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In Pursuit of Social Justice at the Postmodern Turn: Intersectional Activism through the Lens of the Ecosexual Movement

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IN PURSUIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AT THE POSTMODERN TURN: INTERSECTIONAL
ACTIVISM THROUGH THE LENS OF THE ECOSEXUAL MOVEMENT

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

In this study, I examine the development of the ecosexual movement, a social movement that begins at the intersection of environmental and sexual struggles, from its inception in the late 1990s/early 2000s. Previous research suggests intersectionality in social movements often ends up being divisive because it emphasizes difference. Using a mixed qualitative methods design including ethnographic field work, interviews, and content analysis of related web and print materials, I analyze how the ecosexual movement negotiates intersectionality. I found the ecosexual movement links processual notions of environmental justice and sexual justice through a dominant collective action frame of queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019) that resonates in a time of mainstream apocalyptic narratives. The use of disruptive strategies incorporating a celebratory style of collaborative experimental art, radical performance, and other absurd, creative, sensual, emotive, visceral tactics facilitates moving away from modern binary or dichotomous “either/or” ideology starting with the human/nature division. The ecosexual movement not only challenges modern hierarchical dualisms that frame issues as a struggle between two opposing sides, it opens participatory space for creating potential alternative models that demonstrate an embodied example of the postmodern alternative cultural discourse and social organization that situates all humans in “humanity” and humans in nature, the dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015).

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To creating a new, inclusive way forward, with compassion, creativity, and humor.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It was a hot, sunny summer day. Most of us wore black and blue. I donned a short, tight-fitting knit dress patterned in sky and midnight blues with a black fedora hat. The hat was decorated in blue glitter letters and a small jelly-like octopus. It was lent to me that morning for the occasion. On my feet were gently used, soft, zebra striped high-top sneakers gifted to me the night before. Several people rocked a punk dress style; blue hair and mohawks, black leather and vinyl clothing. We were joined by a shimmering silver sea horse with a few purple fins and a group of gnomes in pointed turquoise hats. A shiny, sparkly blue camper trailer wheeled down the road. The words "Pollination Pod" were painted in white capital letters above the trailer's side window. A giant papier mâché fish came snaking along the street, along with smaller fish carried on sticks, and streamers of blue moving like a rolling river. Condoms filled with water were tied on a person's body as they playfully bounced one across their mouth. There was a buzz of energy as people passed around bottles of water and kombucha (i.e., fermented tea) to stay hydrated.

The playfulness soon gave way to a more serious tone as the crowd gathered around a bronze-skinned man burning incense. The man had shoulder length white and silver curls, short white mustache and beard, and a feathered headdress of brown, black, and white plumes. In contrast to those around him, he wore a long-sleeved white shirt with a red and black woven cloth draped over his shoulders, another secured around his waist, and a satchel strapped diagonally across his body. He blew into a conch shell like a trumpet as he made his way around the circle sprinkling the crowd with water. Then he played a primitive string instrument and sang a song about "agua," the Spanish word for "water." As an indigenous South American shaman, he was leading a water blessing ritual. A fair-skinned woman stood nearby in a short, tight-fitting, low-cut black vinyl dress with blue lace frills, black stockings, high heeled black boots with blue laces, full make-up, and a blue decorative headpiece. After watching intently, she suddenly let out a gasp and covered her heart as tears streamed down her face, overwhelmed with gratitude for sharing in this meaningful native tradition.

Next, a booming voice could be heard through a megaphone. Someone was reading a public declaration while the circle of people nodded and cheered in agreement between each line. A stream of bubbles occasionally floated through the air. A same-sex female couple, the fair-skinned woman described earlier dressed in high femme, and her partner, in punk butch attire, approached the front. Two members of the group walked to either side stretching a ribbon in front of them. A woman stood by one and a man knelt by the other, both smiling and holding boa constrictor snacks around their necks. Others anxiously watched from behind as they held up signs that read, “Dirty & Proud,” “Composting Is So Hot!” and “The Earth Is My Lover!” Camera crews snapped pictures and filmed footage. The crowd cheered loudly as the couple officially cut the ribbon and performed a water toast.

Shortly after, the group moved into a line formation led by two young adults. Each was holding up one side of a large teal banner that had big black block letters and two web addresses printed in smaller letters underneath. On one side was a man with pale skin and long dreads wearing white shorts, perhaps swim trunks with large tropical blue flowers outlined in black, a backwards blue and white floral baseball cap, black tennis shoes, and blue pasties shaped like stars covering his nipples. On the other side, there was a woman with olive skin wearing a short black lacy crop top, aqua blue three-quarter length leggings with a short black skirt decorated in sequins, glittery blue eyelids, blue lipstick, and dark hair pulled up in a blue bow. Both had blue paint streaks smudged across their cheeks. Behind them people carried signs with a blue handprint on one side and a black QR code on the other. Two female-presenting persons were completely covered from head to toe in form-fitting body suits, including their faces. The one in black, the “Phantom Mariachi,” wore a festive maroon and mustard sombrero, and the one in silver with a black corset, the “Cyborg Aztec Queen,” wore a shiny silver headpiece topped with black feathers. A striking young woman with flowing dark hair walked alongside them. She sported a sexy police uniform with H2O printed on the cap and heart-shaped sunglasses.

Still others were dressed in either white or powder blue lab coats; those in white dancing down the street and those in powder blue playing the drums. A radiant brown-skinned woman wearing a blue feather boa and white curly wig with blue peacock feathers weaved through the crowd playing a

tambourine. A few people took turns leading songs and chants to the percussion beats sometimes using a megaphone: “Agua es vida (Water is life),” “We are just a sea foam (crowd repeats); Water is life, Earth is home (crowd repeats),” and “H2O, H2O, we’re gonna save water and drink it slow.” The same-sex couple from the ribbon-cutting ceremony now walked next to each other waving colorful flags, but these were different from the familiar rainbow flags of the LGBTQ movement. One flag pictured a heart and globe intertwined on a striped background of orange, purple, dark blue, and light blue; the other displayed an evening landscape featuring the moon, a star, and two prominent purple mountains. Beside each of them was a person carrying a giant, blue and black capital letter “E.” The “E” represented “ecosexual.” The group of about two-hundred people comprised the “Here Come the Ecosexuals!” contingent of the 2015 San Francisco Pride Parade. The earlier ceremonial performances “officially” added an “E” to LGBTQ for ecosexual pride.

* * *

In this study, I examine a transnational grassroots social movement that has worked at the intersection of environmental and sexual struggles for justice over the past twenty years, specifically the ecosexual movement. Some social movement researchers have examined intersectionality, mobilizing multiple identity groups and/or multiple issues, as a strategy used by an otherwise single-issue movement (e.g., Cole 2008). But relatively few have looked at social movements (e.g., Sbicca 2012) or social movement organizations (e.g., Gentile and Salerno 2017; Luna 2016) that link multiple sites of struggle from the beginning (e.g., UndocuQueer, SisterSong) and/or promote intersectional mobilization by addressing activists’ overlapping identities in an inclusive manner (e.g., Terriquez 2015). This dissertation examines how social movements negotiate intersectionality through a case study of the ecosexual movement.

While there has been much research on ecofeminism, a component of the feminist movement popular in the 1970s that brought in insights from environmentalism, there has been little empirical research on the relatively recent emergence of ecosexuality. The ecosexual movement goes beyond connecting gender issues and ecology to explicitly add sexuality as an intersecting dynamic. In doing so it

links processual notions of environmental justice and sexual justice through a dominant collective action frame as queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019). In this dissertation, I examine the origins, development, and persistence of the ecosexual movement. I present the ecosexual movement’s negotiation of intersectionality through three overlapping phases. The first phase began the process of aligning environmental and sexual struggles in a variety of contexts. The second phase embodied experimental and radical performance art tactics emphasizing a collective action frame that popularized and spread the movement transnationally. Finally, during the third phase, the ecosexual movement solidified and maintained a radically inclusive collective identity that also extended to nonhuman nature elements as it gained legitimacy through mainstream media coverage and began the process of institutionalization.

Research has found that intersectionality in social movements often ends up being divisive because it emphasizes difference (Ehrenreich 2002; Hancock 2007; Ludvig 2006). I take an inductive approach using qualitative ethnographic methods to provide a rare overview of the development of this movement, and specifically to analyze how the ecosexual movement negotiates the tensions inherent in intersectionality in the creation and persistence of an intersectional collective identity. In this dissertation, I found that an attention to challenging the cultural discourse and social organization based on modern hierarchical dualisms while creating postmodern alternative narratives reflecting the dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015) through the dominant framing, strategies, and tactics used by the ecosexual movement – queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and collaborative, participatory experimental art, radical performance, and symposia – has been key to how intersectionality is negotiated. The ecosexual movement negotiates intersectional tensions by promoting and practicing:

1. A general intellectual critique of modernity’s dominant dualistic worldview, rejecting binaries and hierarchical dualisms of all kinds beginning with the Nature/Society division and including binaries related to all identity categories with a focus on sex, gender, and

sexuality as well as sacred/profane, human/environment, culture/nature, and reason/emotion

2. A notion of justice that rests on process – how we do justice across issues in terms of individual and community recognition, participation, and functioning (Pellow 2018; Schlosberg 2007) – rather than outcomes
3. A conscious, participatory examination of the linking of struggles – the parallels, similarities, and structural connections – from the initial organizing of the social movement that facilitates participants identifying with it as their own (Davis 2016)
4. Disruptive strategies of celebratory, collaborative, participatory experimental art, radical performance, and symposia incorporating absurd, creative, sensual, emotive, visceral tactics to create a sense of belonging and construct new narratives
5. The utilization of recognizable concepts from the cultural discourse, such as wedding ceremonies, that are beneficial to build a bridge to new narratives because of public familiarity (Gentile and Salerno 2017)
6. A “deep political solidarity” using a “dynamic, process-oriented image of intersectionality” that “neither eschew(s) identity nor remain(s) mired in it” (Hancock 2011:44; 51)
7. Negotiating sameness and difference as an ongoing, multidimensional process (Luna 2016)
8. A radically inclusive collective identity that also recognizes nonhuman nature elements.

Resources involving university and art community funding and the networks and social capital of well-known performance artists in queer, sex-positive, and environmental networks provided primary direction, sustenance, and focus for the ecosexual movement over several years.

The ecosexual movement is a transnational grassroots social movement that integrates environmental and sexual struggles for justice as its starting point. Rather than creating temporary coalitions among single-issue movements or expanding their agenda to include additional issues and

struggles as the movement grows, the ecosexual movement *begins* at the intersection of multiple issues and struggles in a quest for intersectional justice. Its use of disruptive strategies and celebratory style of experimental art, radical performance, and collaborative, participatory expression differentiates it from movements that seek reform through conventional politics providing an avenue for radical inclusion. Thus far, the ecosexual movement has managed to find the balance between alienating people by being too fringe versus being co-opted by capitalist interests so that the radical potential for emancipatory change is subverted.

The Ecosexual Movement

While precursors are found near the turn of the century (see Chapter 4), performance art couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle popularized the contemporary ecosexual movement beginning in 2008 in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. Stephens is a queer artist/activist from the coal fields of West Virginia and an art professor at University of California, Santa Cruz. Sprinkle is an internationally acclaimed feminist former sex worker, radical sex educator, and artist who also developed into an environmental activist. The pair have collaborated on performance art projects, interactive walking tours, symposia, and documentary films to grow the ecosexual movement transnationally. Art and humor are their primary tactics.

Three related general aims of the ecosexual movement are: 1) to transform the relationship between humans and the Earth to one of equal partnership by shifting the metaphor “from Earth as mother to Earth as lover,” 2) to promote an expanded form of sexuality that imagines sex as an ecology that extends beyond the physical body, 3) to change the dynamics of the environmental movement to attract the attention of previously marginalized groups and incite them to action on ecological issues, that is, “make the environmental movement more sexy, fun, and diverse.” Related to the third aim, according to Stephens and Sprinkle (2012b), ecosexual networks include “artists, sex workers, academics, drag queens, queer folks and others whose voices do not necessarily fit easily into the existing environmental movement” (p. 66). The primary values of this social movement as evidenced by time spent with the

actors, at events, and in the making of the ecosexual manifesto are diversity, radical inclusion, equality, justice, sustainability, creativity, humor, joy, and absurdity in human-human and human-nonhuman relationships.

My awareness of environmental and social (in)justice is rooted in my hometown located in a rural Appalachian county of Northeastern Ohio. I grew up with the experience of a community struggle to prevent a toxic waste incinerator from being built next to an elementary school on a major river flood plain of an economically marginalized area. Despite evidence of potential health and environmental consequences and years of protests, the incinerator was eventually built and has continued to operate anyway. As environmental historian and sociologist Jason W. Moore noted:

Appalachians haven't really been 'white' in American history. They've been 'white trash.' There are ways of talking about how these people aren't really part of 'good society'; they're not part of 'civilized society.' They're 'out there in the wild' somehow, not quite part of civilization (UViewTelevision at Point Park University Center for Media and Innovation 2019).

He goes on to say that the dehumanizing of people in Appalachia is linked to treating those areas and its residents as environmental sacrifice zones, using the examples of mountaintop removal coal mining and hydraulic fracturing, i.e. "fracking" of rock deep underground to extract oil or natural gas in "extraction states" such as West Virginia and Ohio.

Additionally, my experience becoming a teen mom during high school began my quest to understand the intersections of gender, sexual politics, and economic injustices. Fast forward to 2008, I became interested in the relationship between environmental and gender issues while working on an interdisciplinary research project in Central Florida supported by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. A few years later after moving to Las Vegas to pursue my Ph.D., I took my comprehensive examinations in the specialty areas of environmental sociology and the sociology of sexuality and gender.

In early 2010, when a colleague told me about Stephens and Sprinkle's ecosexual performance art weddings that combined issues related to the environment and sexuality, it naturally piqued my interest. I searched the internet and discovered Stephens and Sprinkle's online in-progress documentation of their

seven-year performance art wedding project, *Love Art Laboratory*. The project began in 2005 to primarily address laws prohibiting same-sex marriage (while simultaneously critiquing the mainstream conception of the state-sanctioned institution of marriage), but it grew to engage environmental issues during the fourth year after the same-sex couple legally married the prior year. At that time, in 2008, Stephens and Sprinkle shifted to producing ecology-themed weddings and came out as ecosexual.

In my online search, I also came across an advertisement for an upcoming ecosexual workshop scheduled to take place at a bookstore in the North Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area in California. Three female authors of groundbreaking books regarding consensual or ethical non-monogamy/polyamory were slated to lead the workshop. One of the women, a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez at the time, also owned the nonprofit organization that sponsored the event. I registered for the ecosexual workshop and made travel arrangements to attend.

For this project, I conducted multi-sited ethnographic field work. My data collection methods included participant observation of individuals and groups at various public events in the Western U.S., in-depth interviews with ecosexual actors, and content analysis of ecosexual websites and related literature. I attended and documented my first ecosexual event during the summer of 2010. It was the workshop I registered for that explored the concept of ecosexuality through the lens of female authors on ethical non-monogamy/polyamory. I first met Stephens and Sprinkle there. They were also attendees. Near the end of the workshop, the facilitators asked the couple to come to the front of the room and describe their ecosexual performance art projects. After introducing their work, Stephens and Sprinkle invited the group to join them in officially recognizing the Earth as our lover and/or equal partner by participating in an on-the spot marriage ceremony. It was evident that although there was overlap, their conceptions and practices of ecosexuality were quite different from those leading the workshop. The couple renewed their wedding vows to the Earth originally taken in 2008 and most of us repeated them for the first time. The vows concluded:

We promise to love you until death brings us closer together forever. We are consecrated to you, Earth, through this dirt that we will become.

Stephens/Sprinkle: Will you practice these vows every day to become a better lover to the Earth?

Audience: I do!

Stephens/Sprinkle: We now pronounce you married to the Earth!

We were all invited to collaborate in their next large-scale ecology-themed performance art wedding, the Purple Wedding to the Moon scheduled for the fall at an amphitheater in the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles county, California. When the workshop concluded, I bought a purple satin dress with sequins from the sale rack at a nearby boutique and made plans to attend the ecosexual wedding to the moon. Upon returning to Vegas, I found silver crescent moon earrings to add to the outfit. The first Ecosex Symposium “Honeymoon” was also scheduled to take place the day after the wedding. I saw it as a great opportunity to document both ecosexual events. From there, I built relationships with key ecosexual actors, conducted formal and informal interviews, and attended and documented additional events in the field for the next five years. This included camping outdoors for multiple nights at an intentional community deep in the woods of rural Washington and staying for a week at Stephens and Sprinkle’s San Francisco home during their series of Pride Week events.

Research Questions

As I began this study, my main overarching research question was: What does intersectionality look like in the realm of protest, activism, and politics for social justice? More specifically, in examining the ecosexual movement, I asked the initial question: How does the ecosexual movement negotiate intersectionality? To answer this, I proposed the following subset of questions:

1. What are the key events that helped define and develop the ecosexual movement?
2. What key intersecting issues engage various ecosexual movement participants?
3. What networks, communities, and organizations participate as part of the ecosexual movement?
4. What do they hope to accomplish?
5. What strategies, tactics, and resources do they employ?
6. Are there conflicts within the movement? What are they and how are they negotiated?

7. How do ecosexual movement actors negotiate individual and collective identity?

Because qualitative inquiry is a reflective process, after spending time in the field questions change and become more refined (Charmaz 2006; Creswell 2007). A research question that emerged was:

Given the challenges of maintaining a collective identity, how does an intersectional social movement persist?

Chapter Organization

In Chapter 1, I open with a vignette and introduce the social movement that my study is based on, the ecosexual movement. I also present my research questions. In Chapter 2, I review the relevant sociological literature. This includes literature on the development of intersectionality as a concept, intersectional activism and movements, and pertinent social movement theories and concepts including new social movements, framing, collective identity, and the use of art as a social movement tactic. I then explain the methodological design for my study in Chapter 3. I employ mixed qualitative methods which included ethnographic field work at ecosexual events, formal and informal interviews of ecosexual actors, and content analysis of online and print materials pertaining to the ecosexual movement.

In Chapter 4, I lay out the intellectual trends that formed the foundation of the ecosexual movement. The framing of the ecosexual movement as queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) rests on several broader intellectual trends in environmentalism, feminism, postmodernism, sexuality, and queer theory (Reed 2015). The ecosexual movement initially formed as scholars began to call popular attention to the role of humans in transforming the environment and their responsibility to change it. I also highlight the development of concepts of environmental, sexual, and intersectional justice. In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, I present the development of the ecosexual movement in three phases that I identified. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 each tell a unique story, but they also overlap and interconnect.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the initial phase of the ecosexual movement that began in the late 1990s through “frame alignment processes” (Snow et al. 1986). I look at how individuals and communities

began bridging environmental and sexual struggles through: 1) early radical performance activism and environmental adult film, 2) green lifestyle and green consumption frames in dating, sex toys, and other green practices and products, 3) queer art in performance, installations, and print media, and 4) presentations, performance, and discussions at workshops and symposia. The framing of the “ecosexual” collective identity moved from more individualistic lifestyle choices of finding green dating partners and consuming green sexual products to challenging heteronormative social structures to challenging the ideology of modern hierarchical dualisms starting with the human/environment or Nature/Society division. I close with an overview of the first formal ecosexual gatherings of previously disparate networks among scholars, artists, performers, and environmental, sex worker, and sex-positive activists to explore the linking of environmental and sexual struggles to explore the meaning of ecosexuality. Basic categories emerged from the first ecosex symposium that were used in Stephens and Sprinkle’s later ecosex symposia: ecosexual art, theory, practice, activism, and research.

In Chapter 6, I examine the second phase that occurred between 2008 and 2011 where the tactic of staging large-scale, multi-year public performance art weddings to nonhuman nature elements helped popularize the movement and amplify the particular collective action frame of inclusive identities, processes, and goals which avoided many traditional boundary disputes that have plagued other intersectional movements. I analyze the ecosexual component of Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle’s transnational *Love Art Laboratory (LAL)* performance art wedding project that began in the Santa Cruz, California redwoods and primarily took place in Western countries across the globe from 2008-2011. I center their project as an example of queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019) that popularized the ecosexual movement. Next, I discuss two alternative wedding performance projects to nonhuman nature elements: 1) Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* ecosexual wedding to the beach ceremonies in Puerto Rico, and 2) Richard Torres’ transnational *Marry A Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project across Latin American countries. Then I consider the similarities and differences of these two wedding projects compared to the *LAL* project and whether they represent social movement spillover. Despite not being explicitly related to the ecosexual

movement, I include Torres' tree wedding project because it is significant that similar non-traditional artistic tactics are being used in the Global North and the Global South to address the same types of struggles during the same historical period. Finally, I investigate attempts at policing some of the eco-themed performance art weddings.

In Chapter 7, I discuss the third and most recent phase of the ecosexual movement extending from mid-2011 to early 2019 where the movement framed and developed an inclusive ecosexual collective identity. Central to the ecosexual movement's collective identity development was the unveiling of the Ecosex Manifesto by Stephens and Sprinkle at the beginning of this phase. While the couple's performance art branch was not the only faction of the ecosexual movement, the Ecosex Manifesto provided an inclusive umbrella of cohesion as the movement grew and became more popular. The document espoused the same queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) and "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019) found in Stephens and Sprinkle's ecosexual wedding performances. I present examples of how ecosexual activists negotiated conflicts regarding intersectional framing as well as sameness and difference, both in online social media groups and at ecosexual events. I also examine ecosexual movement integration with mainstream media coverage and the production of two ecosexual documentary films. The final phase displayed the first sign of social movement institutionalization with the opening of the E.A.R.T.H. (Environmental Art, Research, Theory, Happenings) Lab at the University of California, Santa Cruz, co-founded and directed by Stephens and Sprinkle, which provided a center for their branch of ecosexual projects. In Chapter 8, I conclude by presenting the major findings of my study including the ecosexual movement's embodied example of the postmodern alternative cultural discourse that situates all humans in humanity and humans in nature, the dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015). In addition, I discuss the implications of my work, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the literature on the development of intersectionality as a concept and studies on intersectional activism and movements. I also draw from literature on social movements including new social movements, framing, collective identity, and the use of art as a social movement tactic.

Intersectionality

“Intersectionality” began as a theory of how oppression works (Crenshaw 1989), but it has developed into a conception of how people can fight it and numerous contemporary movements have attempted to become more intersectional. While the word has been around for 30 years, it is being used more frequently across social justice movements. From 2009 to 2014, Google searches for the term increased 400 percent (Moe 2014). In January 2017, Google Trends data showed that searches for “intersectional feminism” skyrocketed with the Women’s March which addressed not only gender but multiple social justice issues in its policy platform (Weiss 2017). Internet searches for “intersectionality” spiked again in March 2018 after the word was used at the Academy Awards in connection with the anti-sexual harassment movement founded by Hollywood celebrities, Time’s Up (Arnold 2018; Stamper 2018).

In response to identity politics of the 1960s to 1990s, scholars and activists began to see that oppressions were the interaction of multiple identity categories (such as gender, race, and class) rather than single identity categories. I will first discuss intersectionality in scholarly analysis, and then focus on research that examines how activists and social movements have utilized the concept and negotiated the practice.

Intersectional Theory

In the U.S., scholars demonstrated how life for women of color was always raced, classed, and gendered before the term “intersectionality” was even coined (e.g., Hartmann 1976; Davis 2016). While acknowledging the many black feminist pioneers of intersectionality (e.g., Sojourner Truth, Audre

Lorde), Angela Davis (2016) pointed to the work of the organization called the Third World Women's Alliance in New York in the late 1960s and 1970s. The organization and its newspaper, aptly titled *Triple Jeopardy*, identified racism, sexism, and imperialism as contributing to oppressions for these groups. As Angela Davis (2016:18) explained, "imperialism reflected an international awareness of class issues." Davis's (1981) own book, *Women, Race and Class* along with *This Bridge Called My Back* (also in 1981, edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga), the work of bell hooks and Michelle Wallace, and *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* (edited by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith in 1982) were other early examples of intersectional analyses.

However, the concept of "intersectionality" gained significant traction with the black feminist work of law scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1991). Crenshaw critiqued the invisibility of black women and identity politics for erasing groups at the intersection of two or more identity categories, particularly in the legal system. For example, in the case of domestic violence, "Women of color can be erased by the strategic silences of anti-racism and feminism" (Crenshaw 1991:1253).

Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990), author of *Black Feminist Thought* further developed the concept of intersectionality through her paradigm of the "matrix of domination" or interlocking systems of oppression. Collins (1990) noted that additive models of oppression are rooted in either/or dichotomous thinking of Eurocentric, masculine thought in conjunction with the belief that these categories must be ranked. However, in bringing up how intersectionality attends to how distinctive systems of oppression interconnect, she sees it as part of one larger structure of domination. According to Collins (1990:222-225):

The significance of seeing race, class, and gender as interlocking systems of oppression is that such an approach fosters a paradigmatic shift of thinking inclusively about other oppressions, such as age, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity. ... Placing African-American women and other excluded groups in the center of analysis opens up possibilities for a both/and conceptual stance, one in which all groups possess varying amounts of penalty and privilege in one historically created system.

The relation between multiple and larger/overall systems of oppression brings up difficulties in how the concept is utilized. In her review of the many studies of intersectionality, Leslie McCall (2005) found three different approaches used by scholars to explore the complexity of intersectionality in social life. She defined these by their stance toward categories: anti-categorical, intra-categorical, and inter-categorical. Leslie McCall (2005) argued that despite the important contribution of the term intersectionality to understanding privilege and oppression, it would benefit from a more coherent conceptual framework and methodology.

Feminist sociologist Kathy Davis (2008) pointed out that intersectionality has become a “buzzword” despite considerable confusion over the meaning and application of the concept in feminist inquiry. Hae Yeon Choo and Myra Marx Ferree (2010) identified three styles of understanding intersectionality in practice: group-centered, process-centered, and system-centered. In comparing four recent, rigorous qualitative studies on social inequalities, the authors concluded that it would be helpful if researchers made their specific assumptions about intersectionality more explicit (Choo and Ferree 2010).

In the editor’s introduction to a special issue of the journal *Signs* titled “Intersectionality: Theorizing Power, Empowering Theory,” Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall (2013) proposed a field of intersectional studies. The authors identified three loosely defined approaches to intersectionality: 1) applications of an intersectional frame of analysis or investigations of intersectional dynamics, 2) discursive debates about the scope and content of intersectionality as a theory and methodology, and 3) political interventions using an intersectional lens. This study on the ecosexual movement falls into the third category that relates to praxis, recognizing that intersectionality is far beyond only an academic project. As stated in the article about the third approach to intersectionality:

As part of these efforts, scholars and activists illustrate how practice necessarily informs theory, and how theory ideally should inform best practices and community organizing. These concerns reflect the normative and political dimensions of intersectionality and thus embody a motivation to go beyond mere comprehension of intersectional dynamics to transform them (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013:786).

In the same special issue on intersectionality, Chandra Mohanty (2013) – whose work has focused on decolonialization, especially of feminist scholarship and theory – critiqued the disappearance

of antiracist and transnational feminist thought in neoliberal, postmodern academic culture. She cautioned against accepting neoliberal narratives that redefine all experience as individual, personal, or a commodity to be consumed and are disconnected from the power, political economy, and institutions of rule.

Postmodern skepticism applied to intersectionality converts what originated as a compelling theory of the interwoven structures and inequities of power to an inert theory of identity that emphasizes difference over commonality, coalition, and contestation (Mohanty 2013:974).

Instead, we must reclaim the radical narrative and emancipatory knowledge of oppressions as collective, systemic processes that are intersectional in nature.

Sara Salem (2016) similarly argued that intersectionality has lost much of its critical potential in some of the ways the concept has been used in the context of the neoliberal academy. Salem (2016) discussed Ferree's (2013) assertion that the idea of intersectionality has moved from a moment of resistance to systems of oppression to a mainstream erasure of inequalities that has been "converted into the idea of 'diversity' understood as a positive, albeit neoliberal, approach to social inclusion" (quoted in Salem 2016:2). She suggested incorporating Marxist feminist theorizing with its focus on capitalism, imperialism, and broader structures of power relations as one way to get back to the radical beginnings of intersectionality (Salem 2016).

Angela Davis (2016) – world-renowned activist and scholar who has been a powerful force in the black liberation movement and feminism over the past four decades – asserted in her book, *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle* that the term intersectionality has evolved greatly over the past decades. (The excerpt from chapter two in the book where Davis most heavily addresses intersectionality is based on a 2014 interview by activist and author, Frank Barat in Brussels, Belgium.) Rather than an individual analysis, Angela Davis (2016:18) now sees her work as reflecting "a sense within movements and collectives that it was not possible to separate issues of race from issues of class and issues of gender." She stated:

So behind this concept of intersectionality is a rich history of struggle. A history of conversations among activists within movement formations, and with and among academics as well. I mention this genealogy that takes seriously the epistemological productions of those whose primary work is organizing radical movements because I

think it's important to prevent the term "intersectionality" from erasing essential histories of activism. There were those of us who by virtue of our experience, not so much by virtue of academic analysis, recognized that we had to figure out a way to bring these issues together. They weren't separate in our bodies, but also they are not separate in terms of struggles.

I actually think that what is most interesting today, given that long history both of activism and all of the articles and books that have been written since then, what I think is most interesting is the conceptualization of the intersectionality of struggles. Initially intersectionality was about bodies and experiences. But now, how do we talk about bringing various social struggles together, across national borders? ... How can we really create a framework that allows us to think these issues together and to organize around these issues together? (Davis 2016:19).

Robert Corber and Steven Valocchi (2003) expressed that the metaphor of intersectionality as it emerged in women's studies seems to imply that various categories of identity intersect at a fixed point instead of being contextual. These authors contend that a more complex understanding of the relationship between different categories of identity may be gained by considering their mobility, such as queer studies scholars apply to sex, gender, and sexuality. Nonetheless, these concerns are being challenged by research that is looking at the nuanced ways intersectionality is operationalized and utilized across various social movements. In this study, I examine how the ecosexual movement negotiates these contradictions.

