Introduction

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As ecocriticism grows stronger through its intersections with the environmental sciences, environmental politics and philosophy, literary and cultural studies, postcolonial theory, globalization theories, and queer theory, reclaiming ecocriticism’s feminist lineage has become more and more urgent. In our attempt to “reassemble the ecocritical” (to borrow Bruno Latour’s book title, Reassembling the Social), we seek to bring ecocriticism into an even closer alliance with environmental feminist studies. Drawing upon the resources of ecofeminist theories and criticism, but going beyond their methodologies, we offer a new practice of feminist ecocriticism: here, ecocriticism speaks in multiple feminist voices that draw attention to such issues as sexual and environmental justice; women’s active roles in environmental, social, and interspecies justice issues; as well as questions around gendered bodies, postcolonial ecofeminist concerns, feminist re-working of affect theory, posthumanist analyses of power, gender, and ecology, and green queer theories. Our edited volume presents a diversity of feminist ecocritical approaches that affirm the continuing contributions, relevance, and necessity for a feminist perspective in environmental literature, culture, and science.

By attending to the interrelations among these diverse topics, the volume opens a critical pathway to the poetics and politics of feminist ecocriticism in order to reassess the material and discursive connections between human and nonhuman environments from feminist viewpoints. At the same time, acknowledging that feminist ecocritical visions necessitate more effective and sustainable discursive practices—ones that are non-phallogocentric and non-anthropocentric—enables us to develop and establish more responsible ethical positions that would take into account environmental/species/reproductive justice issues. Feminist ecocriticism advocates an ethics based on situated values, on the gender significance of embodiment both human and nonhuman, and considers the moral accountability of “erotic corporeal natures” (Alaimo 22). Karen Barad has forcefully argued that “ethics is not simply about the subsequent consequences of our ways of interacting with the world . . . Ethics is about mattering, about taking account of the entangled materialization of which we are a part, including new configurations,