*, p. 38).

[20] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), p. 72.

[21] See Irigaray, *Marine Lover*, pp. 12–13, where Irigaray makes allusions to Nietzsche's evolutionary "descent."

[22] "Biological Membrane," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biological_membrane, accessed on April 23, 2011.

[23] Nancy Tuana, "Viscous Porosity: Witnessing Katrina," in *Material Feminisms*, ed. Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2008), p. 194.

[24] See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on bodies and their composition, for example, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 152–153.

[25] See Melissa A. Orlie, "Impersonal Matter," in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, ed. Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 134.

[26] Tuana, "Viscous Porosity," p. 194.

[27] Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (London: Polity, 2006), p. 119. This refrain is a motto for Braidotti's posthumanist ecological thought.

[28] Adrienne Rich, "Notes Toward a Politics of Location," in *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*, ed. Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 451.

[29] "Aquatic Extinction," Earth Gauge, http://www.earthgauge.net/2008/aquatic-extinction, accessed on April 23, 2011.

[30] Astrida Neimanis, "'Strange Kinship' and Ascidian Life: 13 Repetitions," *Journal of Critical Animal Studies* 9:1 (2011), pp. 117–143.

[31] "About Shark Finning," Stop Shark Finning: Keep Sharks in the Ocean and Out of the Soup, http://www.stopsharkfinning.net, accessed on April 23, 2011.

[32] See MacLeod, "Water, Memory and the Material Imagination" for a complex analysis of the predatory relationship between the language of capital flows and watery materiality.

[33] Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, "The Marginal World," in *Every Grain of Sand: Canadian Perspectives on Ecology and Environment*, ed. J. Andrew Wainwright (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2004), p. 46.

[34] Pheng Cheah, "Non-Dialectical Materialism," in *New Materialisms*, p. 88.

[35] Mortimer-Sandilands, "The Marginal World," p. 48. See also Cecilia Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," in *Thinking with Water*.

[36] See Cheah, "Non-Dialectical Materialism," p. 88.

[37] Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 20.

[38] Tuana, "Viscous Porosity," p. 198.

[39] Florence Williams, "Toxic Breast Milk?" *New York Times Magazine*, January 9, 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/09/magazine/09TOXIC.html?pagewanted=1&r=1, accessed on February 16, 2011.

[40] Alaimo, *Bodily Natures*, p. 21.

[41] Andrew Duffy, "Toxic Chemicals Poison Inuit Food," *Ottawa Citizen*, http://www.chem.unep.ch/POPs/POP_Inc/press_releases/ottawa-1.htm.5_July_1998, accessed on February 16, 2011.

[42] Rosi Braidotti, "The Ethics of Becoming-Imperceptible," in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 139.

[43] See Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles," *Signs* 28:2 (2003), pp. 499–535.

[44] Spatio-temporal dynamisms "can be experienced only at the borders of the livable" [Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 118]. Copyeditor: No need to reverse brackets here. STET. Braidotti expands this notion as an ethics of sustainability (Braidotti, "The Ethics of Becoming-Imperceptible").