Intersectional Activism and Movements

The use of intersectionality within social movements has also been difficult. As Angela Davis (2016) said, intersectionality as a concept was initially about individual bodies and experiences. From this micro perspective with a primary focus on identity, intersectionality highlights intragroup differences by pointing out that people who are oppressed along one axis (i.e., gender) can still be privileged along others (i.e., race, class, sexual orientation). By drawing attention to difference, intersectionality can lead to rifts and divisions (Ehrenreich 2002; Ludvig 2006), a battle of oppressions or "Oppression Olympics" (Hancock 2007) where individuals or groups compete over who has it the worst and is most oppressed. Alice Ludvig (2006) suggested that another weak point in intersectionality seems to be the endlessness or at least indeterminate number of different axes. In the remainder of this section, I review the literature on intersectional activism and movements. My purpose is to outline research on the way activists and social

movements are engaging with intersectionality that contributed to my research focus on how the ecosexual movement negotiates intersectionality.

The empirical literature on intersectional activism and social movements has grown considerably since I began my research in 2010. Elizabeth Cole (2008) analyzed ten oral history interviews with feminist activists who engage in coalition building within movements. Two themes emerged from the activists' narratives: 1) the challenge they experienced of defining similarity to draw members of diverse groups together, and 2) the need they experienced to address power differentials to sustain a working alliance. The activists' stories suggest that intersectionality for this group was a tool for illuminating less obvious similarities as well as for understanding difference. The group she studied refrained from thinking of social categories (e.g., race, class and gender) as only characteristics of individuals. Instead, activists discussed social categories in terms of stratification more broadly brought about through practices of individuals, institutions, and cultures – what Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) referred to as political intersectionality.

Rachel Luft and Jane Ward (2009) explored the way that the academy and several social movements are defining and engaging the term intersectionality. They looked at rhetorical, political, and organizational uses of intersectionality within feminist, queer, racial, and economic justice movements. Furthermore, they focused on the use of intersectionality as a practice and political strategy. The investigators found that intersectionality was used to describe a wide variety of politics and practices, many of which employed the rhetoric of multiple axes such as gender, sexuality, race, and class while retaining traditional political and organizational tactics. This symbolic use by some grassroots movements and nonprofit organizations resulted in “superficial engagements with intersectionality” divorced from the practice of social justice and from political outcomes (Luft and Ward 2009:33). Only a few social movement groups “exemplify an advanced deployment of intersectionality” by distinguishing the practice of intersectionality from single-issue coalitions or other additive models, placing movement-building toward justice at the center of their work (rather than certain leadership personalities or funding sources), building infrastructure without handing over their decision making to funders, staying committed to

multi-identity solidarity politics, authentically seeking the outcomes they claim, and instituting accountability structures to ensure that they own, and learn from, their missteps (Luft and Ward 2009:34).

Dana Collins and Molly Talcott (2011) looked at grassroots, transnational movements from Mexico (i.e., queer Zapatista-aligned groups) and the Philippines (i.e., Progressive Organization of Gays Philippines or Pro-Gay). They found that participants in these movements merge “queer” and “human rights” discourses that move beyond challenging existing forms of “power over” to embrace creating new forms of “power to” (Stammers 2009). This queer human rights praxis offers an intersectional analysis of queer positionality, recognizing that both identity and political economy form the basis of violence facing queer people. Likewise, both struggles for recognition and for redistribution catalyze queer resistance. Collins and Talcott (2011) focused on addressing how lived experiences of intersectionality form the groundwork for a grassroots queer human rights praxis that, in turn, propels coalitional actions.

Jennifer Jihye Chun, George Lipsitz and Young Shin (2013) examined intersectionality as a movement strategy of Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA) in Oakland and San Jose, California. Small gender- and race-based movements with grassroots leadership like AIWA united groups around common beliefs and experiences rather than common biological characteristics. As such, they gave identity a political definition enabling the creation of new identities and identifications that impacted the formation of new democratic institutions and practices. In other words, their focus was on constructing alternative intersectional identities.

Marie Laperrière and Eléonore Lépinard (2016) studied intersectional strategies used by the Québécois women’s movement to include immigrant and Native women. They differentiated between using intersectionality in two different ways: 1) as a tool for individual inclusion, i.e., integrating immigrant women into a feminist project, and 2) for political representation, i.e., recognizing Native and migrant women as groups with specific identities, thus addressing power relations between Québécois and minority women. They concluded that it would be beneficial for social movement scholars to adopt an intersectional lens and to pay attention to how intersectionality is practiced by activists and organizations.

In fact, it appears particularly fruitful to study how organizations sustain a collective identity,

reorganize their political agendas and manage conflicts while attempting to recognize differences among their members (Laperrière and Lépinard 2016).

Zakiya Luna's (2016) study of an intersectional movement organization emphasized "the importance of attending to intersectionality as an ongoing, multidimensional *process*" (p. 787). In her research on a women of color reproductive justice organization, Luna (2016) identified two different logics involved in constructing an intersectional "women of color" identity: "same difference" and "difference-in-sameness." The logic of "same difference" constructs solidarity "by presenting types of group difference as similar enough in their difference from an 'other' to suggest a position of solidarity," in this case, a collective community of women of color (Luna 2016:785). On the other hand, the "difference-in-sameness" logic recognizes the importance of naming and acknowledging difference (e.g., Native American, Asian, Latina, African American; different ethnic groups comprising each of these racial categories) and "highlights the necessity of continually building internal coalitions" in practice (Luna 2016: 777). Rather than competing, both logics were found to guide social movement participants in productive ways while posing different challenges. Luna (2016) argued that the tension between "same difference" and "difference-in-sameness" reflects that of short-term and long-term goals. She concluded that to maintain solidarity without reproducing the structures of inequality it seeks to transform, intersectional movement organizations must repeatedly negotiate the balance between these two logics using explicit, agreed-upon rules of engagement.

Using web surveys and semi-structured interviews from undocumented immigrant activists in California, Veronica Terriquez (2015) found high levels of activism among a marginalized subgroup – LGBTQ participants – within the already marginalized undocumented immigrant youth population. The powerful intersectional mobilization between undocumented and LGBTQ- or queer-identified activists has been named "undocuqueers." Undocumented youth immigrants have also been called "DREAMers" referring to their advocacy to pass the federal Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. The DREAM Act would have offered a pathway to citizenship to children who arrived in the U.S before age 16 and lacked legal immigration status. Terriquez (2015) argued that identity

formation processes utilized within the DREAM movement, rather than self-selection of LGBTQ-identified youth into the movement, generated *intersectional mobilization*. This was achieved through “the recognition and activation of multiply marginalized identities at various levels of identity formation – at the broader movement, organizational, and individual levels” (Terriquez 2015:344-345). For example, in 2010 through 2012, DREAMers organized a campaign, “Coming Out of the Shadows” derived from the gay and lesbian movement’s “coming out of the closet” narrative.

Utilizing content analysis of images posted to the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project’s (QUIP) official Facebook page, Haley Gentile and Stacy Salerno (2017) studied how one social movement organization attempted to communicate intersectionality online. They found that QUIP’s approach to intersectional representation – that of LGBTQ immigration activists – included reframing the messages of the separate established movements and focusing on points of *both diversity and* intersections among their members.

In essence, by combining symbols, text, narratives drawn from the distinct LGBTQ movement and immigrant movement (side-by-side) and/or creating new symbols, text, and narratives, QUIP evades a narrow definition of their constituency typified by political claims making that is affiliated with the presentation of a uniform collective identity (Gentile and Salerno 2017:13).

For example, an innovative symbol combined the butterfly wings of the immigrant movement with the rainbow of the LGBTQ movement. The authors pointed to previous literature demonstrating that creativity can be important for a movement to express a new ideology or “language of resistance” (Edelman 1977), and repetition of what is already available in the cultural discourse can be beneficial due to its public familiarity (Billig 1995). Also, the term “undocuqueer” represented a “linguistic insurgency” (McAdam 1994:51) which imposed the activists’ self-definition of their group.

In effect, labeling their identities through text tells the viewer, ‘You cannot see me as an immigrant or as LGBTQ. You must see me as both’ (Gentile and Salerno 2017:10).

Instead of focusing on a shared identity or history, the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project focused on a shared marginal relationship (Gentile and Salerno 2017). QUIP activists used this discursive strategy to communicate intersectional experiences to the bystander public and potential allies as well as to connect multiple struggles.

Researchers have begun to apply intersectionality to environmental justice studies. Joshua Sbicca (2012) observed the eco-queer movement at the intersection of LGBTQ and food struggles to be comprised of a more fluid, loose knit, often decentralized set of political and social activists who challenge binary notions of ecology and sexuality. To understand social change, Robert Schaeffer (2014) argued that it is important to focus on informal social networks or social movement communities and individual actors in addition to more formal social movement organizations. These alternatives can be a conscious strategy to move away from Weberian social movement organizations such as critiqued by Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (1979) and political scientist, Robert Michels (1911/1915) due to leading to bureaucratic “professionalization” and “oligarchy” (that comes to be dominated by professional elites) which inhibits change.

Based on interviews with 33 indigenous women who developed community reforestation projects in Guatemala, Rachel Hallum-Montes (2012) found that gender, race, and class impacted their experiences of and responses to environmental degradation which prominently shaped their activist work. Her analysis revealed that gender socialization and women’s view of environmental activism as “care work” influenced their decision to become activists. However, in studies of the environmental justice movement that use an intersectional lens, gender has rarely been incorporated. Hallum-Montes (2012) proposed an “eco-intersectional” framework to address the need for an environmental social science perspective that is attentive to how environmental injustice is maintained and reproduced through interlocking systems of oppression. This framework offers an examination of “how histories and systems of power, privilege, and exclusion based on gender, race, class, and other social markers work together to shape human-human and human-environment relations” (Hallum-Montes 2012:109). Furthermore, “eco-intersectionality” permits an understanding of how people mobilize *across* race, gender, class, and nationality for environmental justice and adopts the feminist commitment of bridging theory with practice.

Kishi Animashaun Ducre (2018) noted that while the concept of intersectionality is especially useful in presenting the case for environmental inequality, it has rarely been used in environmental

sociology. She proposed an intersectional orientation that links identity and justice through three social movement manifestos – Black feminism, ecofeminism, and environmental justice. Ducre (2018) found all these statements demonstrate a commitment to nonhierarchical organizing structures and to the control and self-determination of physical bodies. She established a framework for a Black feminist spatial imagination to account for how people who face multiple oppressions move throughout their physical environment differently, such as navigating increased risks associated with environmental exposure and threats of physical violence.

Social Movement Theories and Concepts

Because my research focuses on a contemporary social movement, it is important for me to briefly review relevant theories and concepts in the social movement literature. In this section I provide an overview of the theory of new social movements, the concepts of social movement framing and collective identity, and the use of art as a social movement tactic.

New Social Movements

The ecosexual movement has characteristics of a new social movement where participants focus on social politics; that is, challenging power relations by creating alternative meanings, symbols, and identities in the cultural realm. According to Doug McAdam and David Snow (1997), a social movement is a “collectivity acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional channels for the purpose of promoting or resisting change in the group, society, or world order of which it is a part” (p. xviii). Additionally, bringing together U.S. and European approaches, Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison (1991:2) defined social movements as “forms of activity by which individuals create new kinds of social identities” for themselves and the societies of which they form a part.

To understand contemporary social movements since the 1960’s, Steven Buechler (1995) reviewed new social movement theory as an alternative to the conventional resource mobilization theory. New social movements (NSMs) with their focus on identity politics (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability) arguably stand in contrast to Marxist theory’s focus on working

class movements as the primary challenge to capitalist society. A feature of new social movements is the agreement that society has shifted into a distinct social form that shapes the current types of collective action taking place (Touraine 1981). Some of the terms that have emerged to describe this transition in societal form are postindustrial, advanced capitalism, post-modern, and information age. Broad characteristics of NSMs include a turn toward contests over meanings, symbols, and identities in the cultural realm (as opposed to instrumental struggle in the political realm), informal organization, and postmaterialist values (Buechler 1995).

German sociologist and critical theorist, Jürgen Habermas (1987) situated new social movements at the intersection between system (i.e., economic and administrative sphere) and lifeworld (i.e., everyday communicative and social sphere). Moving beyond the initial distinction between political and cultural movements in NSMs theory, the term “social politics” refers to “forms of collective action that challenge power relations without an explicit focus on the state” (Buechler 2000:176). I look at how the ecosexual movement promotes change, in part, through creating an alternative intersectional discourse.

Collective Action Frames and Social Movement Framing

Erving Goffman (1974:21) defined a “frame” as a perspective or “schemata of interpretation” from which a person operates. The type of frame that one employs “provides a way of describing the event to which it is applied” (Goffman 1974:24). In social movements, frames are vital because they organize experience and direct individual and collective action (Benford 1993; Benford and Snow 2000). Collective action frames perform an interpretive function but in ways that are “intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists” (Snow and Benford 1988:198).

Social movement scholars use the verb “framing” to conceptualize movement actors as signifying agents actively engaged in processual meaning construction (Benford and Snow 2000; Gamson, Fireman, and Rytina 1982; Snow et al. 1986). According to Snow et al. (2014:38), framing is “an ongoing, ever-

changing and dynamic process” of meaning construction within a social movement. Benford and Snow (2000) explained the relationship between “framing” and “collective action frames”:

(Framing) entails agency in the sense that what is evolving is the work of social movement organizations or movement activists. And it is contentious in the sense that it involves the generation of interpretive frames that not only differ from existing ones but that may also challenge them. The resultant products of this framing activity are referred to as “collective action frames” (p. 614).

Furthermore, they conceptualized three sets of overlapping processes in the development, generation, or elaboration of collective action frames: 1) discursive, 2) strategic, and 3) contested (Benford and Snow 2000). Benford and Snow (2000) defined these three categories of framing processes as follows:

Discursive processes refer to the talk and conversations – the speech acts – and written communications of movement members that occur primarily in the context of, or in relation to, movement activities. ... By strategic processes, we refer to framing processes that are deliberate, utilitarian, and goal directed: Frames are developed and deployed to achieve a specific purpose – to recruit new members, to mobilize adherents, to acquire resources, and so forth. ... (Contested processes) means that activists are not able to construct and impose on their intended targets any version of reality they would like; rather there are a variety of challenges confronting all those who engage in movement framing activities (pp. 623-625).

Within the social movement framing perspective, David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford (1986) conceptualized “frame alignment processes” as the linkage or conjunction of individual and group understandings or interpretations within and between social movements. Since that time, social movement scholars have placed frame alignment processes into the category of “strategic processes” associated with social movement framing (Benford and Snow 2000).

The authors argued social movements engage in four types of frame alignment processes to mobilize participants: 1) frame bridging, 2) frame amplification, 3) frame extension, and 4) frame transformation.

According to Benford and Snow (2000), frame bridging refers to:

the linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem. Bridging can occur between a movement and individuals, through the linkage of a movement organization with an unmobilized sentiment pool or public opinion cluster, or across social movements (p. 624).

Frame amplification means “the idealization, embellishment, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or beliefs”; frame extension involves “depicting an SMO’s (or a social movement’s) interests and frame(s) as extending beyond its primary interests to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be

of importance to potential adherents”; and frame transformation refers to “changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones” (Benford and Snow 2000:624-625).

Drawing from Eyerman and Jamison (1991) in his introduction to *Handbook of Political Citizenship and Social Movements*, Hein-Anton van der Heijden (2010:5) stated “by framing an issue in a ‘counter-hegemonic’ way, by developing points of view that challenge dominant ways of looking at the social and political reality, (a social movement) points to alternative ways of modeling society.” Van der Heijden (2010; 2014) argued that the key feature of a social movement is its production of knowledge or “cognitive praxis” (i.e., big idea) rather than its material success.

Benford (1997) critiqued the “static tendencies” of the social movement framing literature. He argued that scholars have a “tendency to focus on frames as ‘things’ rather than on the dynamic processes associated with their social construction, negotiation, contestation, and transformation” and have been “more inclined to attend to frames rather than to framing” (Benford 1997:415). In their review article on framing processes and social movements, Benford and Snow (2000) expressed a need for researchers to focus on framing processes as a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of a social movement. In this study, I investigate how ecosexual movement actors negotiate the process of framing an intersectional social movement.

Collective Identity

Framing and collective identity are highly interactive (Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994). Collective identity formation is also a key element in building social movements. In fact, Doug McAdam (2004:227) argued that collective identity is a “requisite for the emergence of all movements.” Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (1992:105) defined collective identity as “the shared definition of the group that derives from members’ common interests, experiences, and solidarity.” According to Francesca Polletta and James M. Jasper (2001:285):

(Collective identity) is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity. ... Collective identities are expressed in cultural materials – names, narratives, symbols, verbal styles, rituals, clothing, and so on – but not all cultural materials express collective identities.

Furthermore, Bhikhu Parekh (2008:34) stated that collective identity “facilitates the emergence of a new social subject with a distinct perspective.” However, there are risks and potential shortcomings with collective identity as well. For example, Parekh (2008) expressed that the politics of identity can become the politics of conflict, “frowning on all attempts to stress commonalities, exaggerating minor differences, and even engineering conflicts where none exist” (p. 36).

While the construction of identity is a necessary part of collective action, it is a complex social process. As explained by social movement scholars, Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani (2006) in their chapter on collective action and identity:

If identity is a social process rather than a property of social actors, then feelings of belongingness and solidarity in relation to a certain group, the recognition of elements of continuity and discontinuity in the history of individuals, and the identification of one’s own adversaries, may all be subject to recurring re-elaboration (p. 105).

They continued by emphasizing the complexity of the relationship between identity and collective action:

Although identity feelings are frequently elaborated in reference to specific social traits such as class, gender, territory, or ethnicity, the process of collective identity does not necessarily imply homogeneity of the actors sharing that identity, or their identification with a distinct social group. Nor are feelings of belonging always mutually exclusive. On the contrary, actors frequently identify with heterogeneous collectives who are not always compatible among themselves on fundamental issues. To reconstruct the tensions through the different versions of identity of a movement, and how these versions are negotiated, represents, according to some scholars, a central problem for the analysis of collective action (della Porta and Diani 2006:113).

I investigate how the ecosexual movement constructs, negotiates, and maintains an intersectional collective identity.

Art as Social Movement Tactic

The branch of the ecosexual movement that popularized it utilizes experimental art and radical performance as social movement tactics. According to Ann Swidler (1995:33):

Even without conscious efforts at publicity, one of the most important effects social movements have is publicly enacting images that confound existing cultural codings. ... (A)ltering cultural codings is one of the most powerful ways social movements actually bring about change.

In the book, *The Art of Protest*, Thomas Reed (2005) examined social movements “as sites for the production and reception of cultural texts” (p. xvii). Using examples from progressive social movements

since the 1950s, he demonstrated how various art forms – posters, music, film, poetry, murals, and other creative endeavors – have contributed to movement cultures and social change. Reed (2005) argued that “often the greatest impact (of a social movement) is through a general transgression of cultural codes” (p. 297). In this study, I examine how the ecosexual movement uses experimental art and radical performance to challenge cultural codes and to construct an alternative intersectional discourse.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

In this dissertation, I used a qualitative multimethod approach (Denzin 1989), including participant observation, interviews, and content analysis of ecosexual websites and related literature. I drew on five years of participant observations among ecosexual activists and groups at public events. In addition, I employed content analysis of ecosexual websites, social media, and related literature from public events. Finally, I conducted numerous interviews – both formal and informal – with current and former ecosexual activists and organizers. This multimethod ethnographic approach allowed me to get close to key ecosexual activists to record and understand their activities and narratives surrounding the ecosexual movement, including the intersectional issues that engage participants in the movement as well as their related networks, goals, strategies, conflicts, and identities. By triangulating among various sources of data, I presented a more reliable picture of the topic under investigation (Reinharz 1992). I enhanced validity by checking in with ecosexual movement participants to clarify meanings. My inclusion of both interview and observational data is an analytical strength because what people say and what they do is sometimes incongruent (Khan and Jerolmack 2013).

The Field and Participant Observation

Through multi-sited ethnographic field work (Marcus 1995; Nadai and Maeder 2005), I witnessed the infancy and establishment of the ecosexual movement. I was a participant observer at nine key events in various locations across the Western United States from July 2010 to June 2015 and wrote extensive field notes on what I experienced and observed. The ecosexual events I attended took place at the following locations and on the following dates listed in chronological order: 1) workshop in San Rafael, California on July 3, 2010, 2) performance art wedding in Altadena, California on October 23, 2010, 3) first symposium in Santa Monica, California on October 24, 2010, 4) second symposium in San Francisco, California on June 17-19, 2011, 5) talk in San Diego, California on March 6, 2014, 6) series of four Earth Day events in Las Vegas, Nevada on April 22-23, 2014, 7) conference panel in Los Angeles, California on September 13, 2014, 8) third convergence camping event in Wahkiacus, Washington on

June 19-21, 2015, and 9) a series of ecosexual events during San Francisco Pride week including a parade contingent and filming for a new ecosexual documentary focused on water issues where I stayed with key movement actors at their home in San Francisco, California from June 24-29, 2015. In addition, I used visual equipment in the form of a camera to document the experience and refer to for the purposes of descriptive writing. As indicated, I began ethnographic participant observation in July 2010 and completed it in June 2015. I conducted formal semi-structured interviews mostly with movement actors located in the U.S., including New York City, but also connected by phone to interviewees in Puerto Rico and Australia.

Content Analysis

I gathered print materials from ecosexual events and information from the internet, including ecosexual websites, social media, and articles for content analysis. I conducted extensive internet searches on ecosexuality to identify important online information about the ecosexual movement. In addition, I asked ecosexual activists what internet sites or other media resources they recommended. One website that I analyzed is sexecology.org owned by key ecosexual movement actors, Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle. One social media site I examined is the Facebook group, “Ecosex, Sexecology and Sustainable Love” that at the time of this writing has 1,010 members. The group began with Tina Bernard, a self-described ecosexual advocate and writer, as the administrator and moderator with Serena Anderlini and Kim Marks later added as moderators. As social media platforms wax and wane, this group is much less active than it was a few years ago. By examining these texts, I explored what discourses, perspectives, networks, and identities were important to ecosexual activists. This helped to guide my analysis of participant observation and interview data.

Interviews

I held numerous informal conversations and conducted several unstructured interviews while in the field between 2010 and 2015. I also conducted 15 semi-structured, in-depth interviews from December 2014 through June 2015 with key current and former ecosexual activists and organizers. While

the number of semi-structured interviews may seem small, I found that code saturation was reached where the range of themes was identified and, in conjunction with the multiple qualitative data sources utilized, meaning saturation was reached where a richly textured understanding developed (Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi 2017). For example, I drew on the interviews to clarify any analytical questions that arose in the process of coding field notes and to understand participants' interpretations of identities, behaviors, and materials from their worldview. Five semi-structured, in-depth interviews took place by telephone with the others being conducted at agreed upon public locations, such as coffee shops and one on UNLV campus.

Formal interviews lasted between thirty minutes and one hour, forty-five minutes with the average time being about one hour. I utilized a digital audio recorder for two-thirds of the interviews only after receiving consent from the participant to record. For the five in-person interviews not recorded, I jotted down notes during the interview taking care to remain present and filled them in extensively immediately following. Several participants referred me to their own and other ecosexual activists' writings and additional creative work, including blog posts, articles, audio files, videos, websites, books, book chapters, and doctoral dissertations. These sources reflect the cultural capital of key organizers of the ecosexual movement. French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1977; 1986) developed the theory of cultural capital referring to cultural knowledge, skills, and education that serve as a form of currency much like economic capital.

Rather than creating a rigidly structured interview schedule, semi-structured interviewing provided for the use of sensitizing concepts and the adaptability to explore informational paths that arose. I included open-ended questions and a list of guiding concepts and questions on the interview schedule (see Appendix D). An example of guiding questions that helped to address my larger research questions on meanings, networks, and identities include the following: "What does the term 'ecosexual' mean to you/ how would you define 'ecosexual'?"; "Tell me about your involvement in the ecosexual movement. What drew you to being active?"; and "Were you part of another activist organization, like one for environmental justice, LGBTQ rights, or other sexual rights (e.g., sex worker, polyamorous)?" Questions

about identity included those on general demographics such as a participant's race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. However, throughout this project, I encountered issues with the concept of "identity" which will be discussed further in Chapter 6. Following Georgiann Davis's (2015:172) example used with her intersex research, I decided to document gender presentation "based on my perception given U.S. cultural cues" instead of self-reported gender identity. Furthermore, I made the decision to report only aggregate demographics since many interview participants are public figures and all are identifiable.

I began building relationships and rapport with key actors in the ecosexual movement while attending my first ecosex workshop in the summer of 2010. I have been in touch with several key actors by phone, email, and social media since I have been in the field. Building trust is crucial because obtaining valid interview data is only possible if the participant trusts sharing their knowledge and information with the researcher (Oakley 1981; Whyte 1984). I used purposive and snowball sampling strategies to produce interview contacts. Because I had been in the field for four to five years before conducting formal interviews, I selected my purposive sample based on participants current or past involvement with ecosexual activism in different branches and various ways. I gathered a snowball sample by asking at the end of each interview who else the interviewee recommended interviewing (Berg 2004; Lofland and Lofland 1995). Once research participants secured permission from potential participants to provide their contact information, I sent a recruitment email to those potential interviewees inviting them to participate in the study. Participants completed an informed consent document approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval for interviews was granted from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the UNLV Institutional Review Board (IRB) governing body.

Data Analysis

Using strategies from a grounded theory approach and an iterative process, I started with flexible, sensitizing concepts based on my research questions to provide a general sense of reference in approaching empirical instances (Berg 2004; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Miles and Huberman 1994). I

utilized open coding to assist in identifying general themes through close examination of and reflection on the data collected in the field and online. I wrote integrative memos in my notes to elaborate ideas and start to tie codes and bits of data together (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995). After transcribing the interviews, I further analyzed and organized my data into emerging patterns of events and meanings based on preliminary codes or categories. I assigned different colors to each code and highlighted instances accordingly in word documents. With the addition of data from the in-depth, semi-structured interviews, I clarified analytical questions from the initial coding and developed core themes. Finally, I engaged in focused coding to even more finely break up my data into smaller categories or sub-codes until all themes become repetitive and exhausted. I took care to link the instances found in the data back to addressing my initial research questions where appropriate.

Ethical Considerations

Ethnographic fieldwork techniques are not value-free. The researcher brings their own biases based on their standpoint and “partial perspective” in relation to the research (Collins 1990; Haraway 1988; Harding 1986; Smith 1987). For that reason, it is important for the researcher to be reflexive about their positionality and consciously examine their motives for choosing to do a project. I acknowledge my standpoint as a white, educated, Western woman who has struggled with the challenges of growing up in an economically marginalized family in a rural Appalachian county of Ohio and becoming a teenage mother.

I was 7-years old when a proposal was generated to build a toxic waste incinerator in the flood plain of a major river next to an elementary school in an impoverished neighborhood of my county. Despite evidence of potential environmental and health consequences and years of protests, the facility was eventually built when I was in college. During this study, an explosion occurred at the plant that released gases and ash into nearby neighborhoods. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) noted numerous other violations between 2010 and 2014. The company settled a lawsuit with the EPA and

Department of Justice last year (Wilkinson 2018). The incinerator was still operating at the time of this writing. As environmental historian and sociologist, Jason W. Moore explained:

Appalachians haven't really been 'white' in American history. They've been 'white trash.' There are ways of talking about how these people aren't really part of 'good society'; they're not part of 'civilized society.' They're 'out there in the wild' somehow, not quite part of civilization (UViewTelevision at Point Park University Center for Media and Innovation 2019).

He continued by saying that putting people from Appalachia in the category of "uncivilized" is linked to treating those areas, and consequently its residents, as environmental sacrifice zones. Moore used Ohio and West Virginia as examples of states with Appalachian areas where hydraulic fracturing, i.e. "fracking" of rock deep underground to extract oil or natural gas and mountaintop removal coal mining have been common practices.

While my gender presentation is female, I am gender-nonconforming in that I "reject gender expectations that assume only females can do femininity while only males can do masculinity" (Davis 2018). (For example, I played football at recess with the boys while in elementary school and wanted to play on the football team but was redirected to try out for cheerleading because I was a girl. The two sport activities seemed nothing the same.) In line with queer theory, I understand biological sex, gender, and sexual identities as modern social constructs that exist on a continuum and may be fluid, rather than binary and fixed. I recognize that what a person *is* (i.e., self or identity) and what a person *does* (i.e., behavior or role-taking) may not be the same. This is summed up in the response from one of my white, female-presenting interviewees about her sexuality: "Gay; straight for pay." Furthermore, I worked as an erotic dancer for several years while raising my kids after leaving an abusive relationship. I found the job to provide better pay for fewer hours with a more flexible schedule than other available work. However, I also faced stigma and discrimination for working in the sex industry, especially as a femme-presenting person and mother. I recognize both my privileged and marginalized positions and worked to navigate these – sometimes more, sometimes less successfully – in relation to ecosexual movement collaborators throughout this study.

I identify as an activist as well as a scholar. It was in 2010, shortly after moving to Las Vegas for graduate school when the negative effects of the 2008 economic crash were really being felt in the U.S., that I became more active in social movements. It was my engagement with the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011-2012 that sparked my interest in not only recognizing the intersectional nature of issues, but in developing activist strategies to dismantle intersectional issues and struggles. I embraced the identity of “scholar-activist,” reading and conducting rigorous research and looking for ways to translate findings into action in the community. To avoid concerns of significantly affecting the social process I am studying, I am actively reflexive about my role as researcher who has also been a participant in the ecosexual movement.

CHAPTER 4: THE INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF ECOSEXUALITY: THE CRITIQUE OF HIERARCHICAL DUALISMS

The ecosexual movement rests on several broader intellectual trends in environmentalism and ecology, feminism, postmodernism, sexuality, and queer theory (Reed 2015). In this chapter, I lay out the intellectual foundations of the movement to better understand the way it has combined the environmental movement and sexuality. Most centrally, the movement rests on recent intellectual developments in breaking down and moving beyond the binaries and hierarchical dualisms in social discourse that defined modernity as the main thread in blending environmentalism and sexuality.

The Critique of Modernity, Ecofeminism, and the Foundations of Ecosexuality

The ecosexual movement had its roots in the critique of modernity by critical scholars including early environmental sociologists, feminists, and philosophers. This critique highlighted modernity's contribution to environmental degradation and separately, human sexual and gender oppressions. Modernity is a specific historical period dating back to the 17th century. It is also known as the Age of Enlightenment and is associated with the Scientific Revolution as well as the Industrial Revolution. During this period, modern principles of science and philosophy developed that are still largely at work today. Along with the Scientific Revolution, people's general perceptions shifted to a mechanistic view of nature as passive, dead, and inert. The dominant worldview also shifted: initially humans were perceived as situated within nature as part of the environment, and eventually they were viewed as separate from nature and idealized as masters over the environment (Leiss 1972).

Early environmental sociologists (Foster 1999; Leiss 1972; Murphy 1994) argued that the dualistic, hierarchical ideology of the modern era has a powerful effect on environmental and social institutions leading to the degradation of nature. More specifically, the domination of nature/environment by humans allowed for manipulation, control, and exploitation of the environment for its resources for human use, seemingly without consequences. Ecological feminism or "ecofeminism" (Merchant 1980; Plumwood 1993; Reuther 1975; Shiva 1988) highlighted the specific connections between attitudes and

patterns of environmental domination and the domination of women. According to Rosemary Radford Ruether (1975), with modernity, women were identified with femininity, the body, Earth, sexuality, and flesh whereas men are identified with masculinity, spirit (God), mind, and power. Hierarchical dualisms including reason/emotion, mind/body, culture/nature, heaven/Earth, and man/woman work together. The modernist structure implied that men have inherent power over women and nature.

According to Judith Butler (1990), a “heterosexual matrix” – an ideal order between sex, gender, and sexuality – was generated during the modern era. Not only was gender expected to follow naturally from one’s biological sex, but the gender order became implicitly heterosexual because it sexualizes masculinity and femininity as natural halves that together make a whole. The feminine was placed in a relationship of subordination to be desired by the masculine. By fusing and conflating sexual desire with masculinity and femininity, sexual desire became gendered and gender became sexualized. In other words, man became equated with masculine became equated with sexually desiring the feminine (with the feminine equated with being female).

In her “charmed circle” versus “outer limits” diagram of sexual hierarchy, Gayle Rubin (1984) illustrated how sexual oppression has become maintained by an imaginary line between good and bad sex. This sexual value system can be represented by a binary hierarchy where “good,” “normal,” and “natural” sexuality is defined as heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, non-commercial, coupled, relational, within the same generation, and in private. Ideally, no pornography, manufactured objects (e.g., fetish or sex toys), BDSM /kink or roles other than male and female are involved. According to Rubin (1984:283), this kind of sexual ideology “grants virtue to the dominant groups and relegates vice to the underprivileged” like ideologies of racism. In *Fear of a Queer Planet*, Michael Warner (1993:x-xi) claimed that “the sexual order blends with a wide range of institutions and social ideology, so that to challenge the sexual order is sooner or later to encounter those other institutions as problems.”

A common feature of these critiques of modernist ideology is that they analyze interlocking systems of oppression (Combahee River Collective 1977/2015) or a matrix of domination (Collins 1990) based on the logic of dualism. Critical theorists have primarily attacked the ideology of domination

“rather than describing explicit, determinate possibilities for new social formations” (Antonio 1981:341). Environmental historian and sociologist Jason W. Moore (2015) argued that to open the cage of binary thinking “requires that we build an alternative to the logic of dualism, and this requires new methodological procedures, narrative strategies, and conceptual languages *all at the same time*” (p. 5, emphasis in original).

Activists, on the other hand, have typically campaigned to promote (or resist) new political or social formations. As legendary intersectional feminist, scholar, and American political activist, Angela Davis said during a lecture at Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 2014, “You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time.” In preliminary research, it appears that ecosexual movement actors build on these criticisms and with their activism seek to construct an alternative future capable of dismantling dualisms and simultaneous oppressions in practice. I will be examining how they do this.

Recent Developments in the Environmental Movement

The ecosexual movement initially formed as scholars began to call popular attention to the role of humans in transforming the environment and their responsibility to change it. In 2011, Dutch, Nobel-prize winning, atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen widely popularized the term “Anthropocene” (“Age of Humans”) (Revkin 2011; Stromberg 2013). In an article for *Yale Environment 360*, Crutzen and Berlin-based award-winning science and environmental journalist, Christian Schwägerl (2011) described the Anthropocene as a new epoch characterized by the undeniable reality of “human dominance of biological, chemical and geological processes on Earth.” The co-authors outlined why they believed adopting this term may help transform the perception of people’s role as stewards of the Earth.

Changing the climate for millennia to come is just one aspect. By cutting down rainforests, moving mountains to access coal deposits and acidifying coral reefs, we fundamentally change the biology and the geology of the planet. While driving uncountable numbers of species to extinction, we create new life forms through gene technology, and, soon, through synthetic biology (Crutzen and Schwägerl 2011).

Around the same time, sociologist and coordinator of the World-Ecology Research Network, Jason W. Moore (2015; 2016) proposed using the term “Capitalocene” (“Age of Capital”). Moore reasoned the Anthropocene argument implies that humanity as an undifferentiated whole is responsible for our new epoch. Rather, he argued capitalism’s either/or organization of reality is responsible for the ecological crisis we are facing. In the introduction to *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*, Moore (2015:2) stated the Capitalocene argument is more precise because “the binary Nature/Society is directly implicated in the colossal violence, inequality, and oppression of the modern world; and...the view of Nature as external is a fundamental condition of capital accumulation.” In sum, he argued: “Capitalism is not an economic system; it is not a social system; it is *a way of organizing nature*” (Moore 2015:2, emphasis in original). Moore (2015) differentiated Nature with a capital ‘N’ from nature with a lowercase ‘n.’

Capitalism’s governing conceit is that it may do with Nature as it pleases, that Nature is external and may be coded, quantified, and rationalized to serve economic growth, social development, or some other higher good. This is capitalism *as a project*. The reality – the *historical process* – is radically different. While the manifold projects of capital, empire, and science are busy making Nature with a capital ‘N’ – external, controllable, reducible – the web of life is busy shuffling about the biological and geological conditions of capitalism’s process. The “web of life” is nature as a whole; *nature* with an emphatically lowercase *n*. This is nature as us, as inside us, as around us. It is nature as a flow of flows. Put simply, humans make environments and environments make humans – and human organization (pp. 2-3, emphasis in original).

Critiques of the culture/nature binary inherent in patriarchy were part of the early ecofeminist movement. These scholars highlighted systematic developments leading to profound environmental degradation (Griffin 1978). In the era of modernity, humans have progressively moved into a “risk society” as ever more destructive environmental forces were unleashed by the modernization process (Beck 1986/1992). Social organization is now dominated by risks and uncertainty, such as toxins in food, nuclear threats, soil degradation, Arctic sea ice decline, air pollution, record-breaking heat waves, and the contamination of water. It’s ironic that the modernist project with the use of rationality and science was supposed to make humans more certain and secure through our mastery and control of nature. Instead, our highly developed modern institutions can only attempt to anticipate what we cannot fully predict as we pass unknown tipping points. According to American sociologist Kai Erikson (1995), a “new species of

trouble” has developed based on fear as well as deep and profound dread of chronic human-created “natural” disasters rather than merely acute natural disasters.

Finally, as part of a broader development in intersectional feminist theory (Rubin 1984), scholars began to explicitly bring in human sexuality as an independent but cross-cutting dynamic. In his landmark book, *Cosmopolitan Sexualities*, Ken Plummer (2015) urged readers to imagine the “sheer multiplicity of various gendered, sexual and intimate relationships and practices” (p. 1) of over seven billion human beings on planet Earth, what he referred to as “*the global gendered world of human sexual complexity: the human sexual labyrinth*” (p. 2, emphasis in original). Plummer observed that in an increasingly global arena of hundreds of nations with thousands of ethnic tribes comprised of people who speak numerous languages and have different cultural histories, this sexual pluralism both causes many of our problems and serves as the basis of politics because people inevitably disagree with each other. As global flows continue and different sexual worlds collide, these disagreements often become vocal and sometimes turn violent. As summed up by British sociologist and activist, Jeffrey Weeks (2018):

It is striking how globalized struggles around sexuality and gender have become the focus of wider political divisions, played out in individual countries as well as transnationally, amongst self-declared supporters of sexual justice as well as social conservatives. The liberal reforms in many western countries in recent years have been dismissed by queer and other radical critics as little more than adaptations to neo-liberalism, heralding homonormativity or ‘pinkwashing’ rather than sexual freedom (p. 1240).

How do we negotiate transnational human-constructed struggles of this proportion, they asked?

Postmodernisms’ celebratory style and call for parody and pastiche also infected the early intellectual development of the ecosexual movement (Hutcheon 1989; Jameson 1991). Perhaps global social problems this monumental and absurd, many began to argue, require an equally monumental and absurd response. Environmental humanities scholar and author, Nicole Seymour (2012:57) argued, in “our deeply weird current moment” – in which, for example, “reports of immanent collapse inspire not robust environmentalist action but doomsday fatigue” – an irreverent turn may be appropriate. The branch of ecosexuality that popularized the ecosexual movement, led by performance artist couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, utilizes radical participatory performance art to express an irreverent and queer

environmentalism (Seymour 2012; Whitworth 2019). This includes an absurdist campy ecological style dubbed by film and gender scholar, Luran Whitworth (2019) as “eco-camp.” I rely on ethnographic techniques to study the ecosexual movement’s use of irreverent and queer performance art tactics to negotiate intersectionality.

Scholarship around queer theory began to destabilize earlier conceptions of fixed identity. Joshua Gamson (1995) famously stated that queer social movements spotlighted a general dilemma of identity politics (for example, racial, ethnic, and gender movements): “Fixed identity categories are both the basis for oppression and the basis for political power” (p. 391). Queer theory proposes more unstable and fluid identities.

Environmental and Sexual Justice

The concept of environmental justice has been used by both activists and academics with diverse definitions. Professor of environmental politics, David Schlosberg in his book, *Defining Environmental Justice* (2007) acknowledges that environmental justice is most often thought of as a social movement that addresses the distribution of environmental risks in human communities. While distributive justice is certainly part of it, he and other environmental justice scholars have expanded the discourse to include procedural justice, that is, how we do justice across environmental issues in terms of individual and community recognition, participation, and functioning (Pellow 2018; Schlosberg 2007). According to environmental sociologist, David Pellow (2018), arising from the idea of participatory democracy, procedural justice shifts the lens from distributive outcomes to the importance of recognizing marginalized groups with their unique experiences of oppression and including them in decision-making processes.

Schlosberg (2007) further adds justice for species in the nonhuman realm into the wider conception of environmental justice, sometimes referred to separately as ecological justice. He argued that the same conceptions can be applied to both environmental and ecological matters and to discussing relationships of justice between the human and nonhuman realms.

Realizing this may help us get beyond the divide between environmental and ecological justice, and into a practice of recognition, expanding decision-making, and providing the capacities necessary for individual and community functioning to human and nonhuman alike (Schlosberg 2007:viii).

While most environmental justice scholars have focused on intersectionality through race and class in the human realm, only a small group has explored the role of sexuality and gender. The ecosexual movement is in many ways the “second generation” of environmental justice movements (Pellow 2018). Ecosexual justice concurrently addresses sexual justice while expanding it to the nonhuman realm.

In his contribution to the 20th anniversary edition of the journal *Sexualities*, Jeffrey Weeks (2018) wrote about the relationship between critical studies of sexuality and notions of progress and sexual justice. According to Weeks (2018):

As the sexual pioneers of a hundred years ago showed, and as many advocates of sexual justice across the disciplinary and political spectrum since have demonstrated, it is through finding our voices in debate, dialogue and engagement that we can continue to work towards justice and rediscover the meanings of human progress (p. 1241).

Initially, in the late 19th century, pioneer sexologists combined the scientific study of sexuality with ideas of sexual progress and sexual justice. However, since the 1960s, sexually marginalized people have joined a wider movement for social justice based on lived experience rather than scientific research. Sexual justice became recognized as a concept referring to lesbian and gay rights, emphasizing social recognition of intimate associations, access to marriage for same-sex couples, and protection against discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations (Kaplan 1997). The term has since expanded to include diverse sexualities such as non-monogamy, bisexuality, commercial sex, and sexual fetishes as well as gender variations. As critical sexual theory has developed and global sexual politics have intensified, Weeks (2018) cautioned scholars of sexuality to stay connected to those on the ground struggling for sexual justice rather than get caught up in theory that often seems separated from real life situations. By studying the ecosexual movement, I aim to shine light on significant grassroots forms of knowledge in the realm of sexual justice.

Sexologist Carol Queen, an ecosexual activist and pioneer in the sex-positive feminist movement, recently reframed sex-positivity as sexual justice because it ultimately unites social justice with sexuality.

According to Queen, sexual justice is about “access to information (regarding sexuality), resources, freedom from shame, a focus on consent, diversity and more” (Tiara 2017). She explained that using the term “‘sex positive’ doesn’t imply ‘wheeeee! SEX!’ so much as it is a philosophy that respects sex/gender diversity and calls out sex-negative messages” (Donohue 2019). But the term has been fraught with misconceptions. For example, the “positive” in “sex-positive” does *not* refer to HIV status, and “sex-positive events” differ from full-blown “sex parties” (Barry 2014; Vorreyer 2017).

Increasingly, reproductive justice has been explicitly included in sexual justice. The phrase “reproductive justice” was coined in 1994 by a group of black women to address how different oppressions intersect in marginalized women’s lives beyond the focus of the historically middle- and upper-class white pro-choice movement (Luna 2016). SisterSong Women of Color Health Collective, a national coalition within the reproductive justice movement formed in 1997, defines reproductive justice as “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities” (SisterSong N.d.). For example, a recent public awareness campaign video launched by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in partnership with the Sexual and Reproductive Justice Community Engagement Group defined sexual and reproductive justice concisely as: “When all people have the power and resources to make decisions about their bodies, sexuality, and reproduction” (Sharpe 2016).

Finally, ecosexual activists and communities have built their conception of justice on notions of intersectional justice. The newly-founded Center for Intersectional Justice (CIJ) (N.d.) – an independent, nonprofit organization launched with a conference in Berlin, Germany on September 16, 2017 – offered a comprehensive definition of intersectional justice on their website:

Intersectional justice is the fair and equal distribution of wealth, opportunities, rights and political power within society. It rests on the concepts of equality, and legal and social rights. Intersectional justice focuses on the mutual workings of structural privilege and disadvantage, i.e. that someone’s disadvantage is someone else’s privilege. For this reason, actions tend to be centered on people and groups of people who face the highest structural barriers in society – premised on the idea that if we reach the people at the greatest structural disadvantage, then we can reach everybody.

Intersectional justice understands discrimination and inequality not as the outcome of individual intentions, but rather as systemic, institutional and structural. Therefore, intersectional justice can be achieved through the institutions that directly and indirectly allocate opportunities and resources, including the school system, the labour market, the health and social insurance system, taxation, the housing market, the media, and the bank and loan system (Center for Intersectional Justice N.d.).

Intersectional justice recognizes the systemic, institutional, and structural nature of privilege and marginalization of people and groups. Social movements and their actors working for intersectional justice aim to dismantle the overarching social organization that connects multiple struggles. The ecosexual movement focuses on changing the cultural discourse by creating new narratives that embrace horizontalism for human-human and human-nature relationships.

Discussion

The ecosexual movement rests on several broader intellectual trends in environmentalism and ecology, feminism, postmodernism, sexuality, and queer theory (Reed 2015). In this chapter, I discussed the intellectual foundations of the movement to better understand the way it has combined environmental degradation and sexual inequality as well as environmental and sexual justice. Most centrally, the ecosexual movement rests on recent intellectual developments in breaking down and moving beyond the binaries and hierarchical dualisms in cultural discourse and social organization that defined modernity. This focus on cultural discourse and social organization has become the main thread in linking environmental and sexual struggles.

CHAPTER 5: FRAME ALIGNMENT PROCESSES: BRIDGING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SEXUAL (IN)JUSTICE, LATE 1990s TO 2010

In this chapter, I examine the initial formation of the ecosexual movement beginning in the late 1990s/early 2000s. I analyze this through the active framing processes or meaning construction of the ecosexual movement by different actors (Benford and Snow 2000; Gamson, Fireman, and Rytina 1982; Snow and Benford 1988; Snow et al. 1986). These framing processes developed, generated, or elaborated on various interpretive frames or “collective action frames” linking environmental and sexual struggles in a variety of different ways (Benford and Snow 2000; Snow and Benford 1988).

David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford (1986) conceptualized “frame alignment processes” as the linkage or conjunction of individual and group understandings or interpretations within and between social movements. In this chapter, I mostly focus on one of the four frame alignment processes they identified, frame bridging. Frame bridging was defined by Benford and Snow (2000) as:

the linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem. Bridging can occur between a movement and individuals, through the linkage of a movement organization with an unmobilized sentiment pool or public opinion cluster, or across social movements (p. 624).

I trace these frame alignment processes through a largely chronological discussion of the activism that began to bridge environmental and sexual movement frames through: 1) early performance-based radical protest and arts-based environmental adult film, 2) green lifestyle and green consumption frames in dating, sex toys, and other green sexual practices and products, 3) queer, sex-positive, and environmental art in performance, installations, and print media, and 4) presentations, performances, and discussions at workshops and symposia. Frame variation (Snow, Vliegenhart, and Corrigan-Brown 2007; Snow et al. 2014) occurred when the “ecosexual” collective identity frame moved from a way to find green dating partners and the consumption of green/sustainable sexual products to challenging heterosexuality and monogamy to challenging all modern binaries beginning with the nature/human split. I close with an overview of the first formal gatherings of previously disparate networks among scholars,

artists, performers; and environmental, sex worker, and sex-positive activists to define and discuss linking environmental and sexual struggles.

I show how the framing processes linked sexual and environmental justice through irreverence, humor, satire, radical performance art, and media as disruptive strategies to mainstream discourses and modernist binaries. While ecosexuality was initially framed to encourage green dating and the green consumption of sexual products, the irreverent environmental art projects framed sexuality as eroticism in general as much as sexuality as alternative (LGBTQ or polyamorous) identities. The ecosexual movement aligned environmental and sexual frames through the workshops and symposia, inclusiveness, and critiques of modern binaries, allowing process-based notions of environmental justice to link with the ecosexual collective action frame. In the next chapter, I will spend more time detailing the tactics of ecosexual weddings and how these amplified a particular collective action frame for the ecosexual movement.

Striptease for the Trees and Fuck for Forest: Early Ecosexual Radical Performance Activism

La Tigresa's (Dona Nieto's) "Striptease for the Trees"

Beginning as a way of garnering media attention, one of the first tactics bridging sexual and environmental movement frames came with anti-clear-cutting activism in California. In fall of 2000, La Tigresa's (also known as Dona Nieto, born Donna Sue Scissors in St. Louis, Missouri) activism made international popular news headlines when she blockaded logging trucks in the California redwoods by taking off her top and reciting her poem titled, "I Am the Goddess" (see Figure 4.1, by Eric Risberg, Associated Press). A short documentary film about her was first featured at Sundance Film Festival in 2002 entitled, *Striptease to Save the Trees*. At the time of this writing, it was still available to view from earthfilms.org.

Figure 4.1 La Tigresa Stopping Logging Truck in the California Redwoods.



In 2011, I met Dona Nieto when I was a participant observer at an ecosex symposium held at the Center for Sex and Culture in San Francisco, California. She directed me to her website, latigressa.net where an Associated Press article is posted about her actions that she lightheartedly referred to as “striptease for the trees”:

If a tree falls in a forest and no one calls the media, as the environmental activist saying goes, nothing happened. If a bra falls in the forest, Nieto has discovered, the media will call you. ...

Nieto goes bare-breasted to represent Nature and put a human face on what is happening to the Earth.

She sometimes demonstrates alone, sometime with a few other women, on her campaigns against clear-cutting, the practice of removing every tree from a logging tract rather than selecting only some trees.

“We’re not saying never cut another tree again; we’re saying leave something,” she says (Locke 2000).

This early act was framed by Nieto as an “art attack,” using tactics drawn from performance art.

According to Nieto (N.d.), as posted on her website:

Two years and two dozen logging trucks later, my “art attacks” had succeeded in saving the world’s two tallest trees, helping to bring indictments against law-breaking developers, and inspiring other feisty females to stand up and strip down for what they hold sacred.

Dona Nieto’s actions were about more than just going topless to get media attention. While Nieto was unaware of the term “ecosexual” at the time of her activism, in one of her poems from 2004 she wrote about searching for a term to describe her experiences in a way that highlighted the sexuality of nature. She read some of her “BioSexual Goddess Striptease Poems” to close the “Ecosex Community Speak Out” segment of the ecosex symposium in 2011.

I think I’m “biosexual.”
Flowers turn me on.
I have eco-erotic thoughts.
The liquid trickle of the stream-flow lapping over the rocks
makes my juices flow.
...
All of nature arouses me.
...
Am I a botano-phile? A pan-sexual?
Or just a moist pink mammal
sniffing all the painted perfumed floral floozies
flirting well outside my species
lusting after all my long-forbidden sisters
hungry to embrace
this whole green planet
unable not to taste
the nectar of love
where ever it finds me (Nieto 2010:19-20).

When I met her, she identified as part of the ecosexual movement as a pioneer in the alignment of activism for environmental and sexual justice.

Fuck For Forest

Building on the performance art tactic of crossing normative sexual boundaries to gain media attention for environmental issues, in 2004, an artist couple from Norway, Leona Johansson, age 21 and Tommy Hol Ellingsen, age 28 aligned environmental and sexual justice with the founding of the nonprofit organization, Fuck For Forest (FFF) in Oslo, Norway. FFF is an erotic nonprofit ecological

organization that raises money for environmental causes around the world by selling home-made erotic films or “ecoporn” on their paid-subscription website, fuckforforest.com (Harris 2004). The group often uses stereotypical hippie culture in a tongue-in-cheek manner in its videos. In FFF’s early months, the couple who started the organization received seed money from the Norwegian government for creating an alternative environmental group. One of the aspirations listed on the nonprofit’s website is “to protect and liberate nature and sexuality.”

Fuck For Forest was forced to move to Berlin, Germany after the founding couple was arrested and fined for using performance art via having sex in public. The duo climbed onstage during an outdoor music festival in Norway and had intercourse in front of several thousand people (Onion 2006). To drive traffic to their website, a banner was raised onstage informing the audience that they were having sex to save the rainforest. According to Ellingsen, nearly \$40,000 in U.S. dollars was made shortly following their arrest and the surrounding publicity, including attracting more than 1,000 new members to their site at \$15 per month (Harris 2004).

The use of such an irreverent play on sexuality and the environment alarmed mainstream environmental groups who were reluctant to publicly accept money over concern that they could lose credibility with stakeholders. According to Harris (2004):

Ellingsen also sees a certain irony in mainstream environmental organizations’ reluctance, for political reasons, to associate themselves with groups like Fuck for Forest: We live in a world where public sex is considered far more controversial than wholesale ecological destruction.

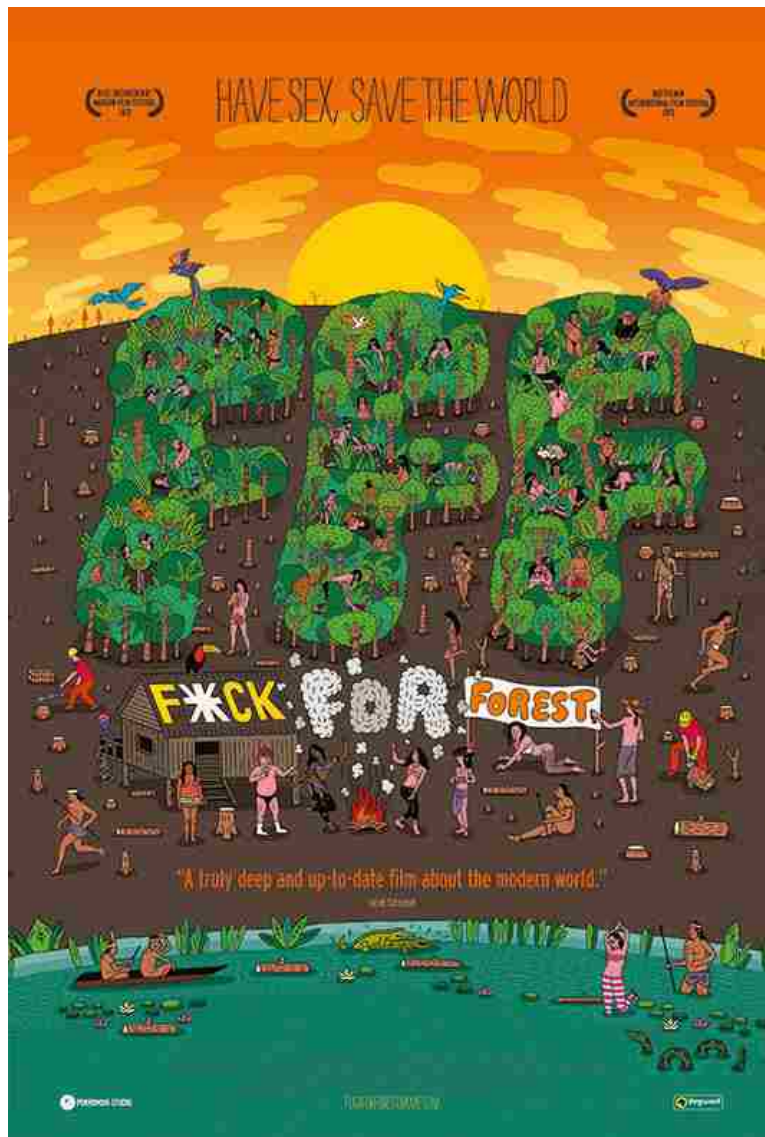
FFF further developed the intersection of sexual and environmental activism. The fuckforforest.com landing page pokes fun at needing a warning to enter the website for containing “natural nudity,” further remarking, “It also contains information about how some humans exploits [sic] our planet and suppresses [sic] our wild nature.” On the “about” page of their website, FFF described how the organization views their combined effort at environmental and sexual justice:

FuckForForest is NOT a commercial erotic website. FuckForForest is an ecological organization - with a sexy touch. The money you donate to our project - is a donation for us to support nature protection. The humans on the FuckForForest website are not “actors” paid to do what they do. They are ecological activists and lovers, who really care for nature - not ashamed of showing

YOU how nature created them. So FuckForForest is - ecology and sexual/body liberation. ALL IN ONE!

A feature-length documentary film entitled *Fuck for Forest* was made about the group by a Polish filmmaker, Michal Marczak. It premiered at the Warsaw Film Festival and won Best Documentary in October 2012. The film was then released to the public in November 2012. The movie stars the pair, Johansson and Ellingsen who began the organization. Figure 4.2 represents a FFF film poster with the tag line, "Have Sex, Save the World," screenshot from mubi.com.

Figure 4.2 FFF Movie Poster.



The “Eco-sexual” Consumer: Green Dating, Green Sex Toys, and Green Lifestyles

While the above was radical and sometimes considered fringe means of protest, the term ecosexual also gained some traction in more consumer-oriented urban culture. The term “ecosexual” first appeared as a dating term around the year 2000 (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016). The word was used to express the identity of someone interested in “green dating,” that is, of a person dating someone who shares environmentally conscious beliefs and practices.

The word *ecosexual* emerged around the beginning of the new millennium, first as a dating term to describe a person that was perhaps interested in vegetarianism and/or environmental causes, or someone who did not use leather, enjoyed nudism, or evoked whatever the prefix *eco-* (from Latin *oeco*, meaning home, household) brought to mind (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016).

Early on, the term stressed both inclusive identities and an activist perspective, albeit at an individual level. As a dating term, proponents stressed that a person was welcome to identify as an ecosexual regardless of their other sexual identities: “Inclusive of all sexual orientations, an ‘ecosexual date’ referred to somebody who would likely enjoy a visit to the farmers’ market or a raw-food meal” (Anderlini-D’Onofrio and Hagamen 2015:2)

Several internet dating sites sprung up with an ecosexual theme such as Planet Earth Singles (planetearthsingles.com), Green Singles (greensingles.com), Green Passions (green-passions.com), Veggie Romance (veggieromance.com), Earth Wise Singles (ewsingles.com, now defunct) and EcoDater.com (now defunct) (Durando 2010). Planet Earth Singles launched its website on Earth Day, 2006. From the website, still active over ten years later:

We are defining a new **eco-sexy** where things like romantic candlelight dinners to save electricity, showering together to save water and sleeping in sheets made from 100% cotton, bamboo or hemp are all very sexy! We see members from **Planet Earth Singles** meeting, falling in love and then working as a team to make the world a more beautiful, loving open hearted place to enjoy and share with all inhabitants of Gaia, our dear Mother Earth (Conscious Dating Network 2016) (emphasis in original).

According to Maxwell (2007), author of the book, *Brave New Words: A Language Lover’s Guide to the 21st Century*:

Lonely **ecosexuals** have the opportunity to meet like-minded partners by visiting ‘green’ Internet dating sites such as planetearthsingles.com or greensingles.com.

These websites have suddenly become incredibly popular, perhaps because the generation of youngsters who have grown up in an era of escalating concern for the planet have now hit the age where they are looking for romance (emphasis in original).

As seen in Figure 4.3, besides offering a place to meet someone with “complimentary (green) beliefs and values,” planetearthsingles.com emphasized welcoming everyone regardless of race, spiritual views/religion, sexual orientation, type of relationship looking for, and country.

Figure 4.3 Planetearthsingles.com Home Page.



Some people were less than enthusiastic about the concept of ecosexuality in dating. For example, in 2006, a writer took to the opinion column of an Australian media source, www.news.com.au with the headline, “Beware the ecosexual”:

The competitiveness by some to be an eco-warrior is so out of control that it now extends to the world of dating and the birth of the ‘eco-sexual’.

Good looks, a sense of humour, education and high-income count for zilch these days if you don't eat organic, wear organic and recycle.

To get lucky, you have to think globally and act locally in your day-to-day living. ...

The true ecosexual is a frightening evolving breed who mainly resides in the city and not surprisingly uses the internet to meet like-minded “sexy-conservationists” (Quigley 2006).

The author continued by saying that those who relate to the ecosexual identity should also belong to the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement. The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement, or VHEMT for short, refers to a movement that promotes “Phasing out the human race by voluntarily ceasing to breed (which) will allow Earth’s biosphere to return to good health” (Knight N.d.). The vhemt.org tag line reads, “May we live long and die out.” The writer related VHEMT to identifying as ecosexual because, taken to the extreme, human sexual reproduction is ultimately bad for the planet with a growing number of people placing a strain on planetary resources.

The word “ecosexual” was included in the dictionary in 2007 when Macmillan Dictionary featured the term as an online BuzzWord. The entry links it to evolving terms for cosmopolitan urban dwellers such as the metro- or retrosexual.

Being ‘environmentally-conscious’ appears to be so fashionable these days that it, too, has joined the trend of social stereotyping which gave birth to a productive pattern of word formation. First there was the *metrosexual*, the heterosexual male who paid careful attention to grooming. He was closely followed by the *retrosexual*, the ‘classically male’ type – unshaven, T-shirt and jeans, hands covered in engine oil. ... And now, finally, a gender-neutral term, the **ecosexual**, a male or female for whom leading an eco-sensitive lifestyle is so vital that they couldn’t imagine sharing their days with anyone who isn’t equally concerned about the environment. (Maxwell 2007)

Also, in 2007, Hamptons.com posted an article, “Green Dating - Are You an Ecosexual?”

Hamptons.com is an online media source focusing on the region of the U.S. known as the Hamptons, also referred to as the “East End” situated along the South Fork of Suffolk County, Long Island, New York. *Business Insider* named a zip code in the Hamptons neighborhood as the number one most expensive in the United States for 2015 with a median home sale price of \$8.5 million (Bruner 2016). By comparison, the closest zip code that placed in the number two most expensive spot was in Silicon Valley, California at a median \$5.9 million home sale price. In the article that leads with the question, “Are you an ecosexual?” Buchanan (2007) bucked the hippie stereotype to demonstrate that the concept may now include some of the wealthiest:

The concept of green dating used to be restricted to SWM (single white male) seeks SWF (single white female) to share life in yurt with long walks in protest rallies and vegan restaurants. But even if you don't throw around words in personal ads like “family oriented pagan feminist certification training” or quote Mary Oliver poetry you may still want to incorporate environmental consciousness into your love life. Check out places like Project GreenHouse in East Hampton which shows a whole new way to live green luxuriously top to bottom....

... Think about not only all the time and money we gals spend getting ready for a date but what we are putting on our bodies and in the air, ground, and water (this goes for men's products as well.) **Even if you're not crunchy granola nature girl who comes out of the woods in Birkenstocks with a daisy in her hair**, you can still pay attention to the beauty products you use (emphasis mine).

The Greening of the Sex Toy Industry

Environmental and sexual justice issues also aligned through consumption in the greening of the sex toy industry. In 2006, the online retail store Earth Erotics became the first sustainability oriented adult boutique in the United States. In addition, it was the only adult pleasure store certified by Green America, a nonprofit organization that focuses on economic strategies to solve social and environmental problems. Earth Erotics founder, Alliyah Mirza holds a degree in environmental law from Lewis and Clark College and uses the trademark tag line “Doing It Green!” (Comella 2010; White 2011). Originally based in Portland, Oregon, the company invited people to become an Earth Erotics Parties Consultant and host Tupperware-style sustainable adult toy parties (Kingsbury 2009).

Earth Erotics launched during the same year that the Danish Environmental Protection Agency released a research report concluding that most of the sex toys on the market contained toxic chemicals and the majority of those were manufactured in China (Nilsson et al. 2006). For example, a class of industrial chemicals of concern, known as phthalate-based plasticizers or simply phthalates, has been commonly used in sex toys to make them softer and more pliable. Several types of phthalates are now banned for use in children's toys in the U.S. due to health risks (United States Consumer Product Safety Commission 2015). Still, adult sex toys are marketed and sold as “novelty items” in the U.S. with no industry standards (Comella 2010).

A pioneer in the sex toy industry for safety and education, Metis Black founded the U.S.-based erotic toy manufacturing company, Tantus in late 1997 (Comella 2010). Tantus specialized in creating

high-quality silicone sex toys and making them available to a mass market rather than simply to small boutiques. In 2013, Black was interviewed for a “Women In Adult” (WIA) profile that was featured in the adult entertainment industry digital magazine, *XBIZ* (Rodriguez 2013). WIA spotlights the professional lives of the adult industry’s most influential female executives. In it, Black highlighted environmental and gender justice in explain to her reasons for starting the company:

In 1997, when we began doing due diligence to start Tantus, education and information about sex toy safety was non-existent. Being a woman, I really wanted a healthy alternative for me as well as for every other woman out there. There were small feminist boutiques in select urban areas that had silicone toys, but 99 percent of adult businesses hadn’t seen a silicone sex toy. In fact, toys made up of PVC (polyvinyl chloride) with 60-90 percent phthalates were all the rage even though they smelled horribly, gave people headaches and created chemical burns in some people. I knew if we could just educate the store buyers and owners we could create a brand that offered a safer alternative. It took us a few years but it was a very rewarding accomplishment

In 2015, I toured the Green America certified sustainable sex toy and adult pleasure store, “As You Like It – The Pleasure Shop” located in Eugene, Oregon and conducted an interview with the owner, Kim Marks. Marks said that her life’s work has been solidly planted in environmental activism since 1994. For example, she practiced forest defense using tactics such as tree sitting and blockading roads. Marks explained that she is a cancer survivor who first launched her green adult pleasure store as an online business in Portland, Oregon and later opened a bricks and mortar store in the current location. She had already been working at the intersection of sex-positive culture (i.e., the idea that all sex, if it is explicitly consensual and healthy, is positive) and environmental activism for a few years.

Like Dona Nieto, Marks embraced the term “ecosexuality” in response to Stephens and Sprinkle’s public ecosexual events. More specifically, Marks adopted the term in 2008 during the performance of the first ecosexual wedding ceremony in the Bay Area of California where she grew up. The opening sentence of the “Our Values” page on her website, asyoulikeitshop.com reads: “*As You Like It* strives to be the leader in Eco-Sexuality! (Marks N.d.)” Figure 4.4 is a photo of the storefront taken the day I interviewed the owner.

Figure 4.4 “As You Like It – The Pleasure Shop” Storefront.



Eco-sex Lifestyle: The First Book on Ecosex Is Published

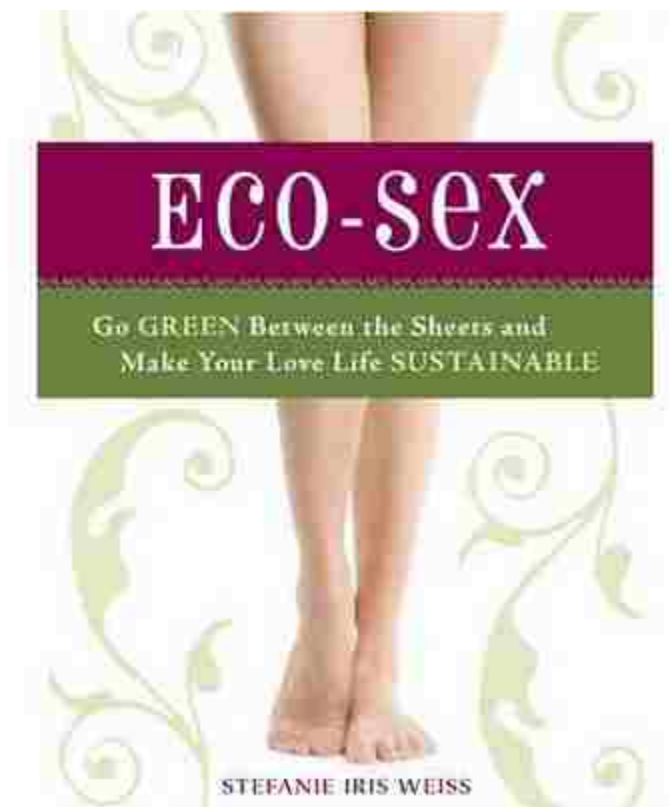
In 2010, the first book that explicitly covered ecosexuality was published written by Stefanie Iris Weiss entitled, *Eco-Sex: Go Green Between the Sheets and Make Your Love Life Sustainable*. A resident of New York City, the author wrote that health and sustainability are inextricably linked and advocated for a healthier, sexier, greener lifestyle and greener consumption. She covered topics from green courtship (or “carbon-neutral love”) to green sex toys, promoting a new paradigm of sexual health that redefines “dysfunctions” as human-environment imbalances. In the book, her motto, “detoxify and amplify your love life” was demonstrated in tips about how to become eco-friendlier on a day-to-day basis, thus generating more energy and passion for better sex. In the first paragraph of the book’s introduction, Weiss (2010:1) asserted:

If you haven’t thought about greening your sex life, you’re still a total environmental disaster. Your compost heap isn’t worth dirt if your bedroom is a toxic waste dump. Sex can be one of the lowest-impact forms of entertainment (and exercise) on the planet, but only if you do it right. Green sex doesn’t have to be clean, vanilla sex; it can be as kinky as you please. But if you want it to be *good sex* (in all senses of the word), then it’s time to make your love life truly sustainable.

She continued with chapters covering topics such as eco-regulation, eco-beauty products, “Big Pharma vs. Your Big O,” and the eco-parenting movement versus remaining childless by choice or choosing to adopt.

By publishing the book *Eco-Sex*, Weiss established herself as a cultural entrepreneur of a lifestyle movement. Ross Haenfler, Brett Johnson, and Ellis Jones (2012:14) defined lifestyle movements (LMs) as “loosely bound collectivities in which participants advocate lifestyle change as a primary means of social change, politicizing daily life while pursuing morally coherent ‘authentic’ identities.” LMs are often linked to a broader social movement. In this case, the lifestyle movement is a branch of the broader ecosexual movement. Figure 4.5 is a screenshot of the front cover of Weiss’s book from ecosex.net.

Figure 4.5 *Eco-Sex* Book Cover.



Weiss described ecosex as a seductive bridge to all things green emphasizing that what is good for your body is good for the planet. At the same time, she conveyed that climate change has been named a threat to U.S. national security. For example, under the heading “One Hot Mess,” she warned:

One of the best reasons to become an eco-sexual is that, if you don’t, in a few decades you might not have time for sex – you’ll be too busy searching for food or escaping from coastal flooding, hurricanes, droughts, and general blight. Yes, it is that dire (Weiss 2010:2).

Similarly, she cautioned against consumerism and the “greenwashing” by companies that look to profit from a trend instead of facilitating change. Rather than a quick fix, she argued that true sustainability requires more holistic thinking, like the perspective that informs alternative medicine.

True eco-sexuals understand that we are human beings before we are consumers. The endless commodification of every facet of our lives is the real root of the ecological crisis we find ourselves in. That’s why so many old-school environmentalists hate the “green” movement. They see it less as a way for people to transform the planet, and more as an opportunity for corporations to cash in on a trend. Think of it as the pleasure principle versus the profit principle. The more you tune in and turn onto eco-sexuality, the more you’ll realize your love is not for sale (Weiss 2010:11).

When I interviewed Weiss by phone from her home in New York City in 2014, she had the following to say in response to the question, “What is an ecosexual? What does ecosexuality mean to you?”:

Everyone who identifies as an ecosexual identifies, I think, in a different way. We’re still figuring out what that definition really is. But, for me, personally, I think that’s the best way to describe what I believe it to be, from a very personal perspective... for me, it’s about merging my relationship with my own body and holistic health with my relationship to the environment. And recognizing that there is, you know, sort of an intersectional, holistic thing going on there where everything that I do to or with my body has an effect on the planet and everything that the planet is subjected to, my body is also subjected to.

She continued by talking about her book’s relationship to the growing, wider ecosexual movement:

(W)hen I first conceived of my own idea of ecosex, it was a very particular segment of what is becoming the wider ecosex movement. It was more limited to our relationship to our own body and holistic lifestyle stuff. So yeah... I love the stuff, for instance, that Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens are doing, but that is not how I originally saw my role in ecosex. They’ve opened my mind to a lot of stuff that I wasn’t thinking about initially.

In addition to her book, Weiss has been a key proponent of ecosexual ideas through writing regularly for several online and print media including *Huffington Post* and her *Ecosalon* column, “Sexual Healing” that began in 2013. She has been a guest speaker on radio shows and at public engagements.

Queer, Sex-Positive, and Environmental Art in Performance, Installations, and Print Media

‘Love Art Laboratory’ Ecosexual Weddings, 2008-2011

One of the projects that provided the foundations to unify these disparate elements in the movement was the fourth to seventh year of a performance art project, beginning at an arts festival at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), by art professor Beth Stephens and her life partner and artistic collaborator, Annie Sprinkle. Their project, the *Love Art Laboratory* was a multi-year eco-themed set of events that ran from 2005-2011 where Stephens and Sprinkle reproduced a color theme according to the seven-chakra system. At the center of the project was the performance of a themed, collaborative series of weddings. The project emerged during the thick of the same-sex marriage debates in California. In their Artists’ Statement on the LoveArtLab.org website, they articulated the goals of the project initially as:

...our response to the violence of war, the anti-gay marriage movement, and our prevailing culture of greed. Our projects are symbolic gestures intended to help make the world a more tolerant, sustainable, and peaceful place.

The first three weddings and surrounding events and installations were artistic challenges to heteronormativity as well as larger cultural greed and violence.

However, in May of 2008 (California legalized same sex marriage in June) the couple changed their focus to include the environment and decided to “take vows to love and cherish the Earth” at their Green Wedding. They defined this “as a strategy to create a more mutual and sustainable relationship with our abused and exploited planet, we are changing the metaphor from Earth as mother to Earth as lover” (Stephens and Sprinkle 2008). The metaphor or frame “Mother Earth” was once used effectively to protect nature. In premodern history, “(t)he image of the earth as a living organism and nurturing mother had served as a cultural constraint restricting the actions of human beings” (Merchant 1980:3). However,

this dominant frame is no longer working to protect nature in the modern era. Social movement scholars conceptualized frame transformation as “changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones” (Benford and Snow 2000:625). Stephens (2015) explained their metaphorical shift or frame transformation strategy to generate the new narrative, “Earth as lover” within the ecosexual movement:

The new orientation of ecosexuality that we propose may help humans be more aware of their relationship to the Earth by redefining human relationships with nature and with each other. Ecosexuality reimagines the metaphor “earth as mother” to become “earth as lover” in order to propose relationships between humans and nonhumans other than the caretaking relationship found in...dominant Western patriarchal frameworks in which the mother is obliged to serve. In the metaphorical shift that I have adopted in my work with Annie Sprinkle, “mother” represents that with which we are already familiar and “lover” as the yet unknown (p. 19).

Rather than recommending “Earth as lover” as a new orthodoxy to replace “Earth as mother,” the couple proposes it as an alternative ecosexual narrative available in the public discourse that may help some people redefine their relationships with nature and each other as an equal partnership.

In an interview with the couple, Sprinkle told me she credits Susun S. Weed, author of the *Wise Women Herbal* series, with the first time she heard of the idea of Earth as lover. At the time, Sprinkle was teaching a secret sex workshop at the Wise Women Center in Upstate New York. Stephens (2015) also addressed the couple’s awareness of potential challenges to the new framing:

While “Earth as Lover” is the way that Sprinkle and I situate this dominant metaphor, sexualizing the Earth may seem to demean specific ideas of the mother in different cultures where “the mother” is generally not seen as a sexual being. Therefore what we do may seem disrespectful or shallow. However, in order to become a mother, there generally has to have been a sexual encounter of some type. Some of the negativity regarding our use of “Earth as Lover” may also stem from living in an overwhelmingly sex negative society. Our use of “Earth as Lover” may also make some feel that we are appropriating the “Earth as Mother” metaphor and misusing it (p. 20).

As described by Stephens and Sprinkle (2016:314):

We are aware that as ecosexuals we are anthropomorphizing the Earth by giving it human qualities. Nevertheless, anthropomorphizing can be a useful strategy to help both others and ourselves connect with that which can hardly be described by language and as such extends beyond human understanding.

In Chapter 6, I discuss the *Love Art Laboratory* performance art wedding project in more detail. What the ecosexual component of Stephens and Sprinkle’s wedding project and nine of their subsequent ecosexual weddings accomplished was to bring the artistic and sex-positive networks of Sprinkle and the

seed resources of UCSC and connections to queer and environmental arts funding of Stephens to a multi-year structure of events that connected the disparate elements of the queer, sex-positive, and environmental movements. Their articulation of the term ecosexuality through weddings and symposia, focused the intersection of environmental and sexual justice through a frame as queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism,” (Seymour 2012; 2018) helping to unify the movement’s collective identity.

The Green Wedding to the Earth was the closing event at the three-day arts festival hosted by UCSC, “Intervene! Interrupt! Rethinking Art as Social Practice.” Stephens, who served as chair of the University of California, Santa Cruz Art Department at the time, said that they raised over \$100,000 for the festival. This is evidence of the social and material capital that the couple was able to generate for their activities through Stephens’ workplace at the university, art, and other social movement connections.

The decision to marry the earth was at least partially inspired by social movement spillover. Sprinkle discussed being influenced on environmental issues by Fuck For Forest and then finding out that her sex-positive work had influenced the organization’s creators as well:

I’m very, very excited about going to places and taking sex-positive culture. And I’m a baby beginner with environmental issues. And actually, I was really inspired by Fuck for Forest, but interestingly they were inspired by me. They saw my show and said, “Oh, porn can be political and activist.” So, they created Fuck for Forest and then it came back to me. It was sort of like a full circle. We joke about that.

The original ecosexual poster, “25 Ways to Make Love to the Earth” (see Figure 4.6) articulated a clear set of tenets that defined Stephens and Sprinkle’s approach to their first ecosexual performance art wedding in 2008. It was comprised of the title in large green lettering at the top with the numbered list printed in black on a large white surface. The list included, “Tell the Earth, ‘I love you. I can’t live without you,’” “Massage the Earth with your feet,” and “Talk dirty to her plants.” Four separate artistically designed versions of the poster have since been produced and distributed. They all contained the same wording as the original with varying colorful graphics. Stephens and Sprinkle created each colorful version in collaboration with a different female-presenting artist and designer who aligned with their work, Katharine Gates, Mari Kono, Little Shiva, and Hoshi Hana respectively. These posters have been featured in several print and online materials about ecosexuality and served as the first artistic

collective identity piece of the ecosexual movement. The posters used eroticism, sensuality, play, and tongue-in-cheek metaphors to voice common precepts of environmentalism, such as recycle, conserve resources, and respect the earth.

As evidence of the affect this first poster had in bridging environmentalism and sexual rights movements, the poster since became reproduced in many venues. In 2017, for an international art display, Stephens and Sprinkle modified the wording on the original 2008 poster to reflect their evolving conception of the Earth as genderqueer. As evident in the image in Figure 4.6, whereas initially the pronouns used for the Earth were only feminine (i.e., she/her), some of the terms were crossed out and replaced with masculine (i.e., his/him) and gender neutral (i.e., their/them) pronouns (screenshot from Instagram post by mvandenbrouck, November 5, 2018, photo from documenta 14).

The top picture in Figure 4.7 below presents the second and third poster versions displayed side by side in the Purple Year Gallery Installation (screenshot from loveartlab.ucsc.edu). The poster on the left is comprised of several rows of artistic outdoor nature photographs and the one on the right is a colorful collage of graphic art with a picture of Stephens and Sprinkle holding the Earth at the bottom. The lower image on the left-hand side of Figure 4.7 (screenshot from littleshiva.com) is an electronic file of a poster version made up of a blue graphic design to match the style of the couple's most recent website (earthlab.ucsc.edu) and ecosexual film focused on water. The lower image on the right-hand side displays the newest 2018 version (screenshot from a post on Michael J. Morris's Facebook page, December 2, 2018). It again contains colorful nature drawings and a photo of Stephens and Sprinkle with their sparkly blue pollination pod in the bottom right corner.

Figure 4.6 “25 Ways to Make Love to the Earth” Original Poster.

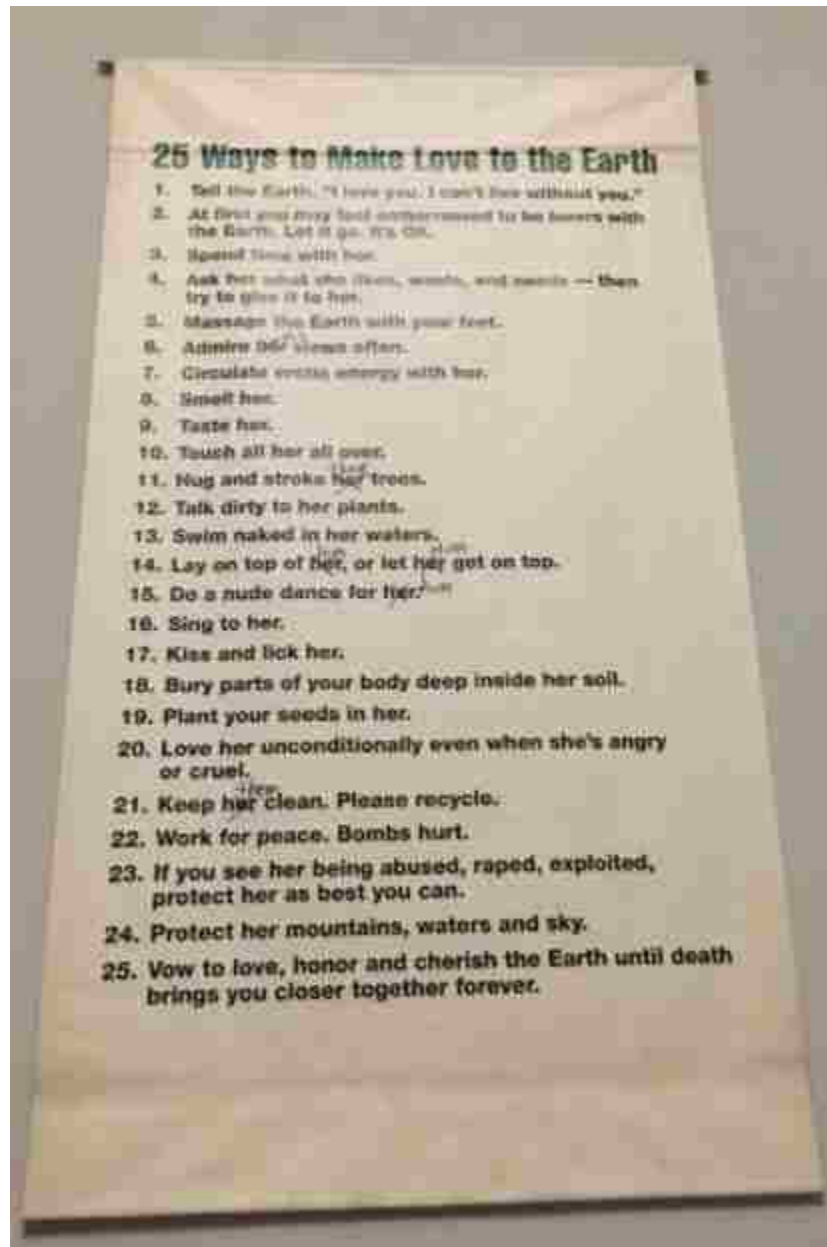
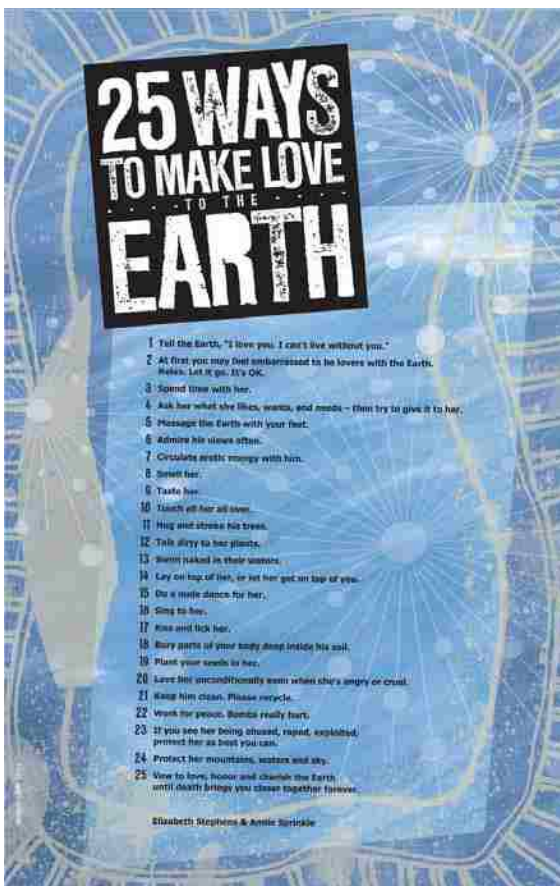


Figure 4.7 “25 Ways to Make Love to the Earth” Subsequent Poster Designs.



Building on the success of the Green Wedding and the UCSC festival, the couple performed two weddings in the Green Year, two in the Blue year, two in the Purple year, and four in the White Year in collaboration with artists, performers, and environmental activists from communities and universities in England, Italy, Canada, Spain, and Croatia as well as the US. Even after the *Love Art Laboratory* project ended, Sprinkle and Stephens continued to collaborate on wedding projects, workshops, and art installations spreading a message about “sexecology” to art communities, sex workers, and LGBTQ and environmental activists across the globe. As of 2019, they have performed more than nineteen ecosexual weddings. Chapter 6 will go into more detail on the framing of these events as queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and the messages of inclusiveness and justice that helped develop the ecosexual movement’s collective identity.

‘Ecosexual’ Cabaret in the Land Down Under

Another performance art event bridging frames of environmental and sexual activism in a campy, humorous manner debuted in September 2009 at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in Australia. The cabaret, *Ecosexual* was directed by Katherine Copsey and performed by the burlesque troupe, “Generation Oh!” which is part of The Revolution Group. Co-founded by Alanna Weekley and Jack O’Brien, according to their website revolutiongroup.com.au, The Revolution Group:

represents a cheeky new breed of people who are more aware of the social and environmental impacts of the way we live. The group aims to raise awareness of sustainability and what really matters, and inspire action through art.

In an article for the *Performing Arts Hub*, Madeliene Wilson (2009) reviewed the cabaret production,

Ecosexual:

which draws a parallel between the environmental damage inflicted by wasteful consumerism, and the hyper-sexualised world this advertising and continuous consumption has induced. ...

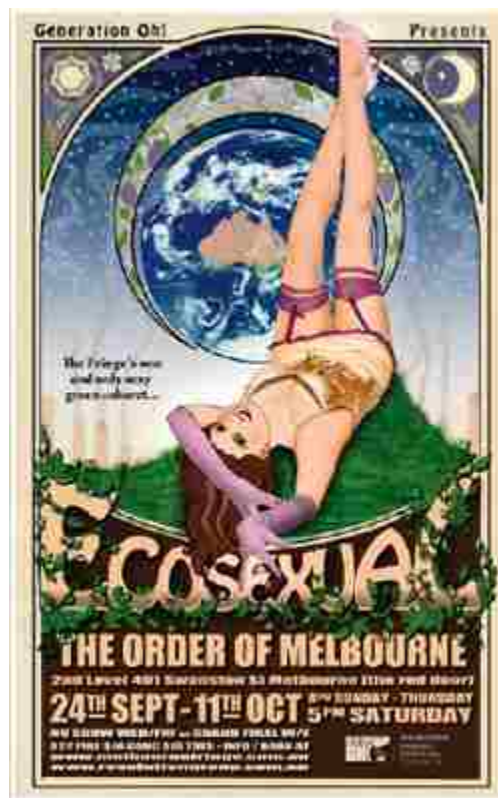
The main plot-line centres on the future of Club Eden, currently run by the gracious and glamorous Mama Earth (creator Katherine Copsey). Mama Earth advocates old-fashioned burlesque – song-and-dance routines performed with real talent, and performers who are sexy by retaining some mystery. The girls of Club Eden are the barely-legal Baby (Renne Chomel), and German sisters Ilke (Erin Watson) and Helga (Zoe Wilson).

However, Club Eden is under pressure from Madam Greed (Tilly Legge) to bring in more money, mainly by being sexier and harder and faster. The natural, unique beauty of the girls must now conform to the modern ideal of a botoxed, waxed Porno Barbie. To illustrate the earning power of this sexuality, Madam brings Polly Pollution (Claire Bowman), in one of the funniest entrances I've seen in a while. Polly grinds and jiggles and thrusts her way through a sample x-rated routine, simulating sex with a whip to the beats of nightclub pop. ...

For the final song, the audience is asked to vote for either Polly Pollution or Mama Earth to perform. Mama Earth won hands-down on the night I attended, and rightly so. A lovely and professional burlesque with all the cast followed, with Mama Earth demonstrating that the slow-food, holistic and naturally beautiful way of life is the most sustainable, and the sexiest.

Figure 4.8 depicts a poster advertising the *Ecosexual* performance as “The Fringe’s one and only green cabaret...,” screenshot from The Revolution Group’s website.

Figure 4.8 Poster Ad for *Ecosexual* Cabaret.



Dirty Girl Zine: Sex Workers Relate to the Earth

The “Dirty Girl” online art project aimed to link the frames of environmental degradation and sexual inequality by exploring the intersections of dirt, earth, dirty girls, and slut stigma in contemporary culture. On October 22, 2010, Sequoia Redd, born in San Francisco and raised in South Florida, and Alaska-based Hobo Stripper put out a call for submissions for a new electronic magazine or “e-zine” on the website hobostripper.com. The pair’s online call requested submissions of art, writing, or photography from former or current sex workers of all genders focused on those intersecting themes. The deadline stated was November 30 in hopes of having the e-zine done by Winter Solstice, December 21, 2010.

One of the project organizers, Sequoia Redd runs an independent website and has worked in various parts of the sex industry, including erotic artistic modeling, erotic dance, adult film, webcam performance, and as a companion. The other artistic organizer, Hobo Stripper is also known by at least two other names: the Ecowhore, a self-described “whore revolutionary and a wilderbabe” at ecowhore.com, and Tara Burns. Her ecowhore.com website lists a few other “ecosexy whores” including Annie Sprinkle. She is a writer, researcher, and the author of the 3-book series, *Whore Diaries* about her adventures as an escort. She also co-founded the Alaska-based organization, Communities United for Safety and Protection (CUSP) where she helps “advocate for individuals in the sex trade to be able to report crimes without being arrested” (Burns N.d.).

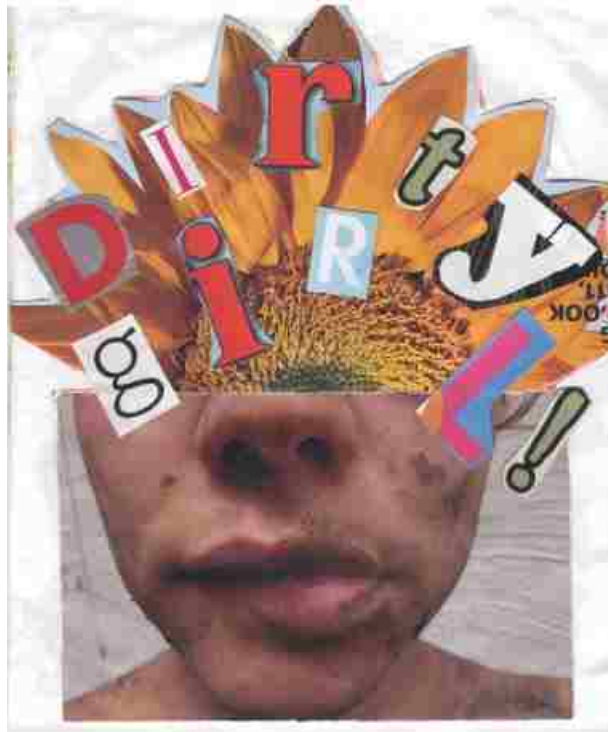
Sequoia Redd and Hobo Stripper stated that with the recent closing of one of their favorite sex industry publications, *Spread* magazine, they felt it was more important than ever for people engaging in the sex trade to continue to create their own media and get their message out there. Furthermore, they explained that they had decided on the theme and publication name “Dirty Girl” based on their interpretation of bringing the earth, sex, and sex workers together in contemporary culture (see Figure 4.9, screenshot from hobostripper.com).

(We) are working on a zine about dirt, earth, dirty girls, slut stigma and exploring the context of what it means to be seen as a dirty girl in a culture obsessed with cleanliness and scrubbing away the dirt. There are definite parallels between how our society regards dirt and the stigma of sex. Just as nutrient rich dirt is the basis of life on our planet, so is sex the basis of our humanity. ...

We settled on the name Dirty Girl because at a time when our topsoil is being depleted and you can go to jail for carrying condoms, we want to explore and celebrate the dirt and sex that stains us. ...

Sex workers are like dirt, we nourish life. We want to explore and celebrate our dirty sexy goodness, together (Burns and Redd 2010).

Figure 4.9 “Dirty Girl Zine!” Front Cover



Bridging Social Movements in Ecosexual Workshops and Symposia

Interdependence Day Workshop: The Ecosexual and Ethical Non-Monogamy/Polyamory

Inspired by the success of Stephens and Sprinkle applying the term “ecosexual” to their eco-themed queer wedding performances, an ecosexual workshop was organized to explain how practicing the arts of loving can contribute to the health of planetary life. On July 3, 2010, I attended my first event advertised as “ecosexual,” a workshop to explore multiple perspectives of the “Future of Love on Planet Earth” for “interdependence day” at a bookstore in the North Bay region of California’s San Francisco Bay Area (Anderlini-D’Onofrio 2010). The cost to attend was \$63 per person with discounted rates for

signing up early or multi-person registration. The workshop was led by “three wise women” (i.e., knowledge gained through experience valued) who were all authors of groundbreaking works regarding ethical non-monogamy/polyamory: 1) Dossie Easton (co-author of the popular 1997 book, with an updated and expanded 20th anniversary edition in 2017, *The Ethical Slut*), 2) Deborah Taj Anapol (author of the 2010 book entitled, *Polyamory in the 21st Century*), and 3) Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio (author of the 2009 book that explicitly connects environmental issues to intimate relationship styles, *Gaia and the New Politics of Love*). It was scheduled from 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. with a break for lunch.

Anderlini-D’Onofrio founded the organization, 3WayKiss that sponsored the workshop. According to her personal website serenagaia.org, 3WayKiss is a non-profit “whose mission is to educate the public about the arts of loving and their infinite forms of expression.” Furthermore, it “supports research on love in its multiple forms of expression, including the sharing of emotional resources this involves.” An online advertisement found on Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s (2010a) site polyplanet.blogspot.com about two months before the workshop read:

What is the future of love on an imperiled planet? What’s the global, cultural, emotional, spiritual, and body ecology of love? Will sex save the planet? What combination of ‘free’ love, polyamory, and imaginative styles of erotic expression will do the job of making peace with Gaia, our mother Earth?

The connection between sex and the environment has been on people’s minds lately. As top-rated writer of conscious love Tinamarie Bernard has put it, “At first glance, sex and the environment don’t make obvious bedfellows. How can the answer to our environmental problems . . . possibly be found in the satin sheets of lovers? According to a growing number of greenies, free love may just save the planet.”

We have only to look around us to see that this salvation hasn’t happened yet. Why not? Is the whole idea of a politics of love just a flakey new age fantasy? Or have we not taken it far enough? Has the wisdom of love been forgotten, distorted, and misunderstood for so long we are only now starting to penetrate this mystery?

The following is an excerpt from another version of a web-based ad for the workshop on the same site about one month prior to the workshop date:

Whether you are straight, monogamous, gay, polyamorous, bisexual, lesbian, polysexual, ecosexual, asexual, metrosexual, or any other preference; whether you are female, male, intersex, transgender or any other gender; regardless of your relationship status, age, nationality, trade, profession, race, ethnicity, religion, spiritual practice, this workshop exposes you to an awesome combination of perspectives on the arts of loving practiced today. It helps to access the multiple

ways that these practices can serve one’s personal, communal, ecosystemic, and planetary health (Anderlini-D’Onofrio 2010b).

When I attended the workshop, I found the room in the back of the bookstore where it was held to be an intimate space, richly decorated with pictures on the walls and various statues and other artworks mostly depicting worldwide spiritual thought. The workshop had a playful and comfortable, yet serious vibe. The presenters dressed in casual rather than professional attire. One woman was wearing a long flowing plaid skirt with a gold butterfly brooch pinned to her dark shirt, one a bright multi-colored long dress and scarf, and the third was dressed in black yoga pants with a short-sleeved blouse layered over a long-sleeved shirt and a turquoise blue stone necklace. They all removed their shoes, mostly sitting at the front of the group of participants, often on the floor (see Figure 4.10, photo by the author). There was a portable working easel at the front of the room with paper and markers for listing key points and ideas.

Figure 4.10 Ecosexual Workshop “Three Wise Women” on Non-Monogamy/Polyamory.



The ecosexual workshop opened with some broad philosophical questions including: What's the connection between sexuality and the environment? What's the role of "Eros," the energy of love, in keeping "Gaia," the planet, in balance with herself? According to the first co-presenter, Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio, the ecosexual movement brings the need for planetary balance to the surface. As such, she explained that during the workshop, we would be exploring the ecology of love and becoming a resource of love to each other. She discussed exploring the balance of freedom in intimate relationships while maintaining respect, safety, and/or even commitment; the importance of conscious/intentional choices, consciousness, and compassion; and the possibility of sexual fluidity over the life course. Anderlini-D'Onofrio shared her motto: "A world where it is safe to love is a world where it is safe to live." Originally from Italy, she speaks multiple languages including Italian, English, French, and Spanish. Anderlini-D'Onofrio completed her Ph.D. in comparative literature at the University of California-Riverside and at the time was a professor of humanities at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez. (She retired in 2017.)

The second co-presenter, Deborah Taj Anapol earned a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Washington-Seattle. Her stated motto was: "Let jealousy be your teacher." She described herself as pro-choice on polyamory rather than anti-monogamy, and explored conscious/intentional relationships, tantra (i.e., an Eastern style of meditation and ritual), and sexual healing. Anapol, (who has since passed away on August 19, 2015), wrote a blog for *Psychology Today*, "Love without Limits" and ran the website lovewithoutlimits.com.

The third co-presenter, Dossie Easton, a psychotherapist with a license in Marriage and Family Therapy, described herself as an active sex radical since 1961 who explored new paradigms of gender, sexuality, and relationships. Her motto was: "Each relationship will seek its own level like water if you let it." Easton, who wanted to reclaim the word "slut," collaborated with Janet Hardy (under the pseudonym, Catherine A. Liszt for the first edition) to publish a book on non-monogamy, *The Ethical Slut* in 1997. After coming out of a traumatic relationship and having a newborn daughter in 1969, Easton decided that she was never going to be monogamous again (Fitzpatrick 2017). Still relevant today, a third edition of

the popular guidebook was published in 2017 that was revised to include interviews with millennials who practice polyamory. Easton has lectured and led workshops on polyamory at conferences and universities and maintains a personal website, dossieeaston.com.

Anderlini-D'Onofrio talked about the groundbreaking work of biologist Lynn Margulis (who was married to the famous astronomer, Carl Sagan from 1957-1964): evolution is driven as much by symbiosis, interdependence, and cooperative relationships as by competitive selection. Known as “endosymbiotic theory,” this is now widely scientifically accepted, although the idea was fought at the time Lynn Margulis introduced it. Margulis is associated with expanding the Gaia hypothesis which argues that all living and non-living components on Earth work together to form a complex, self-regulating system that promotes life; organisms co-evolve with their environment, that is, the evolution of life and its environment may affect each other. The idea was first formulated by environmental scientist James Lovelock while working for NASA in the 1960's.

To answer the question about the relationship between sexuality and the environment that is at the heart of the ecosexual movement, one early topic of discussion revolved around the terms “eros” (i.e., sexual desire or intimate love) and “ecology” (i.e., the relations among organisms and their physical environment) as well as the connection between the two as sustainers of life. Another topic included ecosexuality as an expanded notion of sexuality and erotic expression beyond that of heterosexual intercourse, e.g., birth, sexuality (in diverse forms), and death all as part of the life cycle; and sexual energy as the life force energy that animates all forms of life. The presenters talked about several keys to this paradigm including the following: human vulnerability rather than control, acknowledging our mortality, humans as part of the biosphere, recognizing interdependency, and viewing the Earth as alive.

Another question posed was: When applied to ecosexuality, how is the concept of polyamory different from the “free love” of the 1960s? The presenters said that one main difference is the intentional awareness of how we affect one another when relating with each other. An exchange with a person must be a choice based on consent and respect rather than expectation. Participants were led to examine our cultural conditioning about romantic relationships, in particular, monogamy; the idea of conscious or

intentional loving, and the notion of relationship style choices. Presenters conveyed that although having one single romantic partner is touted as ideal, the most common current intimate relationship form in the U.S. is serial monogamy. In other words, rarely does a person stay with one partner for life although most often each person will have only one partner at a time in succession. They encouraged a willingness to be aware, explore, and consciously choose intimate relationship forms rather than be completely dictated by the norms of society; one consideration is polyamory.

According to the presenters, the key to a polyamorous or “poly” style of relating is people being honest about what they want from relationships and negotiating. It was noted that it takes a lot of introspection, honest communication about feelings, “radical honesty” or being reflexive about how people affect one another. Some of the complexities of poly relationships discussed were that time and energy are finite, and that jealousy is recognized as a real emotion to be acknowledged and worked through. While it may be hard for many to imagine, using tools for relating, a person can even learn to transform jealousy into “compersion,” a feeling of joy from seeing one’s lover experience pleasure or love with somebody else. Polyamory also has different meanings and forms. It’s not just another term for promiscuity, although sexual variety can be a reason for poly relationships which is acceptable if a person is upfront about it (most significantly, sexual variety without giving up emotional intimacy). How can this be ecosexual? Ideally, relationships and relatedness (which are not necessarily, but can be, physically sexual) are viewed as a sharing of resources, support, and energies, beyond the fear of scarcity. Partners operate as symbiotic systems rather than parasitic.

From a wider ecosexual perspective, according to Anderlini-D’Onofrio, Gaia is viewed as a hostess and humans as guests in ecosystemic balance. Philosophically, ecosexuality reflects ancient approaches, for example, pagan spirituality that recognizes the body as sacred and human connection to the physical world or nature. It also echoes Hindu or Buddhist tantric principles, although tantra and tantric practices are not just about sexual acts as often thought in Western culture. Rather, tantra as sacred sexuality is only one small facet – the idea that sexual energy can be harnessed to achieve union with the divine – that appeals to a Western culture with mainstream religion that lacks sex-positive models. While

there is no universally accepted definition, one broad meaning of tantra is an interweaving of ritual practices of energy in the everyday mundane world used to reach the sacred. It takes worldly desires and pleasure into account rather than viewing them as mutually exclusive from spiritual practices. Such traditions connect the microcosm with the macrocosm rather than upholding modern categorical separations. A common theme is conscious awareness of or reflexivity about how choices we make impact ourselves, others, and the planet; thus, leading to personal and planetary responsibility.

As a precursor that informs ecosexuality, presenters briefly discussed the theory of ecofeminism and modern dualisms and hierarchies that connect ecological and feminist issues. They talked about three related theoretical points: 1) the nature/culture split and the oppression of nonhuman and female bodies that allows for domination over the environment and women/the feminine that are perceived as more closely associated with nature, 2) embodiment in terms of reclaiming the physical body and feelings as equal to the mind and thoughts as well as moving beyond the mind/body split, and 3) bringing back in the right brain where creativity and art would be valued on par with the left brain activities of rationality and science.

Next, each presenter practiced different feeling and embodiment exercises with the attendees. Easton led an exercise based on the question, “How does jealousy make you feel?” Participants were instructed to examine their deeper feelings underlying the feeling of jealousy and where it was felt in the body. Anderlini-D’Onofrio directed a couple of exercises. One was a practice of human connection by eye-gazing with a partner that the person doesn’t know well and repeating the process with a second partner. The other was a small group exercise emphasizing communication, touch, trust, and establishing healthy boundaries.

Anapol led a brief demonstration of the Pelvic Heart Integration (PHI), a body-mind integration technique using breath, movement, and touch that focuses on various dimensions of sexuality and love. It was developed by the late Jack Painter – a university professor of philosophy and psychology and one of the pioneers of 1960’s humanistic growth work who died a few days before the workshop – to connect and unite masculine and feminine energies and aspects within an individual. Anapol talked about how the

technique is a synthesis of tools used to transcend the cultural dualities of male and female, love and sex, yin and yang, upper and lower chakras, and individual and tribe. PHI is premised on finding love within oneself rather than endlessly seeking satisfaction outside oneself. Anapol endorsed it to help unravel and heal the sexual dysfunction caused by cultural conditioning, and to restore trust and harmony between men and women. She said to achieve this we must recognize men and masculinity as vulnerable, too; and that normative masculinity damages both men and women and extends to environment. Anapol concluded by promoting a series of workshops and retreats she was scheduled to teach internationally.

Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle showed up to the workshop as guests. They were asked to come up front and speak briefly about their ecosexual performance art projects. Stephens and Sprinkle renewed their vows to the Earth with our group and invited us to repeat the vows to join in marrying the Earth as well. Sprinkle explained that at this point in her life, after working in the sex industry and exploring different lifestyles, the most radical notion for her was a commitment to monogamy and life collaboration with a partner she loves as a conscious choice. Furthermore, Stephens just so happened to be a person of the same sex that resulted in them becoming a queer couple. In other words, Sprinkle's attraction was to the person rather than to Stephens' sex/gender. She also joked about her long-time friend and somatic sex educator, Joseph Kramer being both of their husbands. In closing, Stephens and Sprinkle invited attendees to collaborate in their upcoming Purple Wedding to the Moon to be held in Los Angeles county, California in the fall.

The First Ecosex Symposium ("Honeymoon" to the Purple Wedding to the Moon)

Later that year, I attended a symposium with my sister, Kim that become one of the most significant events in the ecosexual movement's history thus far in bridging various collective action networks and communities to formally explore and discuss the emergence of ecosexuality. The gathering also served as the organizers, Stephens and Sprinkle's "Honeymoon" following their Purple Wedding to the Moon ceremony. The Purple Wedding to the Moon performance took place at an outdoor amphitheater in Los Angeles County, California on the night of a full moon the evening before. (For more

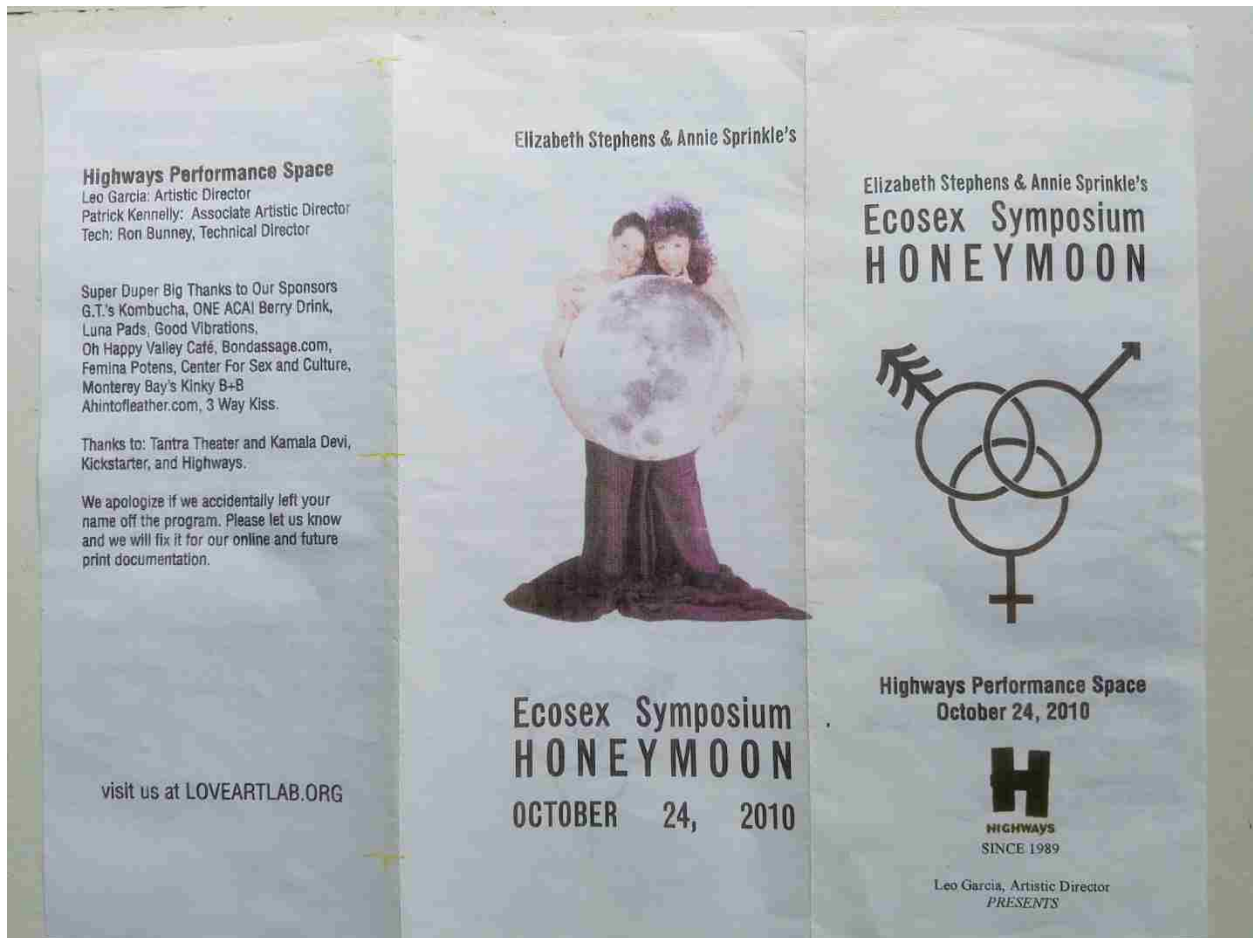
in-depth coverage, see Chapter 5.) It was the sixth year of their seven-year *Love Art Laboratory* project and the third year of performing ecosexual weddings to nonhuman nature elements.

The Ecosex Symposium I “Honeymoon” took place on October 24, 2010 from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. in Santa Monica, California. The symposium revolved around the question, “What is ecosexuality?” and brought together artists, academics, performers, sex workers, and activists to explore the answer from many perspectives. It was held at Highways Performance Space, a “venue for freedom of creative expression” and produced by artistic director, Leo Garcia and associate artistic director, Patrick Kennelly. The mission of Highways Performance Space and Gallery as stated on the website highwaysperformance.org in 2017:

*Our mission is to develop and present innovative performance and visual artists, **promote interaction among people of diverse cultural backgrounds** and engage artists and the communities they serve in cross-cultural dialogues about social, cultural and artistic issues (emphasis in original).*

The symposium consisted of diverse short presentations, performances, and projects exploring what the ecosexual movement is all about. The name tags handed out upon entering had written on them, “What I find most sexy about nature is....” Attendees were encouraged to write their answer to the question along with their name. There was a long table covered with a red tablecloth and some purple decorations at the front. Chairs were set around it for the presenters. The audience sat in bleacher-style seating. Veronica Hart acted as the moderator and shared her animal rights perspective. Veronica Hart, also known as Jane Hamilton, is a former adult film actress turned director who was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 1983, Veronica Hart and Annie Sprinkle were both a part of starting the first porn star support group, Club 90, in New York City at Veronica Hart’s baby shower (Wissot 2015). They have remained close friends ever since. Figure 4.11 below is an image of the Ecosex Symposium I (Honeymoon) program distributed upon entrance (photo by the author).

Figure 4.11 Tri-fold Program for Stephens and Sprinkle's Ecosex Symposium Honeymoon.



Stephens and Sprinkle kicked off the presentations by arguing that the Earth could be imagined as male and/or female, thus queering the Earth (see Figure 4.12). According to Stephens and Sprinkle, to see the Earth as our Mother is to put too much of a burden now. We can't just take, take, take and assume "she" will breastfeed us forever. Humans must find a new way to relate to the Earth's limited capacity that is more mutual and sustainable. One way to do this is to see ourselves as part of nature and the Earth as our partner in a symbiotic system. Stephens and Sprinkle shared their performance art wedding concept beginning with same-sex marriage and the development to marrying the Earth and other nonhuman nature entities, including colorful PowerPoint slides. They described it as political performance to promote a new paradigm and make the human-environment system more symbiotic. Stephens and Sprinkle said

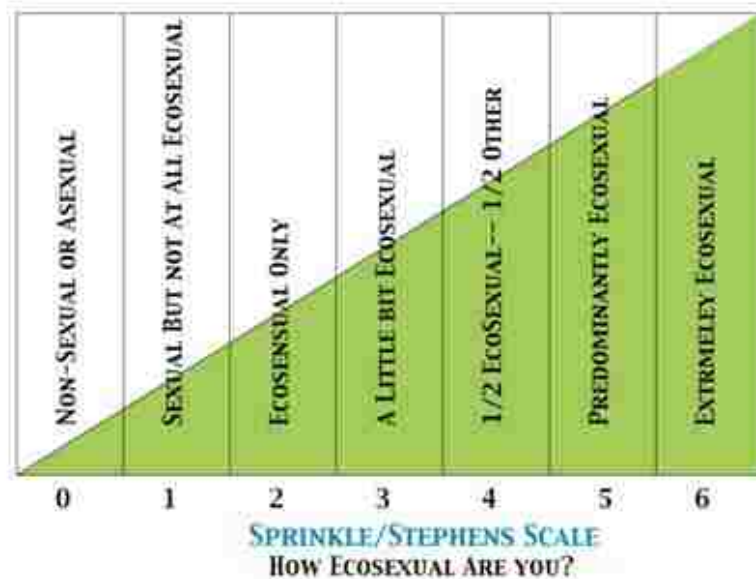
their aim was “to inspire others to make the environmental movement a little more sexy, fun, and diverse.”

Figure 4.12 Queering the Earth.



Some definitions of an “ecosexual” as explained by the couple included: “A person who finds nature sensual, sexy” or a “Person who takes the earth as their lover.” The novel term “sexecology” coined by Stephens and Sprinkle was defined as “a new field of research exploring the places sexology and ecology intersect.” They showed a slide of the “Sprinkle/Stephens Scale: How Ecosexual Are You?” modeled after the Kinsey Scale or Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale that rated sexual orientation on a continuum instead of the modern binary (see Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13 Sprinkle/Stephens Scale: How Ecosexual Are You?



Additionally, Stephens showed slides of the environmental destruction caused by Mountain Top Removal (MTR) coal mining in the Appalachian Mountain region of West Virginia where she is originally from and has firsthand knowledge (see Figure 4.14). MTR is a process used to mine coal from the ground by blowing off mountain tops with explosives. At the time, coal-fired power plants created about half of U.S. electricity. MTR has been demonstrated in peer-reviewed research to cause serious environmental and human health impacts, with no successful mitigation practices to address them. Stephens argued that a cultural mentality that values the Earth as merely a resource leads to this kind of ecological destruction and human exposure to toxins that are related to higher rates of cancer and birth defects. Stephens and Sprinkle announced having a second ecosexual Purple Wedding during 2010 – this time to the Appalachian Mountains in Athens, Ohio – and extended an invitation to collaborate to those in attendance. The location was chosen because the city of Athens is located in southeastern Ohio at the foot of the Appalachian Mountains near the border of West Virginia.

Figure 4.14 Aerial View of Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining.



There were also a few presenters on the greening of the adult pleasure industry. Carol Queen spoke about the greening of the sex toy industry as an avenue of ecosexuality. Queen worked as the staff sexologist and Chief Cultural Officer at Good Vibrations, the women-founded sex toy and bookstore in San Francisco where she has worked since 1990. She is a pioneer in the sex-positivity movement (more recently referred to as “sexual justice”), and a well-known author and lecturer on the topics of sexuality and erotica (Nahmod 2016; Tiara 2017). Queen also founded the Center for Sex and Culture in San Francisco in 1994. She and Annie Sprinkle have been friends for many years. Her partner, Robert Lawrence read a poem he wrote on ecosex fetishes. Jiz Lee, a Feminist Porn Award-winning genderqueer adult film star known for an androgynous gender-bending appearance, and April Flores, also an award-winning adult film performer discussed their work in green porn. They screened a piece of the newly released eco-erotic adult film, “Dangerous Curves.” It was directed by Carlos Batts and featured both

Flores and Lee. Batts, who passed away in 2013, was married to Flores (Miller 2013). The film won an award for Most Deliciously Diverse Cast at the 2010 Feminist Porn Awards, rebranded in 2017 as the Toronto International Porn Festival (Good for Her 2017; 2018).

Deborah Taj Anapol and Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio from the prior ecosexual workshop on polyamory served as keynote speakers. Anapol presented an overview of the ecosexual movement focusing on the bigger picture of the life force (i.e., sexual) energy and sacred sex. According to Anapol, with the agricultural revolution came the problematic issue of “control” and ownership of land which resulted in the loss of human connection to nature which had existed in the Neolithic hunter/gatherer society. She identified the three main components of the ecosexual movement from her perspective as: 1) bringing passion, humor, and fun to ecological and environmental movements, 2) inextricably linking sexual health and sustainability, including the greening of sex toys, exemplified by author, Stefanie Iris Weiss's (2010) book, *Eco-Sex: Go Green between the Sheets and Make Your Love Life Sustainable*, and 3) the erotic love of nature grounded in indigenous cultures, paganism and neo-paganism, and Druidism. She closed by talking about meditation, ritual workshops, and trainings she helps facilitate for healing and balancing personal energies to support intimate relationships and heal the planet. Anderlini-D'Onofrio spoke about “how the Earth stores and runs the energy of love” and then covered much of the same philosophical material as from the previous workshop.

The Wallpapered Dumpster Project is an international act of environmental activism that uses street art to reconnect humans with our urban waste. Rome-based artist Christine Finley (C. Finley) created her own brand of “polite graffiti” by beautifying (and feminizing) garbage dumpsters to draw attention to our trash problem and the issue of overconsumption with the mission of making our systems more symbiotic (Zimmer 2010). According to Finley, “If we see dumpsters as works of art, we have raised consciousness.” Figure 4.15 below depicts one art piece in the Wallpapered Dumpster Project collection located outside of Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica the evening after the first ecosex symposium (photo by the author). For this collection, she used leftover wallpaper from a set dressing job in Los Angeles. The piece features a dumpster covered in white wallpaper with several bright

red lips, most smiling and showing teeth and some with lips closed. Two attendees from the symposium are posing to have their picture taken in front of it by a third attendee.

Figure 4.15 Wallpapered Dumpster Project Art.



A couple examples of ecosexual performance art pieces were those by Tania Hammidi and Lady Monster. Tania Hammidi, a queer live artist and writer who weaves storytelling with site specific performance, performed an intense, physical, choreographed aesthetic piece, “Olive Tree Hug.” The performance symbolized pulling back from imperial or military conquest. It asked the deeper question, “What is fulfilling?”; the answer received, “Imagination; desire to hug a tree.” Hammidi physically wrapped themselves fully around a person who volunteered to pose as the tree. They are the founder of *Queerture: Queer + Couture*, earned a Ph.D. in critical dance studies from UC Riverside, and now own a burgeoning organic date fruit shop.

Lady Monster, “Queen of the Fire Tassels” performed an ecosexual burlesque striptease and fire tassels routine. She joined the burlesque world in 2005, began teaching its history and methods in 2009, and makes several of her own costumes (Lady Monster N.d.). Her ecosexual burlesque performances incorporate water, fire, and portraying “*Love Earth*.” Lady Monster performed in previous ecosexual weddings starting with the Green Wedding to the Earth in 2008 and has served as Annie Sprinkle’s assistant.

Ecosex pride flags were introduced by their designers, Cindy Baker and Megan Morman as a symbol to represent the movement (see Figure 4.16, upper photo of the cloth flag by the author; lower screenshot of the digital flag from populust.ca). True to the DIY ethic, the women who created the flags are artists from Canada who identify as part of the ecosexual movement. The women explained that the four stripes on the universal ecosex pride flag represent the four elements of ecosexuality arranged as a cross-section of the earth: fire in the core (orange), foundation of earth/rock (purple), covered in water (darker blue) and surrounded by air (lighter blue). Further, plant and animal life are embodied by the intertwined heart and globe, which celebrate the earth as our lover. This visual of an intertwined heart and globe serves as a powerful symbol of the alignment and intersection of environmental and sexual justice.

The ecosex flag reflects the idea of the rainbow flag as a universal symbol of gay pride or more recently, LGBTQ pride. The gay pride flag was created by gay rights activist, Gilbert Baker (who passed away March 31, 2017) and unveiled at the 1978 International Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade (Pride Parade) in San Francisco (Haag 2017). Originally containing eight stripes of different colors, but now commonly with only six, Gilbert Baker said that each colored stripe of the rainbow flag similarly carried its own significance: pink for sex, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sun, green for nature, turquoise for magic, blue for serenity, and purple for the spirit (Melendez 2017).

Figure 4.16 Ecosex Pride Flags, Intertwined Heart and Globe Version.



Stephens introduced an alternate ecosex pride flag featuring her beloved Appalachian Mountains in purple. Small ecosex pride flags of both types, made of paper and attached to wooden sticks, were passed out to attendees with each containing an explanation of what they represented on the back.

According to their website, populust.ca, Morman and Baker also designed and built a pride flag for another underrepresented community with which they identify: lesbians who prefer to stay at home with their cats. From this first ecosex symposium, basic categories emerged that were used in Stephens and Sprinkle's later ecosex symposia: ecosexual art, theory, practice, activism, and research.

Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the first phase of the ecosexual movement which began in the late 1990s/early 2000s and proceeded until 2010. This initial phase was characterized by activists and communities bringing attention to various intersections of the environment and sexuality. Using the concept of frame alignment (Snow et al. 1986), a strategic process where a social movement links their goals to the goals of other social movements and merges into a single group, I analyze the ecosexual movement's beginning developments.

First, I examine two early ecosexual projects that incorporated radical performance activism, La Tigresa's "Striptease for the Trees" and the founding of the nonprofit organization, Fuck for Forest. Next, I look at the origin and trajectory of the word "ecosexual" from when it first appeared as a dating term, referring to an environmentally conscious person seeking the same in their romantic partners, to its application to queer performance art wedding ceremonies to nonhuman nature elements as an activist tactic. Furthermore, I trace the ecosexual movement branch dedicated to greening the sex toy and adult pleasure industry. Certainly, green dating and the green sex toy movements tapped into sexual justice as well as environmental justice. However, as a lifestyle faction, it did so through neoliberal culture's notion of the self-regulating, self-sufficient, self-enhancing, entrepreneurial consumer. While issues linking the environment and human sexuality were valued, they were valued as market-granted individual traits (Duggan 2003; Lemke 2001).

In the final section, I examine the first ecosexual workshop and symposium. The first workshop I attended largely focused on redefining polyamory in terms of ecosexuality. As such, the workshop presenters used the strategic process of frame extension and represented a subcultural faction of the

emerging ecosexual movement. The initial Ecosex Symposium, organized by performance art couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, was the first formal gathering dedicated to a diverse discussion and artistic presentation considering the development of ecosexuality as a social movement. Out of that gathering, basic categories emerged that were used in Stephens and Sprinkle's later ecosex symposia: ecosexual art, theory, practice, activism, and research. I argue that strategic frame bridging took place in the initial phase of the ecosexual movement that linked environmental and sexual struggles in ways that resonated with certain activists and communities enough to grow and begin to popularize this intersectional movement transnationally.

CHAPTER 6: POPULARIZING ECOSEXUALITY: MARRYING THE EARTH, 2008-2011

In this chapter, I analyze the second phase of the ecosexual movement from 2008 to 2011, where the tactic of staging large-scale, multi-year public performance art weddings to nonhuman nature elements helped popularize the movement and contributed to emphasizing particular inclusive identities, processes, and goals that were able to avoid many traditional boundary disputes that have plagued other intersectional movements. I show how the performance art, irreverence, and camp in weddings amplified a collective action frame that rejected modern binaries in favor of a postmodern dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015).

I center the discussion on the ecosexual component of Stephens and Sprinkle's *Love Art Laboratory (LAL)* project which popularized the ecosexual movement and amplified the collective action frame of queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) or "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019). The ecosexual weddings started in the redwoods of Santa Cruz, California and were mainly conducted in Western countries between 2008 and 2011. The fact that the project took place over several years allows us to trace how this frame and collective identity developed and centered the movement. I look at three years of their ecosexual wedding ceremonies in more detail: 1) the Green Wedding to Earth in 2008 that kicked off the ecosexual portion of Stephens and Sprinkle's performance art wedding series, 2) the Blue Weddings in 2009 that took place in two European countries and helped spread the movement transnationally, and 3) the Purple Wedding to the Moon in 2010 which I attended in Southern California.

I also examine two different multi-year performance art marriage projects to ecological entities that began slightly later in different locations: 1) Serena Anderlini-D-Onofrio's *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* ecosexual wedding ceremonies performed at the beach in Puerto Rico from 2014-2017, and 2) Richard Torres' multi-site *Marry A Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project carried out in Latin American nations beginning in 2013 that are still ongoing at the time of this writing. I trace Anderlini-D-Onofrio's ecosexual beach wedding ceremonies as a case of social movement spillover (Meyer and Whittier 1994) also referred to as tactical diffusion (McAdam and Rucht 1993; Soule 1997).

While Torres' tactics for his tree wedding project in Latin American countries appear much like those used by the ecosexual movement, I found no evidence to indicate social movement spillover. Though directly unrelated to the ecosexual movement, I include this final case because it is significant that similar non-traditional artistic tactics are being used in the Global South and the Global North as disruptive strategies to address the same kinds of social problems during the same historical period. Finally, I explore efforts at social control of some of the eco-themed performance art wedding events. I argue that these performance art weddings to nonhuman nature elements, instead of being oppositional, create alternative cultural narratives through the participation and collaboration of attendees in celebratory experimental art and radical performance.

Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle's *Love Art Laboratory* Wedding Series Project

Beth: The queer community was becoming increasingly predictable and mainstream with the sort of focus on marriage and equality in the military. Which I understand but people need to understand that our multiple weddings are really sort of a push against that one big day in a person's life. You know what I mean?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. The weddings were about us trying to play with a ritual that is really beautiful in many ways, but also that people take far too seriously in some ways. Like for a woman to marry and what she wears to her wedding is the biggest thing in her life?

Beth: It really is. Ecosexuality was in part born about wanting a new concept as opposed to being... whatever...

Annie: Just gay. We wanted something bigger and wider than "gay."

Beth: Whatever that thing is that same-sex couples felt that (they) needed to become mainstream.

Beth Stephens, a queer artist/activist from the coal fields of West Virginia and art professor and chair at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), and her life partner and art collaborator, Annie Sprinkle, an internationally-acclaimed feminist former adult performer, radical sex educator, and artist, began staging interactive performance art weddings in 2005. As we noted earlier, the project was

designed to call attention to efforts to deny same sex marriage and respond to the culture of war, violence and greed.

The structure of their performance art wedding ceremony project, *Love Art Laboratory* was inspired by contemporary feminist performance artist, Linda Montano's "14 Years of Living Art." Montano was a pioneer of performance art that takes place over an extended time period known as durational art or durational performances (Sparrow 2019). From 1984 to 1998, her performance art project involved wearing clothing of one color per year for seven years, then repeating the process for another seven years (Montano N.d.). Each yearly color corresponded to the color of one of the seven main chakras (i.e., energy focal points in the human body) as conceived by Hindu tradition, in order from root (i.e., pelvis) to crown (i.e., top of the head). From 2005-2011, Stephens and Sprinkle reproduced the color theme according to the seven-chakra system for seven years of performance art weddings.

As indicated in Chapter 5, the first environmentally themed wedding, and nine subsequent large-scale ecosexual weddings brought the artistic and sex-positive networks of Sprinkle and the seed resources of UCSD and connections to queer and environmental arts funding of Stephens to a multi-year structure of events that connected the disparate elements of the queer, sex-positive, and environmental movements. Their creation of the idea of sexecology and ecosexuality through weddings and symposia, focused the intersection of environmental and sexual justice through a frame as queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism," helping to unite the movement. In articulating the term ecosexuality, they solidified a non-binary, artistic, irreverent approach to unifying the movement's collective identity.

How the 'Love Art Laboratory' Project Became Ecosexual: The Green Wedding to the Earth

After three years of wedding ceremonies, with the third in Canada resulting in a legal marriage, Stephens and Sprinkle decided they wanted to move beyond the issue of same-sex marriages and human-human relationships. In 2008, with green as the yearly color, they held their first *ecosexual* wedding – the Green Wedding to the Earth – inviting people to join them in their vow to love, honor and cherish the Earth, Sky, and Sea until death brings us closer together forever. Stephens and Sprinkle (2010) succinctly

stated their attempt to reframe humans' relationship to the Earth with their entrée into ecosexual performance art weddings: "as a strategy to create a more mutual and sustainable relationship with our abused and exploited planet, we are changing the metaphor from Earth as mother to Earth as lover." The Green Wedding to the Earth was performed in the California redwoods of Santa Cruz with roughly four-hundred guest witnesses and one-hundred fifty collaborators. It was the closing event at the three-day arts festival hosted by UCSC, "Intervene! Interrupt! Rethinking Art as Social Practice." Stephens, who served as chair of the UC Santa Cruz Art Department at the time, said that they raised over \$100,000 for the festival.

Their move to include the Earth in these weddings was the beginning of their efforts to bridge the experience from Sprinkle's previous career in the adult entertainment industry and as a radical sex educator with Stephens' experience as an art professor and queer artist/activist from the coal fields of West Virginia with a growing awareness of the environmental devastation from mountaintop removal coal mining there. In an interview with Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle in 2015, they discussed their artistic collaboration:

Beth: What's really nice about our collaboration is that I bring people to this that Annie would never have access to. She brings people to this. People I wouldn't really have access to.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: She makes me be nice when I'm being an asshole. I make her be like a little bit...

Annie: Smarter. [chuckles]

Beth: No, you're brilliant. I make her just focus a little bit. We balance each other in that way. It's like we're a little ecology with very different parts functioning here. And you know, as a whole we work very well.

Furthermore, during the interview, Sprinkle discussed being influenced on environmental issues by Fuck For Forest and then finding out that her sex-positive work had influenced the organization's creators:

I think we could have an ecosex road show at some point with our ecosex walking tours and our little jewel box theatre (i.e., sparkly, blue "Pollination Pod" designed from a 1975 Perris Pacer camper trailer). I'm very, very excited about going to places and taking sex-positive culture. And I'm a baby beginner with environmental issues. And actually, I was really inspired by Fuck for Forest, but interestingly they were inspired by me. They saw my show and said, "Oh,

porn can be political and activist.” So, they created Fuck for Forest and then it came back to me. It was sort of like a full circle. We joke about that.

Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle began staging interactive performance art weddings in 2005 for their *Love Art Laboratory* project. They originally planned a seven-year performance art wedding project as a performative protest against the prohibition of same-sex marriage under United States federal law with the so-called “Defense of Marriage Act” (DOMA). The project was also a personal response to being prevented from marrying as a same-sex couple in the state of California (see Appendix B for a list of weddings, including years, colors, and themes). On the loveartlab.org website, the “Initial Artist’s Statement” provided a brief overview of the project:

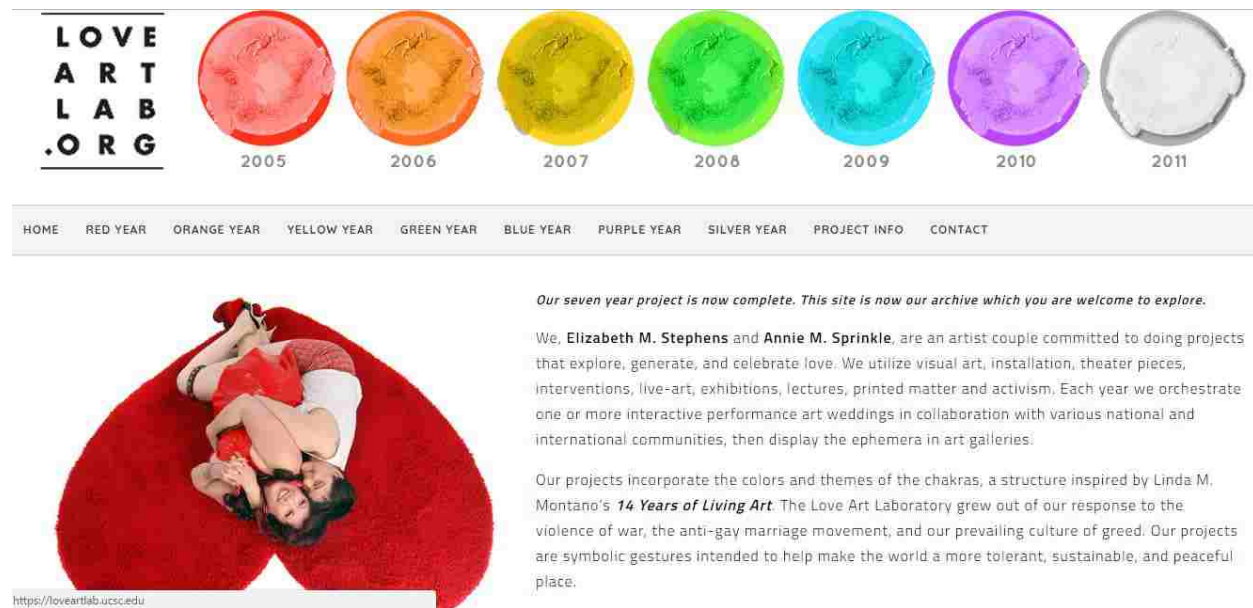
WE ARE THE LOVE ART LABORATORY, an artist couple dedicated to doing art projects that explore, generate, and celebrate love. We orchestrate performance art weddings in collaboration with various international communities. Each wedding is site-specific, interactive, and utilizes a different theme and color based on the seven chakra system (inspired by artist Linda Montano’s *14 Years of Living Art*.) The Love Art Laboratory grew out of our response to the violence of war, the anti-gay marriage movement, and the corporate greed causing the destruction of our planet. Our projects are symbolic gestures, which aim to instill hope, to be an antidote to fear, and act as a call to action.

As mentioned in the initial artist’s statement, the structure of Stephens and Sprinkle’s performance art wedding project was inspired by contemporary feminist performance artist, Linda Montano’s “*14 Years of Living Art*.” Montano was a pioneer of durational art or durational performances, performance art that takes place over an extended time period (Sparrow 2019). Her fourteen-year performance art project, from 1984 to 1998, involved wearing clothing of one color per year for seven years, then repeating the process for another seven years (Montano N.d.). Each yearly color corresponded to the color of one of the seven main chakras (i.e., energy focal points in the human body) as conceived by Hindu tradition, in order from root (i.e., pelvis) to crown (i.e., top of the head).

From 2005-2011, Stephens and Sprinkle reproduced Montano’s color theme according to the seven-chakra system for seven years of performance art weddings representing love as art. The weddings started being catalogued at loveartlab.org and the archive has since been transferred to loveartlab.ucsc.edu. The first three human-based, same-sex wedding performances were held in: 1) New

York City, 2) San Francisco, and 3) Calgary, Canada. The couple married legally for the first time at the third ceremony in Canada. Figure 5.4 displays the home page of the archived website (screenshot from loveartlab.ucsc.edu).

Figure 5.1 Love Art Laboratory Archived Website Home Page.



In her theatre and performance studies dissertation on queer wedlock performance completed at Stanford University, Joy Brooke Fairfield, a professor of theatre at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, examined Stephens and Sprinkle's *Love Art Laboratory* series of weddings. Fairfield (2015) also contributed a theoretical chapter on non-traditional, polyamorous relationships to the edited book, *Ecosexuality: When Nature Inspires the Arts of Love*. In her dissertation study, she explained the broad range of artistic influences from which the couple's work has developed drawing largely from the culture of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Their (Stephens/Sprinkle's) prolific work emerges from distinct lineages of formal contemporary art practice, weaving together elements of relational aesthetics, durational performance, body art, and social sculpture. Their aesthetic is influenced by the cultural milieu of San Francisco and the greater Bay Area (where both have resided since the 1990s) including but not limited to: porn, drag, BDSM, sex-positive culture, non-monogamous communities, New Age spirituality, neo-tantra and sacred sexuality, the Radical Faeries and Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Burning

Man, dyke biker culture, the AIDS crisis and responses like ACT-UP! and the Healing Circle, Chican@/Latin@ political art, academia and critical theory, internet/tech culture, genderqueer and riotgrrl styles, environmental activism, and the lineage of 1960s counterculture groups such as hippies, beat poets, the Black Panthers, and the American Indian Movement. Borrowing liberally (and at some moments perhaps problematically) from this wide palette of aesthetic and political influences, their *Love Art Laboratory* is a both an intimate experiment and a semi-permeable space of eroticized cultural encounter, a queer prismatic engine where relations with both human and nonhuman entities are invited into improvisatory collaboration (Fairfield 2016:225-226).

In 2008, the fourth year of their seven-year project, Stephens and Sprinkle extended their large, collaborative performance art weddings to include the Earth and other designated nonhuman nature elements. They staged the first in their series of eco-themed wedding performances, the Green Wedding to the Earth, on central California's coast. This provided the couple the opportunity to become involved in the development of ecosexuality and the ecosexual movement. In an interview with Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, we discussed how the ecology theme and Green Wedding to the Earth came about:

Beth: I was the chair of my (art) department (at University of California, Santa Cruz) at that time in 2008 and I think... I was chair of my department from 2006-2009.

Jennifer: Mm-hm.

Beth: So, 2008 was right in the middle of it.

Jennifer: Mm-hm. That's a lot of work. [chuckles]

Beth: It was a lot of work. But we were able because I was the chair, I was very supported, I was able to get funding.

Jennifer: Okay.

Beth: We were... [phone ringing] Myself and a couple of my colleagues made this arts festival called "Intervene! Interrupt! Rethinking Art as Social Practice" and our wedding was sort of the ending to that. But it was wonderful because we raised over \$100,000 for this festival.

Jennifer: That's awesome.

Beth: And we were able to pay every single artist. I think, you know Guillermo (Gómez-Peña of La Pocha Nostra, a radical trans-disciplinary arts organization) was there and he was our "High (Aztec) Priest" but he also gave a talk for the festival. Then Linda Montano was there and also the Harrisons, Helen and Newton Harrison, who moved to Santa Cruz to retire.

Jennifer: Okay.

Beth: And they were pretty big, important, kind of academic environmental artists. And I had hired Newton to help me envision a graduate program for my department

Jennifer: Mm-hm.

Beth: And he and I went on to... I mean we kind of envisioned a Ph.D. program. ... But it was sort of like hanging around with them...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: That made me kind of think, well gosh. Maybe I should really be directing my artwork towards environmental art. And it was the wedding...

Jennifer: Mm-hm.

Beth: ...you know, which wouldn't have taken place, really if we hadn't already been doing three years of our project about Love as Art and kind of color coding it...

Jennifer: Mm-hm.

Beth: ...to Linda's system, you know her glandular system or chakra system, or whatever she wants to call it. Because if we hadn't hit green in the fourth year of our project with the Harrisons there...you know. And I mean, really the collaboration with Guillermo started there too, for me. I mean I don't know if Annie actually collaborated with Guillermo before that or not, but it was a big love fest. And we did it in a really beautiful place and I was becoming aware of mountaintop removal (i.e., MTR, which involves blasting the top off of mountains to access coal) at the same time, too. That's right around the time I met Paul Corbit Brown (a photographer and MTR activist from Appalachian West Virginia).

Jennifer: Okay.

Beth: So, a lot of things came together in this moment in 2008 when we had that wedding. ... It was a very interesting moment; 2008 is when we really started identifying as ecosexual.

Figure 5.5 below is a screenshot of the invitation to the Green Wedding to the Earth from loveartlab.org.

The text on the invitation reads, "*Please wear green and dress in the theme(s) of the wedding*" (the letters in the word, "green" are green colored in the original). The themes are listed as "love/earth (4th chakra)."

At the bottom, it reads, "No material gifts please. We welcome your collaboration in the wedding."

Figure 5.2 Green Wedding to the Earth (Year 4) in Santa Cruz, CA, USA Invitation.



Stephens and Sprinkle wrote and posted an “Artists’ Statement” on the website for each year of the project to provide the viewer an understanding of the annual focus of their work. The following is taken from the 2010 “Artist’s Statement” for the Green Year/Fourth Year that corresponded to the fourth chakra focused on love, Earth, and heart, archived at loveartlab.ucsc.edu (green-colored bold in original):

Now in our fourth year, we will have our fourth wedding on May 17th, 2008. This year we will take vows to love and cherish the Earth.

WHY VOWS TO THE EARTH, AND WHY NOW? A wise woman told us a story: “People often think of the Earth as ‘Mother Earth’. But today the Earth is so battered, abused, exploited; polluted, blown up and ripped apart that she can’t handle the burden of being a ‘mother’ any more. It would be better to think of the Earth as a ‘lover’ because we take care of our lovers instead of expecting them to take care of us.

YES, YES, THE EARTH IS OUR LOVER! With her abundant sensual delights, breathtaking beauty, her delicious scents, tastes, and occasional temper tantrums. She’s magical, mysterious, curvaceous, exciting, and unpredictable. We love to nestle in her woods, walk barefoot on her soft skin, circulate erotic energy with her float in her luscious waters. She’s a fantastic lover and we simply can’t live without her. It’s so painful to watch her suffer—to witness the unbelievable pollution of her oceans, her mountaintops brutally sliced off, deadly chemicals and piles of electronic waste dumped all over her, her premature global warming, the pollution of her air, the holocaust of her trees... need we go on?

WE ARE INSPIRED BY PEOPLE THAT WE KNOW WHO ARE ACTIVELY LOVING THE EARTH, such as the pioneers of environmental art Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison. We are honored that they will do our wedding homily. We are inspired by the work of artist and activist Guillermo Gómez-Peña, who will be so generous as to facilitate our vows. Educators Julia Butterfly, Kutira, bell hooks, and Kaytea Petro—a former student studying sustainable business—are all teaching us new ways to love our Earth. We are also inspired by the eco-porn activists of fuckforforest.com.

SO ON MAY 17TH WE WILL VOW TO LOVE, HONOR AND CHERISH THE EARTH UNTIL DEATH DO US PART. We will enter into a deeper, more committed relationship with her, and celebrate our love. We will vow to make more of an effort to be biodegradable, sustainable, spend more time cleaning the beach, drive less—walk more, and we will promise to install a grey water system in our house. We are beginning work on a new theater project about our journey into the environmental movement, to help educate ourselves and the public about how to have a more healthy relationship with our Earth. We will vow to help make the environmental movement more fun and sexy. We invite our wedding guests who are ready to make some vows to the Earth, to do so, along with us.

ULTIMATELY WE HOPE TO DO OUR PART TO LEAVE OUR LOVER EARTH IN A NICE AFTERGLOW for future generations so that they too may experience all of the pleasures, excitement and satisfactions that we have experienced with her in our lifetimes. We hope you will join us.

ANNIE M. SPRINKLE & ELIZABETH M. STEPHENS

Environmental artists Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison wrote and performed the homily, “Making Earth” as a spoken word duet about the dynamism of healthy soil as a living system. Chicano performance artist and artistic director of the international trans-disciplinary arts organization La Pocha

Nostra, Guillermo Gómez-Peña officiated the vows as a Nahuatl speaking “High Aztec Priest.” Stephens (2015) explained the multi-layered significance of Gómez-Peña’s performance:

Gómez-Peña called himself a High Aztec Priest to claim his Chicano stake in the land by gesturing towards California’s annexation by the United States from Mexico. Gómez-Peña’s historical gesture was relevant to our ceremony, because it called attention to the fact that the Green Wedding took place on colonized land that never was and never really will be “ours.” Speaking fake Nahuatl humorously gestured towards his own complicity in the never-ending cycles of colonialism, while seducing his audience into believing that this performance contained “indigenous authenticity” (p. 266).

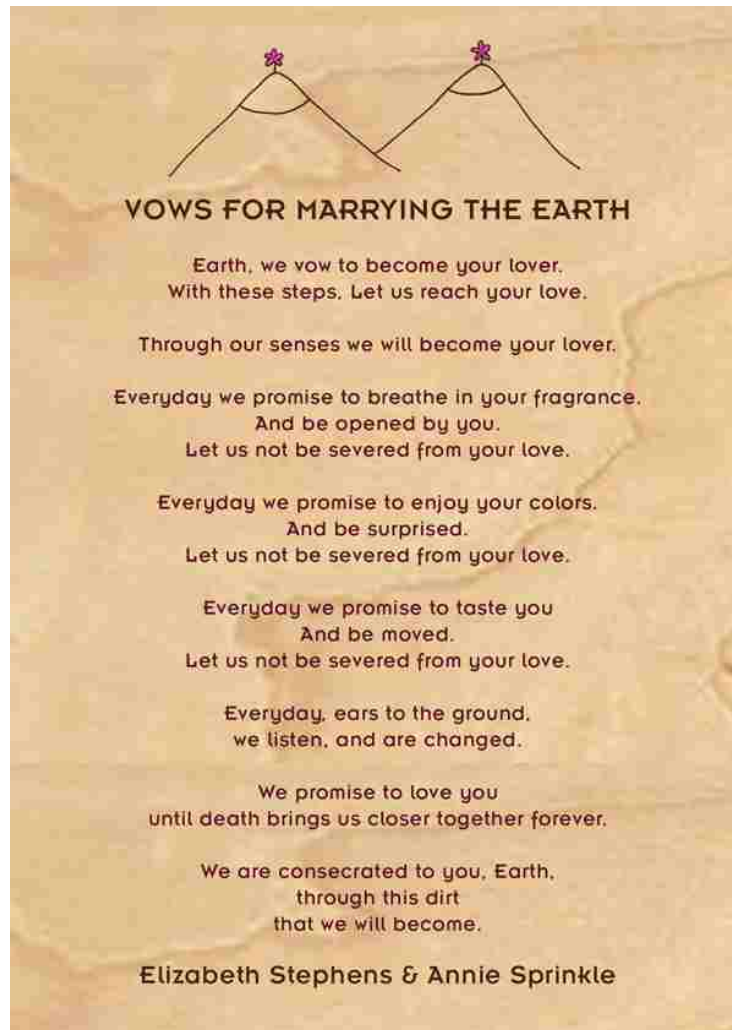
One-hundred fifty people co-created the wedding and four-hundred people attended (Stephens and Sprinkle 2012). Figure 5.3 is a picture of Sprinkle and Stephens wearing green costumes with peacock feathers, kneeling while holding hands (photo by Lydia Daniller, screenshot from loveartlab.org). Gómez-Peña, dressed in a grass skirt and feather headdress, is standing behind them holding a microphone to officiate the ceremony.

Figure 5.3 Green Wedding to the Earth (Year 4) Ceremony.



Figure 5.4 below is an image of the “Vows for Marrying the Earth” (screenshot from sexecology.org).

Figure 5.4 Vows for Marrying the Earth.



In an interview with ecosexual performance artist Lady Monster, she discussed her profound perceptual shift while participating in the Green Wedding to the Earth in 2008:

Yeah, I attended (the Green Wedding that Annie and Beth had in Santa Cruz). And I was a participant within one of the performances. And everything that they said, all of their vows, it resonated so deeply. And I think it resonated with many people that attended that day... and then that's where the whole thing started was at that ceremony, because something in us just clicked. Because they were like, it's a Green Wedding, we're opening our heart chakra, and we're marrying the earth. And the earth received it and gave us love back that day.

And some of the vows were, “Let’s all get up and massage the earth with our feet.” So, everybody took their shoes off... you know, we’re in the middle of redwood trees... and we start massaging the earth with our feet. And I think it was that moment where we were just all like, “Holy cow! This is happening. We are making love with the earth! And this is a thing. And we’re gonna build on this! And we’re gonna really....” And Annie was like, “Let’s make a movement!” Annie and Beth, you know.

Lady Monster’s experience of participating in queer, erotic performative engagement with the environment through Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual wedding ceremony is an embodiment of what Nicole Seymour (2012; 2018) champions as “irreverent environmentalism.” Seymour (2012) proposed that “instead of remaining serious in the face of self-doubt, ridicule, and broader ecological crisis, we embrace our sense of our own absurdity, our uncertainty, our humor, even our perversity” (p. 57). Reports of oncoming ecological catastrophe can be counter-productive, resulting in apocalypse fatigue rather than robust environmentalism. Comedic, absurdist alternatives to environmental engagement are one way to inspire people to act to create change.

Stephens and Sprinkle (2016) explained their conscious use of humor and erotic art as a tactic to address environmental destruction and open spaces to imagine alternative futures:

The Stephens-Sprinkle branch of ecosexuality incorporates humor alongside serious, thought-provoking artistic content and performative action. This multipronged approach creates spaces within which one can remain open to possibilities for acknowledging, reframing, and possibly remediating environmental devastation. ... As part of the artistic branch of ecosexuality, we use creative license and improvisation. We also embrace an *ars erotica* (erotica as an art form) approach rather than one centered on *scientia sexualis* (the science of sexuality). French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984) distinguished these two approaches in volume one of his *History of Sexuality* (1978) (p. 322).

Blue Weddings in Europe

After the Green Wedding to the Earth, Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual performance art began to gain a great deal of notoriety and they were invited by many high-profile arts communities to perform. In 2009, with blue as the annual color, Stephens and Sprinkle performed two ecosexual wedding ceremonies abroad, the Blue Wedding to the Sky in Oxford, England in mid-June and the Blue Wedding to the Sea in Venice, Italy near the end of August (see Figure 5.5, screenshot from loveartlab.ucsc.edu). Produced by theatre director and academic, Luke Dixon, a week-long International Workshop Festival

Initiative associated with the wedding to the sky, “Making Love into Art and Art into Love” was hosted by Polly McLean, the owner of the Grove House in Oxford, England. Stephens and Sprinkle led the workshop program and concluded on Sunday with their performance art wedding by making “sacred vows to their lover, the sky” (Little 2009).

The second blue wedding was performed as part of the 53rd Venice Biennale, a contemporary international art exhibition held every other year (with a few breaks) since 1895 in Italy. In an online photo gallery of the Venice Biennale 2009, *TIME* referred to it as “the oldest, most high-profile and possibly the best contemporary art show in the world.” In a one-day event during the 2009 biennale, performance artists from twenty countries came to present their art as wedding gifts to the Adriatic Sea. While the ecosexual wedding was a new practice, it also served as a callback to the old Italian tradition of Venice marrying the Adriatic Sea every year on Ascension Day, dating back to the year 1,000. Stephens and Sprinkle closed the event by adding their own contemporary spin to their enactment of the Venetian tradition of marrying the sea. The artists’ statement written by the couple and posted to the website, loveartlab.org (that has since been transferred to the server at Beth Stephens’ place of work, loveartlab.ucsc.edu) explained:

WHY MARRY THE SEA IN VENICE? During the Renaissance, the Doge (chief magistrate) decreed that, “Venice must marry the sea as a man marries a woman and thus become her Lord.” So each year the Doge would go out on a boat and drop a ring into the water. But can people really Lord over the Sea? What is perfectly clear is that people do have the power to destroy her, and are rapidly doing so. We will follow the tradition of marrying the Sea in Venice – as two women who have moved beyond the dominant-male and submissive-female dynamic, as seductive eco-sexual artists, and as global citizens who care deeply about the welfare of our planet (Stephens and Sprinkle 2009).

Figure 5.5 Blue Wedding to the Sea (Year 5) in Venice, Italy.



Purple Wedding to the Moon

On October 23, 2010, I attended performance artists, collaborators, and life partners, Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle's third year of ecosexual weddings, the Purple Wedding to the Moon at a public park in Southern California. It was the sixth year of their *Love Art Laboratory* wedding performance project, and the third year of ecosexual weddings. That year the wedding project had expanded to include this one, and a Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains in Athens, Ohio in collaboration with the University of Ohio. The location of the Wedding to the Moon was at an amphitheater in the San Gabriel Mountains, a relatively conservative unincorporated area northeast of the city of Los Angeles, California. The following explanation for the nuptials was written on the wedding program cover and in the press release for the public ceremony:

Because N.A.S.A. has bombed the Moon prospecting for water... (really!) And because we are poisoning our water here on Earth at an alarming rate... and in order to inspire more love for our environment, as well as for each other, tonight we will marry the Moon.

Following the theme, it was a night of a full moon although the sky was cloudy, so the moon was rarely visible. The park contained an outdoor amphitheater that served as the wedding performance venue. The amphitheater was comprised of a raised stage, wooden benches, and had many trees surrounding it. Behind the rows of benches, opposite the stage, stood a rather large, beautiful wood and stone cabin with a cozy stone fireplace inside. The cabin was used for the wedding party and food preparation. In addition to some corporate sponsors that aligned with the ecosexual movement (e.g., G.T.'s Kombucha, Lunapads, Bondassage.com), over \$5,500 of the cost of the performance art wedding was raised by public crowd funding with 110 backers through the online platform Kickstarter (Stephens and Sprinkle 2010). Figure 5.6 depicts the cover of the wedding program given to attendees upon entrance (photo taken by the author). On it is a black and white image of Stephens and Sprinkle smiling with their heads leaned together while holding the moon in front of them.

Figure 5.6 Purple Wedding to the Moon (Year 6) Program Cover.



My sister, Kim flew down from the U.S. Pacific Northwest. We met at nearby Venice Beach to attend the performance art wedding together. Attendees, including my sister and I, dressed in festive purple attire; some in elaborate costumes. I wore a purple satin dress with sequins that I bought for the wedding after attending my first ecosexual event a few months earlier. Stephens and Sprinkle were the brides with costumes made by Sarah Stolar, a friend and interdisciplinary artist who is part of the ecosexual movement. Stolar creating the brides' costumes is part of the movement's do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic much like the artists designing the ecosexual pride flags as discussed in the previous chapter. The couple explained that their personal costumes were typically handmade by someone who identifies with the ecosexual movement.

Sprinkle wore a more traditionally femme costume, a long flowing purple dress with white and silver shimmer and a purple veil. Each of her ample breasts were covered by a white replica of the full moon. Her costume was reminiscent of Glinda the Good Witch from *The Wizard of Oz*. Stephens donned a more butch costume, a purple top and shiny silver pants wrapped with purple ties up each leg. She also wore a matching purple and gray jacket. True to Stephens' funny, over-the-top personality and the ecosexual movement's embrace of humor and absurdity, what looked to be three purple udders supporting a silver sphere protruded from her groin area. Both Stephens and Sprinkle wore a slightly different version of an elaborate silver metallic, celestial headpiece with purple accents. They are pictured in full costume in Figure 5.7 below (photo taken by the author).

Figure 5.7 Purple Wedding to the Moon (Year 6) Ceremony in Altadena, CA, USA.



The New York City-based comic preacher, Reverend Billy Talen – featured in the 2007 documentary film, *What Would Jesus Buy?* – officiated the ceremony along with about twenty members of his performance art community, the Church of Stop Shopping Choir, alternatively known as the Life After Shopping Choir or Earthalujah Choir. Reverend Billy, as he’s generally known, was dressed in a white suit, black shirt and shoes, and a white preacher’s collar. Choir members wore dark green church choir robes, some with purple accessories. The musical director was dressed in black with a purple and white headdress. Savitri D., church co-founder and Reverend Billy’s partner, served as the theatrical director. In their activist and radical performance work, Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir merge anti-consumerist views with environmental movement ideals. They often stage guerrilla theater style disruptions of mainstream cultural institutions to bring awareness to consumerist and environmental

issues. The preacher and his performance troupe previously collaborated with Stephens and Sprinkle and many other environmental activists, networks, and groups to stop mountaintop removal coal mining through radical public performances aimed at getting banks to stop funding it. For example, activists piled mounds of “murdered mountain mud” obtained from West Virginia in bank lobbies that funded the practice and Reverend Billy exorcised the automated teller machines (ATMs) (Hansen 2010).

After many moon-themed performance acts including a puppet show, a clown, poetry readings, singing, and various interpretive dances, Reverend Billy performed an amusing homily interspersed with “Earthalujahs!” and “Moonalujahs!” before calling the brides to the stage. “Does anyone object to the marriage between Annie, Beth, and the Moon?” Reverend Billy asked the audience. A disgruntled heiress voiced her objection claiming that her family owned the Moon and the wedding went against corporate values. Reverend Billy defended the decision to marry the Moon. Next, Stephens and Sprinkle addressed the Moon about their relationship and why they wanted to share their partnership. Then they proclaimed to the Moon what they loved about it:

Annie to Moon: (*Annie circles Beth and says what she loves about the moon.*) When I heard that NASA bombed you looking for water... I felt really sad. Some people think you’re a dead old hunk of rock, and it doesn’t matter. But I love you. You bring out the best in me. When I look at you, I feel spiritual. And calm, and good. You’re very sexy, very romantic, and you inspire me to no end. Moon, you sometimes make me a little crazy and wild, but I welcome that.

Beth to Moon: (*Beth circles Annie and says what she loves about the moon.*) Moon, we depend on you for our cycles. We plant our crops on your phases. The tides depend on your gravitational pull. We depend upon you to hold us in your gravitational arms. Hold us, moon. Make women have menstrual cycles so we can reproduce. Moon, guide us spiritually. You give us comfort, because you are always there. But you make us crazy. You give us permission to dream. You give us permission to sing sacred songs, to howl. We can be like a cow and jump over the moon, moooooo. Moon, you make us crazy, lunatic, you guide us in love.

Beth: Luna.

Annie: Lunatic.

Beth: Luna.

Annie: Love

Annie and Beth: Luna, Lunatic, Luna, Love (*Hand gestures*) (Stephens and Sprinkle 2010).

The audience, choir, and performers started to playfully join in the chanting and hand gestures. The energy and noise level steadily rose until it built to a howl. Reverend Billy quieted everybody and asked the couple if they were ready for the vows. He also invited anyone from the audience who felt called to make the vows to join in (for a recording of the vows, see Russo 2017):

Rev. Billy: Do you, Beth Stephens... do you, Annie Sprinkle promise to be careful and caring about your water consumption?

Annie, Beth, and audience: I do.

Rev. Billy: Do you promise to protect the waters of the earth in order to protect the moon from human exploitation?

Annie, Beth, and audience: I do.

Rev. Billy: Do you promise to sharpen your intuition, wisdom, and vision...?

Annie, Beth, and audience: I do.

Rev. Billy: ...to activate your extra sensory perception?

Annie, Beth, and audience: I do.

Rev. Billy: Promise to love and honor and obey the moon... let's say that one more time, obey the moon, 'til death brings us closer together forever.

Annie and audience: I do.

Beth: Right on!

Figure 5.8 below features a view of the entire stage with participants seated and Reverend Billy Talen standing while preaching (screenshot from loveartlab.org).

Figure 5.8 Reverend Billy Talen Preaching on Farnsworth Park Stage.



In the next section, I discuss how Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual performance art weddings to nature elements began. I also describe their first eco-themed wedding that kicked off the ecosexual portion of their art project in 2008, the Green Wedding the Earth.

Impact of Performance Art Weddings to Nonhuman Nature Elements on the Ecosexual Movement

In her 1964 essay “Notes on ‘Camp,’” Susan Sontag (1966) defined the aesthetic sensibility of “camp” as “art that proposes itself seriously, but cannot be taken altogether seriously because it is ‘too much’” (p. 284). Building on Seymour’s concept of environmental irreverence, Lauran Whitworth (2019) called the form of “theatrical environmental sensibility” embodied in Stephens and Sprinkle’s marriages to nonhuman ecological elements “eco-camp.” Whitworth (2019) defined “eco-camp” as “a mode of florid performance, spectacle and ostentatious sex-positivity that champions new forms of relationality

between humans and other earthly inhabitants (p. 73). She described Stephens and Sprinkle's quirky yet earnest environmental activism as both playful and poignant. According to Whitworth (2019):

Ecosexuality dares us to take ourselves a little less seriously and simultaneously entreats us to take seriously the momentous impact that our habits and ways of thinking have on the planet and its ecosystems. These queer environmental ethics are thus rendered all the more palatable through a campy charm that amuses us even as it challenges us (p. 83).

Whitworth (2019) argued this queer, absurdist environmentalism "has the potential to flummox our affective and moral registers such that the sanctity of our (human) exceptionalism is shaken, and we are more willing to consider the sentience of nonhuman nature" (p. 79). Similarly, Fairfield (2016) contended that Stephens and Sprinkle's "*ecosexual* queer wedlock performance uses the recognizable dramaturgy of matrimony to critique and challenge human exceptionalism within the earth's ecosystems" (p. 227). Drawing from Gentile and Salerno's (2017) study on claims-making strategies used by the intersectional SMO Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project, combining innovation to express a new ideology or "language of resistance" (Edelman 1977) and repetition of what is already available in the cultural discourse due to its public familiarity (Billig 1995) can be effective for communicating new intersectional narratives. In this case, the use of wedding ceremonies, a ritual already recognized in the cultural discourse and familiar to the public, was beneficial to anchor the innovative queer, absurdist environmental performance that challenged human exceptionalism and conveyed the new ideology or "language of resistance" of ecosexuality.

Scholar and curator Paul B. Preciado further discussed the significance of Stephens and Sprinkle's tactical use of the conventional concept of marriage in the context of nonhuman nature elements. Preciado, a student of Jacques Derrida originally known as a female writer who documented his slow transition process to becoming physically male, performed the homily for Stephens and Sprinkle's Blue Wedding to the Sea in Italy in 2009. He was also the Curator of Public Programs for documenta 14, the fourteenth edition of the prestigious contemporary art exhibition documenta. In 2017, documenta 14 was held in its traditional home of Kassel, Germany and for the first time in a guest city, Athens, Greece. Stephens and Sprinkle were invited to share some of their *ecosexual* artwork during the 2017 exhibition.

In an excerpt from the “documenta 14: Daybook” posted in Public Exhibition and shared on the documenta14.de website, Preciado (2017) expressed:

In proposing to marry the Earth, Sprinkle and Stephens are proposing to place it within the legal system, giving it the same rights that a partner acquires in a conventional marriage. This impetus connects to the claims raised by Indigenous Bolivian and Amazonian activists to recognize Water and the Earth as subjects before the law, in keeping with Sprinkle and Stephens’s construction of relations and affiliations that go further than the binary alliances of two human bodies of a different sex (or of the same one).

Preciado argued that much like some indigenous activists, Sprinkle and Stephens proposed to legally protect the rights of nonhuman nature elements, but through constructing a broadened relational conception of traditional marriage.

Stephens and Sprinkle (2012b:65) also pointed to their critique of traditional marriage by performing nonhuman as well as communal human weddings:

Nonhuman marriage or communal human marriage threatens to disrupt time-honored patriarchal power relationships. ... Our weddings incorporate humor and critique to acknowledge that the wedding ritual is an example (of) exploitation and servitude as well as love, collaboration, and community-building.

The interview quotes from Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle in the opening of this chapter indicated that their wedding critique extends to same-sex marriage as well.

Beth: Ecosexuality was in part born about wanting a new concept as opposed to being... whatever...

Annie: Just gay. We wanted something bigger and wider than “gay.”

Beth: Whatever that thing is that same-sex couples felt that (they) needed to become mainstream.

As such, through their queer ecosexual wedding performances, the couple *both* problematizes *and* celebrates the concept of marriage *at the same time*. This is one example of the rejection of modern “either/or” dichotomies and embracing of postmodern “both/and” dialectics prevalent in the ecosexual movement. For a same-sex couple to express that they want to have the right to marry their human partner yet reject the notion of being accepted into the mainstream is also significant. Modern binary ideology is again rejected. Instead of aiming to become recognized as part of the “good” side of the sexual value system as described by Rubin (1984), they moved to flatten the sexual hierarchy. Furthermore, with their

ecosexual weddings, the couple took aim at the modern binary nature/culture or Nature/Society. Stephens and Sprinkle opted to promote a dialectic humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015) ideology rather than to accept the recreation of a hierarchy that would now favor them on the mainstream Society side that has been privileged in the modern era.

An important feature of the ecosexual weddings was their participatory, open-ended nature.

Stephens and Sprinkle (2016) invited attendees at their wedding performances to collaborate in creating possibilities for an alternative future:

We invite audiences to be part of the process of finding sustainable alternatives to human-caused ecological harm. These spaces allow viewers and participants to make up their own minds about given issues rather than feel coerced into accepting dogmatic rhetoric or stereotypical conclusions (p. 322).

In Stephens' (2015) dissertation abstract for her Ph.D. in performance studies at the University of California, Davis entitled "Critical and Aesthetic Research in Environmental Art," she explained her and Sprinkle's deliberate use of what performance art scholar Lynette Hunter (2014) called "disunified aesthetics."

The actual *inclusion* of the viewer that occurred during the Love Art Lab weddings exemplified disunified aesthetics through open-format performances that functioned as a form of unexpected gifting instead of as a series of predetermined acts. By making the deliberate choice not to put constraints on fellow performers, and even *inviting* oppositional views to share the same space, these performances brought heightened attention to things that could not speak and sometimes could not be spoken about. Adopting an "alongside" position under the aegis of disunified aesthetics created space that nurtured new ideas which had hitherto been unknown and unrecognizable to hegemonic ideology. This intentional engagement with the unknown allowed new ideas to emerge and exist alongside others instead of perpetuating attempts to unify cultural practices, which would have caused difference to become absorbed, homogenized and made the same (Stephens 2015).

Stephens and Sprinkle made intentional choices to collaborate with attendees and engage with the unknown during their wedding performances. This opened space for attendees to truly be participants in creating the event rather than merely spectators viewing it or performers following a predetermined script. By engaging in participatory, festive, do-it-yourself group and individual activity to open up public space, these ecosexual weddings resemble the tactical carnival model of radical clowning found in the global justice movement (Bogad 2010). By actively involving the audience, an alternative space is created

outside of Guy DeBord's (1967/2000) notion of the passive, self-perpetuating "society of the spectacle" prevalent in late capitalism as "no one is relegated to the role of passive spectator/consumer" (Bogad 2010:546). Opening this shared creative space allowed for the emergence of new, different, and as of yet unknown ideas, including opposing viewpoints.

In an interview with Stephens, she expanded on the couple's dedication to "disunified aesthetics" in their ecosexual wedding project.

But I think that we're very dedicated to the aesthetic of... we're dedicated... I mean, this is what I'm writing about in my dissertation, is the aesthetic, the aesthetic positions that we are taking. I'm very interested in this aesthetic called 'disunified aesthetics' which means... you know I'm tracing an aesthetic lineage, relational aesthetics to dialogical aesthetics, to this disunified aesthetic... which means that we're doing our thing over here and we're not really reacting. I mean, we say we're protesting or this and that. But we're not really reacting that much to mainstream culture, which also differentiates us from environmental activists. Because it's like, "here's the problem. We're going to push against this problem... and bring attention to this problem." While the ecosexuals are over here celebrating like 'cloudgasms.'

Here Stephens elaborated on what is meant by the "alongside" position of disunified aesthetics mentioned previously using the example of ecosexuals celebrating "cloudgasms." Rather than reacting to and pushing back against mainstream culture, Stephens and Sprinkle are stepping outside of the dominant narrative and inviting others to collaborate in creating a new and different narrative alongside it. Such a tactic mirrors radical clowning's "yes, and" ethos of improvisation, nodding to the previous performance then adding to it (Bogad 2010) and multispecies feminist scholar Donna Haraway's (2016a; 2016b) notion of practicing "staying with the trouble" during the current ecological crisis.

Further, I met Isabelle Carlier from the French arts organization, Bandits-Mages while we were both documenting a series of ecosexual events. Carlier (2015) wrote about the power of pleasure and joy experienced through the act of creative participation in Stephens and Sprinkle's ecosexual happenings:

Proceeding from the consciousness of what is and of what could be instead of a post-hippie ideal, Annie and Beth displace paradigms and present new narratives at the intersection of environmental issues and queer practices, at the intersection of ecology and sexuality. This aims to produce extreme pleasure, an orgasmic joy of creation and intervention. "Did you have fun?" Beth often asked me. This pleasure of creation is a militant act and a powerful unifier.

Carlier also identified participating in the process of innovation at the intersection of ecology and sexuality as a powerful unifier among ecosexual co-creators. Angela Davis (2016) expressed that social

movements that engage intersectionality need to develop organizing strategies that encourage participants to think about the similarities and structural connections between issues as their own, preferably in the context of the struggles themselves. One example from the ecosexual movement would be connecting the “othering” of nature and queer people in the modern era that results in violence and discrimination, both environmental destruction and human rights violations of LGBTQ individuals.

Although the *Love Art Laboratory (LAL)* project officially ended in 2011, the couple extended their ecosexual wedding performances for a few years to accommodate invitations. They held nineteen large-scale weddings to nonhuman nature entities in nine countries from 2008 to 2014 (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016). In 2014, the pair produced a ten-minute video, *Ecosexual Weddings Project* (available online at the time of this writing on the video platform, Vimeo) that documents the highlights from seven of their performance art weddings to numerous nature elements. According to Stephens and Sprinkle (2014) in the beginning of their video, “We married various nature entities. We asked for no material gifts but invited people to help co-create the weddings. Everyone was welcome to take vows along with us.” Figure 5.9 is a wedding portrait compilation consisting of six pictures of the couple representing various *LAL* project ecosexual wedding ceremonies. From top left to right, clockwise: 1) Green Wedding to the Earth in Santa Cruz, California, USA in 2008, 2) Blue Wedding to the Sea in Venice, Italy in 2009, 3) Silver Wedding to the Rocks in Barcelona, Spain in 2011, 4) Black Wedding to the Coal in Gijon, Spain in 2011, 5) White Wedding to the Snow in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada in 2011, and 6) Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains in Athens, Ohio, USA / Moon in Altadena, California, USA in 2010.

Figure 5.9 Stephens and Sprinkle’s Ecosex Weddings Portrait Compilation.



When I interviewed Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle in 2015, they summed up their positions on art and activism:

Beth: I think the thing with Annie and I is we have not strayed from our art making. Even though we’re doing this so-called activist art, we’re artists first.

Annie: Yeah.

Beth: Because I believe that however people maintain their creativity, that that is a radical, subversive way of being in the world that no one can, hopefully no one can, actually co-opt.

Stephens also talked more generally about the power of art and creativity, both personally and politically, and its unpredictable nature:

Beth: People can say, “Art is a luxury” and this and that. But what that does is it really makes people think that they can’t do it. [phone rings] And I tell my students all the time. They’re like, “My parents are saying – why are you interested in the arts? You can’t make any money in the arts.” And I’m like, listen. When you can think creatively, you can apply that to whatever you need to apply it to. You’ve really got to do something that means something to you. Otherwise, you’re going to die before you’re dead. You know?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: I really believe that. I think that terrifies whatever, whoever the powers are... more than anything else.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: Because we are unpredictable. We are unpredictable and the system does not like unpredictability, even though the system itself is unpredictable. But there’s this controlling mechanism that... states.... that states, as the state [chuckles] that there are predictable conditions, and by God you’re going to follow. Art is unpredictable and that’s why society hates art so much, right? ...or disparages. I mean, of course, there is state sanctioned art, right?

Jennifer: Right.

Beth: I feel like creativity is perhaps the most powerful political thing that there is. It continues to move. It moves and changes.

Annie Sprinkle quickly followed up on what Beth Stephens had to say, expressing the freedom she has felt in pursuing absurdist art projects as a couple that differs from her experience of performing in the sex industry to make a living:

Annie: I just want to continue on that. Doing art offers so much freedom. Really, Beth has given me the opportunity to create things that, it doesn’t matter if they make money in a way, which is an incredible gift and freedom. Before I used to come at doing art and performance... I had to making a living out of it. I had to put myself through college with the sex work.

Beth: You had nicer clothes then. [chuckles]

Annie: I had nicer clothes. I didn’t have anywhere near the responsibilities and liabilities, [chuckles] but I had to do gigs that made money. With Beth, she always made art. She had a job and made art that she wanted. So, it’s been a shift for me. Like, just letting go of my business, in a way and surrendering to absurdist projects that I really wanted to do.

Sprinkle and Stephens went on to say that they like the same aesthetics, share the same love of experimental art, and both celebrate absurdity. These shared artistic interests and styles are evident in and

appear to drive their ecosexual movement work, starting with the *Love Art Laboratory* ecosexual wedding performances in 2008 that popularized the movement. Their aesthetic amplified an ecosexual collective action frame based on artistic disruptive strategies, absurdity, a celebration of eroticism, collaboration, inclusiveness, and a non-binary tension around ecosexual collective identity as we shall see.

Alternative Wedding Performances to Nonhuman Nature Elements

In this section, I discuss two alternative wedding performance projects to nonhuman nature elements that began in different locations shortly after the *Love Art Laboratory* project series of weddings ended. The first project, a series of weddings to the beach in Puerto Rico, involves a subcultural faction of the ecosexual movement that shares a network with Sprinkle and Stephens. The second project, a sequence of weddings to trees across several Latin American countries that was still ongoing at the time of this writing, appears to have no direct link to the ecosexual movement that began in the Western U.S.

Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio's 'Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You' Weddings to the Beach in Puerto Rico

Italian native, author, and scholar, Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio – who took “SerenaGaia” as her “sacred name” in 2015 when she co-edited the collection, *Ecosexuality: When Nature Inspires the Arts of Love* – invited others to marry the tropical beach with her at her home in the Caribbean. Three ecosexual weddings to the beach were performed in Puerto Rico, in 2014, 2016, and 2017 (see Figure 5.10). In a phone interview with Anderlini-D'Onofrio, she described her three “matrias” or motherlands that she identifies with as: 1) Italy, where she was born, 2) California, where she attended college and earned her Ph.D. at University of California, Riverside, and 3) the Caribbean, where she lived on the Western shore of Puerto Rico and worked as a professor of humanities at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez at the time.

Figure 5.10 Venue for *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* Wedding to the Beach in Puerto Rico.



The first wedding ceremony, *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* was performed in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico to the tropical beach, Playa Azul on January 25, 2014. Puerto Rico is an island located in the Caribbean Sea that became a U.S. territory in 1898. Cabo Rojo is a region on the southwest coast of Puerto Rico. “Te amo” is the Spanish phrase for “I love you.” Anderlini-D’Onofrio described the wedding to the beach performance as an official expression of connection to an ecosystem that nourishes and supports her, like a loving partner. During an interview, she explained how the concept emerged:

This [performance art wedding] was called, *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You*, two languages [Spanish and English] in the title. Playa Azul is this “blue beach” on the western side of Puerto Rico, on the Caribbean shore where I’ve lived since I’ve lived in Puerto Rico, 1997. It was on my return from a year of research in Connecticut where I had encountered the climate of the Northeast [U.S.], with the various storms and the dreariness of the winter where there are no green leaves anywhere, that I really recognized this beach [Playa Azul in Puerto Rico] as my lover. I said, oh gosh, I haven’t even acknowledged that and this beach [that I live on] has been there for me for so long now, unrecognized.

And so, when I came back, I also had a contact from India whose name was Shaison Ouseph Antony. He had contacted me because he wanted to work on ecosexuality as a documentary. He

likes to go around the world shooting documentaries. In coincidence with his trip here [to Puerto Rico], we organized this wedding on the beach.

In a brief video introducing highlights of the first wedding to the beach as well as some literature for the follow-up wedding performances, she further refers to the project as a “Plural Wedding of Ecosexual Love” (Anderlini-D’Onofrio 2014). The chosen wording of “plural” references multiple partners or polyamory, a topic of many of Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s writings. For example, her memoir, *Eros: A Journey of Multiple Loves* was published in 2007 by Haworth Press and picked up by Routledge in 2013. This is echoed in her statement, “There are no limits to how many can marry a beach.”

There were three workshops organized around the wedding project’s leading principles held before the ceremony: 1) Know and Love the Ecosystem Called Thyself, 2) Know and Love Your Most Compersive Lover: Earth, and 3) Know and Love Those Who Share this Lover with You: Humankind. A dinner for the party of “spice” was served after the wedding ceremony. Language associated with polyamory was evident in the description of the events. Examples include the following words: 1) “compersive” describing the opposite of feeling jealous, that is, feeling joy and excitement for a partner because of the joy and excitement one’s partner is feeling for someone else, 2) “spice” meaning the plural of spouse, often considered humorous and, 3) “metamour” referring to the partner of one’s partner, with whom one does not share a direct romantic or sexual relationship (Veaux N.d.). As such, Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s weddings to the beach appealed more specifically to the polyamorous network of the sex-positive movement.

The second wedding to the beach performance, *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Two* took place on January 30, 2016. A two-day conference was held beforehand, “Practices of Ecosexuality: A Symposium.” The third beach wedding ceremony was performed on February 4, 2017 (Anderlini-D’Onofrio 2016). Both events were advertised in part as “Rituals to Bond with the Partner We All Share: The Earth.” Because the framing of the *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* wedding to the beach ceremonies differed from Stephens and Sprinkle’s *LAL* ecosexual performance art weddings – more polyamorous and

less queer or flamboyant – and were held on the island of Puerto Rico, they drew a different and smaller network of participants.

Anderlini-D’Onofrio previously participated in Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle’s ecosexual performance art events including as a speaker at their Purple Wedding to the Moon in Southern California in 2010. She credited Stephens and Sprinkle’s series of ecosexual weddings with inspiring her ecosexual wedding ceremonies to the beach. One type of social movement spillover is when a social movement organization or informal network influences another’s form or tactics within the same movement (Meyer and Whittier 1994). Another term for this process is social movement diffusion, in this case, tactical diffusion (McAdam and Rucht 1993; Soule 1997). In an interview with Anderlini-D’Onofrio, she expressed that attending Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual performance art wedding ceremony changed her thoughts about weddings.

For me, even dealing with the idea of a wedding is a big leap... because I’m not the marrying type. I’m just not the marrying type. Maybe someday marriage for more than two people will be available, and I might consider it. But it’s not just that... it’s that I’m just not the marrying type. But in my first [ecosexual] wedding [with Stephens and Sprinkle], it was so amazing that I thought, “Wow! if that’s a wedding, I might trust it; I like it.” I don’t know if it reminds me of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” of the festive comedies of the Renaissance... that whole festive... festive with nature...of the imagination... it reminded me of that... of “The Bucolics” ...all of these sorts of mythological triggers.

And the most important thing for me really was... and revealing... was that, in a way... those weddings.... Historically, what happens with monotheism is that the ceremony of the wedding became separated from what is known as the consummation of the marriage, which is the sex, right? You don’t have sex on the altar of the Christian church. Correct? So [Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual] weddings were very sexual. There were nude portions of the wedding... things that you don’t normally see at a wedding. So, I thought, “Wow! this is really sacralizing sexuality again in a very, very deep and meaningful way... in the very performance of the wedding.” I was raised on classical theology, because my parents didn’t want us to read the Bible. I’ve always known that the nuptial bed is the altar of the matrimony... they are not two separate entities... for certain cultures. So, for me, that was very revealing. I don’t know, it was wonderful to reencounter the idea of a wedding in that context.

Anderlini-D’Onofrio also acknowledged some differences from Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual wedding performances: “In this case [the performance art wedding in Puerto Rico], there was no couple. We were all equal. I’m the one who lived here, so it was my marriage of my long-term partner.” She also attributed the all-day form of her wedding ceremony program to the tradition of the all-

day “La Sensa” festival where the whole city of Venice, Italy marries the sea every year, dating back to the Renaissance.

In Winter 2017, the documentary film produced about the first wedding performance to the beach, “Playa Azul I Love You: Together in Ecosexual Love” won three silver awards at the International Independent Film Awards. The awards were received in the categories of concept, documentary short, and experimental film (International Independent Film Awards N.d.). The film was directed by internationally acclaimed documentary filmmaker, cameraman, and photographer, Shaison P. Ouseph (also known by the last name “Antony”) and Anderlini-D’Onofrio.

Figures 5.11 and 5.12 show two versions of invitations to the beach weddings in Puerto Rico (screenshots from Indiegogo Campaign and polyplanet.blogspot.com). The image in Figure 5.11 appears more visual like a postcard of a tropical beach at sunset. The description “Rituals to Bond with Earth’s Energies and Each Other” is written across the water under the words, “Te Amo Playa Azul.” The second invitation in Figure 5.12 is more descriptive, containing text in both English and Spanish including, “Love the Earth? Marry an ecosystem!”

Figure 5.11 *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You*, 2014 Invitation Version One.



Figure 5.12 *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You, 2014 Invitation Version Two.*

♥ TE AMO PLAYA AZUL

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Love the Earth?
Marry an ecosystem!

Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You:
a whole day of love with/on/for
a handsome tropical beach.
Friends, lovers, partners, pets,
family, spouses, children welcome.
There are no limits to how
many can marry a beach.
And you get to kiss the bride too!
Workshops, performances, rituals,
magic, facilitation, ceremonies,
refreshments, hospitality, foods.
Bring your own magic!
Program is open:
Let us know what
you'd like to do!



Donde: Punta Arenas, Área Oeste, Puerto Rico.
Cuando: Sábado, 25 de enero 2014

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Amas a la tierra?
Cásate con un ecosistema.

Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You es un
día entero de amor con/en/para
una hermosa playa tropical.
Amistades, amantes, parejas,
mascotas, familia, esposas y
esposos, niños y niñas bienvenid@s.
No hay límites a cuantas personas se
pueden casar con una playa!
Y besar a la esposa esta permitido!
Talleres, performances, rituales,
magia, facilitación, ceremonias,
refrescos, hospitalidad, comida.
Lleva tu magia! El programa esta
abierto: Déjanos saber que te
gustaría hacer!



♥♥♥♥♥♥

Shaison Ouseph
Co-Creator
Director
Producer



♥ SerenaGaia ♥

a.k.a. Serena
Anderlini-D'Onofrio
Co-Creator
Visionary



Where: Playa Azul, Punta Arenas, Western Puerto Rico. ♥ **I LOVE YOU PLAYA AZUL**
When: Saturday Jan 25, 2014.

Template Episode for docu-series *Hearts on Fire: Together in Ecosexual Love*
CONTACT – SERENA: Call or text 787 538 1680 , Email: serena.anderlini@gmail.com

Figure 5.13 below contains two images of participants getting ready to participate in the beach marriage ceremony in 2014 (screenshots from the Google Drive folder link found at SerenaGaia.org). The top photo shows an “oxytocin ohm and group hug” to promote the bonding of participants shortly beforehand. In the lower picture, the group of about fifteen people is standing on the sand near the sea preparing to take their wedding vows to the beach.

Figure 5.13 Preparing to Take Wedding Vows to the Beach, 2014.



Figures 5.14 and 5.15 below are a set of two images promoting *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Two* in 2016 (screenshot from the Facebook event, hosted by Serena Anderlini, Maria Sanchez, Karen Henry, Anya Anne Light, and Paola Pagán). Figure 5.14 depicts an image of the invitation to “The Second Plural Wedding of Ecosexual Love in the Caribbean” which contains a photo from the first event and text providing general information in both Spanish and English. Figure 5.15 displays an image of the detailed schedule of the one-day program with registration starting at 10:30 A.M. and the wedding vows to the beach at sunset.

Figure 5.14 Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Two Invitation, 2016.

INVITATION / INVITACIÓN

THE SECOND PLURAL WEDDING OF ECOSEXUAL LOVE IN THE CARIBBEAN
 A celebrarse el sábado, 30 de enero todo el día en la playa mas amada del litoral oeste de Puerto Rico
 ALGUNAS PLAYAS SON TAN AMADAS QUE LA GENTE SIGUE CASANDOSE CON LAS MISMAS - ¡QUE LOCURA DIVERTIDA!

EXPERIMENTA A LA TIERRA COMO UN/A AMANTE – EXPERIENCE THE EARTH AS A LOVER

TE AMO PLAYA AZUL I LOVE YOU TWO • 1-30-16
RITUALS TO BOND WITH THE PARTNER WE ALL SHARE: THE EARTH

PRODUCTION AND FACILITATION: SERENAGARA ANDERLINI-D'ONOFRIO AND THE PLAYA ZUL "SPICE" TEAM
 PROGRAM INCLUDES: RITUALS, DANCE, SONG, WORKSHOPS, QHYTOSIN HUGS, PERFORMANCES, FOODS, SHARING
 PHOTO CREDITS: SHARON ANTONY

WHEN: SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2016 – 11 AM TO SUNSET
 WHERE: Playa Azul, Punta Arenas, Carr 102, km 11.6, Joyuda, PR
 RESPOND TO: serena.anderlini@gmail.com
 Sponsors: Arts & Sciences @ UPRM and Participants

UNETE A ESE GRUPO DE SOÑADORES QUE AMAN LA TIERRA Y LA GENTE QUE RESPETA ESTA AMANTE COMPARTIDA
TODOS EVENTOS LIBRE DE COSTO - ¡APRECIA LA ECONOMIA DEL DONO EN NUESTRA REGION!

Figure 5.15 Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Two Program, 2016.

Un evento bilingüe / A bilingual event

TE AMO PLAYA AZUL I LOVE YOU TWO - A PLURAL WEDDING OF ECOSEXUAL LOVE - SABADO 30 DE ENERO 2016

10:30-11:00 AM	Registration	
11:00-11:30 AM	Contact dance	
11:30-1:00	- Workshop One: Know and Love the Ecosystem called Thyself, Taber Shadburne	
1-1:30 PM	Break, Debriefing: Your experience?	
1:30-1:45 PM	Oxytocin Ohm and Group Hug	
1:45-3:15 PM	- Workshop Two: Know and Love the Partner We All Share: The Earth, Marsha Scarbrough	
3:15-3:45 PM	Break, Debriefing: Your experience?	
3:45-4:00 PM	Oxytocin Ohm and Group Hug	
4:00-5:30 PM	- Workshop Three: Know and Love Those Who Share this partner with You: Humankind	
	SerenaGaia:	
5:30-6:00 PM	Break, Debriefing: Your experience?	
6:00-6:15 PM	- INVOCATION and VOWS	
	SUNSET TIME	
	- Becoming "Spice" to the Beach	
	Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Two	
	- Dinner, Enjoyment, Relaxation, Connection	
	Participants welcome to linger and enjoy	
	Options: music of the sea, beach, company, massage, reiki, bomba music and dance, drums, amorous circles	
		6:19 PM
		6:30-7:30 PM
		7:30 PM onwards

COMO LLEGAR: Llegue a Playa Azul ANTES de las 11:000 Am. Llegue a Carr 102, Km 11.6. Estacione: Entre al callejoncito entre Cond Punta Arenas y villa. A llegar a la playa, vire a la derecha. En la punta, entre las dos uvas playeras, es que es. LLEVE TODO lo que necesita para pasar un dia tranquilo en la playa: toallas, almohadas, trajes de banos, protector solar, agua, alfombras, alimentos de comodidad., tambores, guitarras, panderetas. HABRA COMIDA FRESCA, LOCAL, Y SALUDABLE - LOCAL, FRESH, AND HEALTHY FOOD SERVED

Learning to love the natural way
Aprender el amor naturalmente

According to Anderlini-D’Onofrio, the program for *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You Three* convened on February 4, 2017 was a part of the project “Islas Maravillas: Ecosexual Education and Extensive Research” at University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez (UPRM) with her serving as the principal investigator. The project was sponsored by UPRM College of Arts and Sciences and supported by Puerto Rico’s Department of Natural Resources. She retired from UPRM the summer of 2017 and has been teaching ecosexual workshops in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Italy, and Estonia which sometimes include a final ceremony called Wedding of Ecosexual Love.

Richard Torres’ Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen Project in Latin America

Although not labeled “ecosexual,” a similar contemporary performance art wedding project to nonhuman nature elements began in Latin America in 2013. Popular Peruvian actor, artist, and environmental activist, Richard Torres started a series of wedding performances to trees with the project,

Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen (Genova 2016; *Mexico News Daily* 2016). Thus far, Torres has married trees in Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic (*La Tribuna* 2017; EFE-EPA 2018). In Mexico, he married the famous *Árbol del Tule* or Tule Tree, known as one of the oldest and widest trees in the world (*Mexico News Daily* 2016). Torres is sometimes referred to in the Western press as popular American actor, Johnny Depp’s look-alike (e.g., Bender 2013; Genova 2016) or *doppelgänger* (Scherker 2013).

Like Stephens and Sprinkle’s ecosexual weddings that began in year four of the *Love Art Laboratory* project, Torres hopes to bring attention to human-made environmental troubles of the world including deforestation and to persuade people “to commit to nature and stop destroying it... and one another” (Stallard 2014). He also invited the public to witness and, in later versions, join in his wedding performances to trees. However, shortly after the project began, Torres started putting various white wedding veils on the trees he was marrying. Also, his wedding events often included reforestation efforts by planting new trees with those in attendance and children were usually prominently featured.

The Facebook page, “*Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial*” has consistently documented the weddings to the trees for Torres’ project. Figure 5.16 is a screenshot of the Facebook page cover photo image posted on February 19, 2019.

Figure 5.16 “*Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree - Oficial*” Facebook Page Cover Photo.



Figure 5.17 below is a screenshot of the wedding invitation to a tree in Guatemala with Richard Torres (screenshot from the project’s Facebook page “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial” posted on February 22, 2017). The accompanying post read in Spanish, “Y también plantaremos el árbol de la Paz” which translates to English as, “And we will also plant the Tree of Peace.”

Figure 5.17 Wedding Invitation to a Tree in Guatemala and Richard Torres.

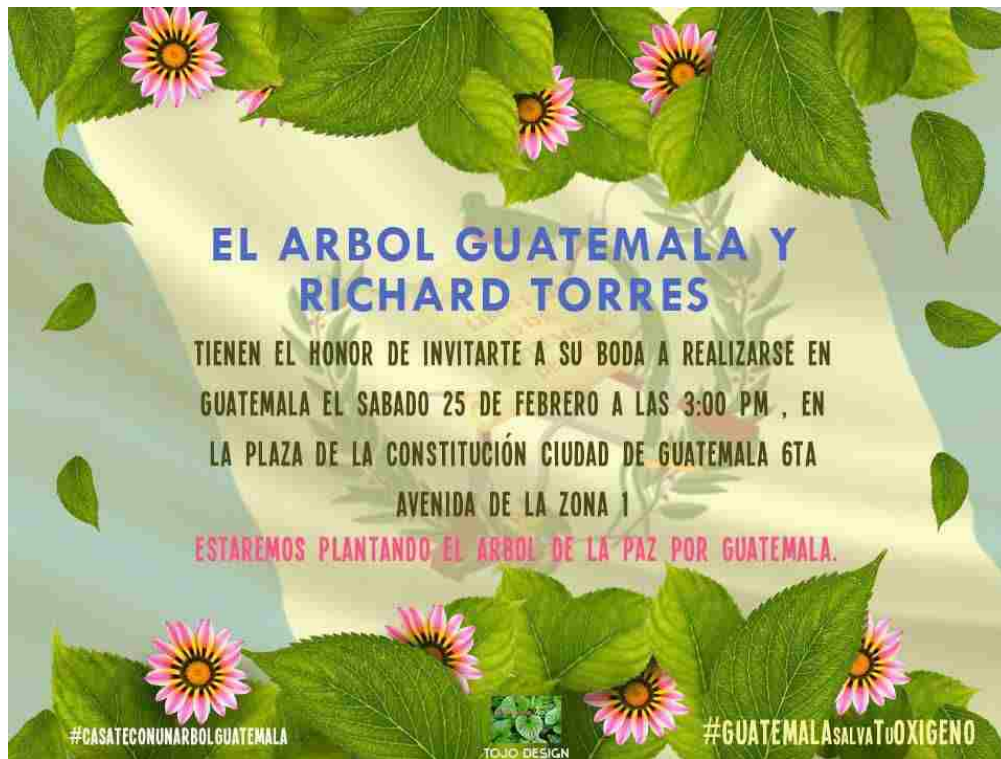


Figure 5.18 features Torres as he kisses his tree bride while holding a white flower bouquet during the first tree wedding performance in Argentina in 2013 (screenshot from the Twitter account Cásate con un Árbol @CCACOL, posted October 29, 2014).

Figure 5.18 Torres Kisses Tree Bride in Argentina in First Wedding Performance, 2013.



Figure 5.19 features the tree wedding party in Colombia (screenshot from the “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial” Facebook page).

Figure 5.19 Tree Wedding Party in Colombia.



Figure 5.20 shows Torres – wearing a white suit, orange tie, and sunglasses – leaning in to kiss his tree bride. The tree has a white wedding veil wrapped around its trunk as guests throw rice. A man behind them is clapping and smiling (screenshot from “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial” Facebook page).

Figure 5.20 Torres Leans in to Kiss Tree Bride in Colombia as Guests Throw Rice.



The following post was translated from Spanish from Richard Torres’ personal Facebook page, Photo Album, August 27, 2015:

The Wedding of the Year in Chile. Total success. Challenge fulfilled We are the voice of the Last Native Forest PANUL that gives Oxygen to Santiago de Chile. And we planted the Peru tree. Thank you God. Thank you Chile. #CasateConUnArbolChile #ArteConConciencia

Figure 5.21 pictures Torres with his arm around his tree bride that is wearing a Chilean Flag dress and white wedding veil (screenshot from the Facebook page, “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial”).

Figure 5.21 Tree Bride with a Chilean Flag Dress, 2015.



Figure 5.22 below features Torres making a ritual payment or offering to the Pachamama or Mother Earth before the tree wedding (screenshot from the project’s Facebook page, “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree – Oficial”). A basket of fruit and lit candle are setting on the ground in front of the tree bride as Torres sprinkles what appears to be salt or sugar on the earth. The ancient Peruvians in the Andes, based on Incan tradition, used the Pachamama offering ritual to give thanks and give back to Mother Earth from what humans are given in a reciprocal relationship (Vincent 2018). For the *Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project, the Pachamama ceremony is followed by “asking for forgiveness for the disasters that humans produce on the planet” (EFE 2018).

Figure 5.22 Torres Making a Ritual Payment or Offering to the Pachamama/Mother Earth.



On December 10, 2017, Torres officiated the first “community marriage” between people and the trees in San Isidro, Lima, Peru (Apen-Sadler 2017). As part of the ceremony, several actresses married their tree husbands with Torres acting as a priest. This move permitted others to participate in a mass wedding to several trees and kicked off a new phase in the project. It also allowed for the switching of gender roles but remained within the sex/gender binary. The women all wore traditional wedding gowns, mostly white with some light pastel. Figure 5.23 depicts nearly twenty brides posing together for a group photo (screenshot from the “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree - Oficial” Facebook page, posted

December 10, 2017). According to the project’s Facebook page, sixty people married the trees of San Isidro that day. Also, the group collected signatures at the event to request the municipality of Lima to conserve trees and green spaces and evaluate alternatives to the proposed cutting down of trees to improve traffic in the area.

Figure 5.23 Brides Marry Tree Grooms in Community Ceremony in Peru.



After the mass wedding in Peru, the *Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project began including invitations for the community to join in marrying the trees in some locations. In February 2018, Torres performed his first mass wedding with the trees in Oaxaca, Mexico “for peace and oxygen.” On October 24, 2018, a brief video of about 30 seconds was posted to the “Cásate con un árbol - Marry a tree - Oficial” Facebook page. The video was a message from a diplomatic official, the Consul General of Peru, Minister Carlos Vallejo Martell in Buenos Aires, Argentina expressing his support for the project’s cause.

He also married a tree in Buenos Aires, Argentina at their next planned ceremony (see Figure 5.24, screenshot from the project’s Facebook page on October 28, 2018). During this ceremony, according to Torres, several people married the same tree – sometimes an already married couple – and practiced polyamory (EFE 2018). However, he quickly followed up by expressing that the message and symbolism of the project is very serious and represented a commitment to nature for life.

Figure 5.24 Consul General of Peru in Buenos Aires, Argentina Marries a Tree, 2018.



While marrying a tree in the Dominican Republic, Torres indicated to the media that he will continue his project far into the future, “We have come to Santo Domingo to perform our wedding number 17 and we will not stop until we establish a new Guinness record, with 100 ceremonies like this” (EFE-EPA 2018). Furthermore, he said he was planning to perform at least five future weddings to trees per year in different countries and cities despite acknowledging the high cost of the project.

Social Control of Performance Art Weddings to Nonhuman Nature Elements

The policing of protest and other collective actions is one significant facet of the state's response to social movement activities and events (della Porta 1995; Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003). A rather large police and security presence created an odd tension as elaborately dressed wedding collaborators entered the park space in Los Angeles county, California for Stephens and Sprinkle's Purple Wedding to the Moon. The use of the facility for the event had been cancelled by park authorities shortly beforehand. Figure 5.25 is a screenshot from the website, altadenablog.com titled, "Dear Moon: the wedding's off." The final line reads, "they were notified on Friday that the LA County Dept. of Parks and Recreation had cancelled the event, citing safety concerns from law enforcement."

Figure 5.25 "Dear Moon: the wedding's off" Article.

Wednesday, October 13, 2010

Dear Moon: the wedding's off

The "Purple Wedding to the Moon" has been eclipsed.

The "eco-sexual Purple Wedding to the Moon," an event by performance artists **Annie Sprinkle** and **Beth Stephens** scheduled for Oct. 23 at Farnsworth Park amphitheater, has been cancelled by LA County.

According to **Savitri Durkee**, one of the producers, they were notified on Friday that the LA County Dept. of Parks and Recreation had cancelled the event, citing safety concerns from law enforcement.

However, an agreement was reached to hold the event when a press advisory was released by the producers stating that "Sprinkle, Stephens, and their wedding co-creators believe that the cancellation is in direct response to the gender of the brides, and the environmental activist themes of their vows" and expressed the couple was considering filing a lawsuit against the county. As part of the negotiation, Stephens and Sprinkle were required to purchase extra security, and expressly told that no nudity was permitted during the ceremony. Similarly, in 2009, during the couple's Blue Wedding to the Sea performance in Italy, the police showed up three times and tried to arrest the performers (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016).

In 2016, Torres also experienced social control efforts while performing the wedding to *Árbol del Tule* or the Tule Tree in the state of Oaxaca located in southern Mexico. One of the committee members responsible for looking after the tree removed offerings from its branches and threw them on the ground, then demanded 50,000 pesos (\$2,750). Torres insisted nature belonged to everyone and that the tree was not private property (*Mexico New Daily* 2016). In 2012, shortly before beginning his ecological wedding project, Torres was nearly arrested after staging a nude protest to prevent trees from being removed from a Peruvian park (Scherker 2013). However, people in the park's neighborhood interceded to prevent the arrest (*La Republica* 2012). Torres' tactic in Peru in 2012 echoed that of La Tigresa's "striptease for the trees" to prevent the practice of clear-cutting in California in 2000 (see the opening of Chapter 4). Both aligned activism for environmental and sexual justice.

Discussion

In this chapter, I examine the second phase of the ecosexual movement from 2008 to 2011 that popularized it, characterized by conducting performance art wedding ceremonies to nonhuman nature elements. More specifically, I investigate the ecosexual wedding component of performance artist couple, Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle's *Love Art Laboratory* project. I provide detail on the Green Wedding to the Earth that kicked off the ecosexual nuptials in 2008, the Blue Weddings that were performed transnationally in two European countries in 2009, and the Purple Wedding to the Moon that I attended in Los Angeles County, California in 2010. These ecosexual queer wedding ceremonies began in the redwood forest of Santa Cruz, California and were performed transnationally, mostly in Western countries. I analyze Stephens and Sprinkle's use of queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) or "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019) in their ecosexual marriage performances. Furthermore, I consider how the queer ecosexual performance art weddings break down modern binaries and embrace a postmodern dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015) ideology.

Next, I discuss Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio's *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You* ecosexual weddings to the beach in Puerto Rico, performed between 2014-2017, as a case of social movement spillover

(Meyer and Whittier 1994) or tactical diffusion (McAdam and Rucht 1993; Soule 1997) being used by the polyamorous subcultural faction of the ecosexual movement. I also examine Richard Torres' *Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project with weddings to the trees in Latin America, from 2013 to present. Torres' eco-themed performance art wedding ceremonies in several Latin American nations resemble those used by the ecosexual movement, but I found no evidence of social movement spillover. I include Torres' tree wedding project, despite it not being directly related to the ecosexual movement that began in the Western U.S., because it is significant that similar non-traditional artistic tactics are being used in the Global South and the Global North to address the same kinds of social problems during the same historical period.

Each wedding project, with its focus on symbolic marriage to nonhuman nature elements, took on the distinctive flavor of their locations and of the networks of artists who led the projects. Finally, I look at social control efforts aimed at the performance art weddings to nonhuman nature elements. I argue that instead of being oppositional, these eco-themed performance art weddings to nonhuman nature elements create alternative cultural discourse through the participation and collaboration of attendees in celebratory experimental art and radical performance.

CHAPTER 7: DEFINING AND NEGOTIATING AN INCLUSIVE INTERSECTIONAL COLLECTIVE IDENTITY, 2011-2019

I examine the third and most recent phase of the ecosexual movement extending from mid-2011 to early 2019 in this chapter; the processes involved in and challenges to building a cohesive intersectional collective identity. As Hunt, Benford, and Snow (1994) noted, framing and collective identity are highly interactive. Building the ecosexual collective identity involved processes and challenges in linking networks, tactics, and framing. It is clear that the emphasis on radical inclusiveness, that extended to nonhuman nature elements, allowed through experimental art and creative expression, and the focus on justice as process were key in building this cohesion.

I first analyze the Ecosex Manifesto, unveiled at the beginning of this period by performance art couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, which became the ecosexual movement's central, unifying collective identity piece. The Manifesto reflected queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) and "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019) that had emerged in the ecosexual component of the *Love Art Laboratory* weddings and events. It reflected the focus on experimental art and creative expression, challenging binaries in discourse, and a celebration of queerness and eroticism. I also look at how ecosexual activists negotiated conflicts around intersectional framing and identity. These negotiations cemented an emphasis on radical inclusion.

I then discuss how the ecosexual movement continued to grow transnationally with additional events and gained legitimation with coverage by mainstream media outlets and the production of two documentary films incorporating an ecosexual perspective. Mainstream media coverage included major publications which focus on the environment and on sexuality. During this time, the ecosexual movement also showed the first sign of social movement institutionalization with the establishment of the E.A.R.T.H. Lab at the University of California, Santa Cruz. I examine the E.A.R.T.H. Lab – which stands for Environmental Art, Research, Theory, and Happenings – that was co-founded by Stephens and Sprinkle. The pair began directing and producing "experimental environmental art in collaboration with the Earth," including their branch of ecosexual projects at this center.

Important to this discussion is the diversity in the various networks that were involved in the building of the movement. While the ecosexual movement is radically inclusive in potential, its activists are primarily comprised of several marginalized sexual and gender identity groups and frontier actors of existing environmental networks. For example, networks involved in the ecosexual movement include the following: LGBTQ/queer, queer performance artists, sex workers, ethically non-monogamous/polyamorous, sex-positive feminists, Greenpeace, environmental health, Keeper of the Mountains (mountaintop removal activists), sustainable intentional communities, Reverend Billy & the Stop Shopping Choir, La Pocha Nostra (ever-morphing trans-disciplinary arts organization of border crossers), and environmental artists. Stephens and Sprinkle (2012b:66) stated, “Our networks include artists, sex workers, academics, drag queens, queer folks and others whose voices do not necessarily fit easily into the existing environmental movement.”

In her analysis of the post-2008 wave of protest, sociologist Ruth Milkman (2017) offered two dimensions that social movements varied along: “1) the social characteristics of their activists and leaders, and 2) their dominant modes of organization and strategic repertoires” (p. 2). According to her classification, ecosexual activists and leaders *combine* the characteristics of social insiders *and* social outsiders. They are social *insiders* as mostly white and typically affluent, or at least rich in cultural capital. These ecosexual leaders and activists are also social *outsiders* as highly overrepresented by women and LGBTQ or other marginalized sexual/gender groups. It is also notable that some of the leaders, despite being white, share a historical lineage of being social *outsiders* such as from Appalachian areas or Jewish descent. Stephens and Sprinkle leverage resources involving university and art community funding and the networks and social capital of well-known performance artists in queer, sex-positive, and environmental networks that could provide primary direction, sustenance, and focus for the ecosexual movement over several years. However, as the ecosexual movement has grown over time, so has the diversity of its activists.

A major difference is that Milkman (2017) examined four post-2008 social movements that are led primarily by Millennials. In contrast, the ecosexual movement has been led mostly by Baby Boomers.

Much like the contemporary social movements Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter, the ecosexual movement rejects hierarchy in favor of “horizontalism” and “leaderful” participatory organizational forms. As I found, ecosexual activists’ strategic repertoires are designed to challenge cultural discourse and modern social organization rather than to seek reforms through conventional politics. As such, they use mostly disruptive strategies with some non-violent direct action.

Formalizing an Inclusive Ecosexual Collective Identity

The Ecosex Manifesto

The piece that became central to the collective identity of the ecosexual movement, the Ecosex Manifesto emerged during the final year of Stephens and Sprinkle’s *Love Art Laboratory* series of wedding performances. Manifestos are one way that social movements tell their story. The social movement stories or narratives told in literary devices such as manifestos “have rich potential for illuminating features of the emergence, trajectories, and consequences of movements” (Polletta 1998:419). For emerging movements such as the ecosexual movement, in addition to creating or strengthening the collective identity, Francesca Polletta (1998) argued that these narratives can aid in understanding the recruitment of movement actors prior to formal social movement organizations being established. The Ecosexual Manifesto was written by Stephens and Sprinkle but reflected what they had come to see over the past few years as the central values and tenets of ecosexuality as a movement. It established an inclusive ecosexual identity, celebrated eroticism in (eco-)camp and double entendres, included green consumer values, and commitment to activism of any kind as long as it was non-violent.

The Ecosex Manifesto Art Exhibit, a visual art display unveiling the original “Ecosex Manifesto” was held in San Francisco, California at the Center for Sex and Culture the evening of June 17, 2011. The event was free and opened to the public. It doubled as the opening night reception for the Ecosex Symposium II scheduled for the following two days in the same location. The manifesto clarified the movement’s purpose and served as an invitation for others to join. As explained by Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle (2016:316):

In 2011, we presented a visual art exhibit and introduced our Ecosex Manifesto 1.0, which laid out a set of values that we associate with ecosexuality and functioned as an invitation for others to identify as ecosexual. The exhibit was held at the Center for Sex & Culture in San Francisco. It was produced by the art organization Femina Potens and funded in part by the San Francisco Arts Commission and the University of California, Santa Cruz. Many members of our community signed our Ecosex Manifesto.

The initial Ecosex Manifesto was co-authored and signed by Stephens and Sprinkle. In an email to ecosex participants and supporters, they also recognized a few ecosex community members for their help with editing it. The manifesto was based largely on collective ideas that were shared at the first Ecosex Symposium the previous year in Santa Monica, California the day after their nearby Purple Wedding to the Moon performance (see Chapter 4 for details of the first Ecosex Symposium.) Attendees of the Ecosex Manifesto Art Exhibit and Ecosex Symposium II Opening Night Reception were encouraged to add their signatures to the manifesto's framed wall text. Various colors of marker were made available for that purpose.

A black leather notebook was also on display with writing on the opening page that invited people to share their ecosex notes, thoughts, and experiences as well as provide suggestions and feedback on the Ecosex Manifesto. The bottom of the page was signed, "Annie and Beth." Figure 6.1 below shows the original framed Ecosex Manifesto wall text. The top photo was taken by the author at the Ecosex Manifesto unveiling event. Stephens and Sprinkle can be seen standing next to the framed wall text and discussing the ecosex manifesto. The lower image displays the Ecosex Manifesto wall text after it was signed by members of the ecosex community. It includes the opened notebook containing comments, setting on a fancy table with a quill pen and some markers, beneath the framed and signed wall text. This screenshot is from Stephens and Sprinkle's Year 7/2011 "Silver Year Gallery Installation," an art display depicting the final year of their *Love Art Laboratory* performance art wedding ceremony project after it was completed.

Figure 6.1 “Ecosex Manifesto.”



The following is the complete text of the original Ecosex Manifesto:

THE ECOSEX MANIFESTO

Draft 1.0 of a work in progress.

(i) **WE ARE THE ECOSEXUALS.** The Earth is our lover. We are madly, passionately, and fiercely in love, and we are grateful for this relationship each and every day. In order to create a more mutual and sustainable relationship with the Earth, we collaborate with nature. We treat the Earth with kindness, respect and affection.

(ii) **WE MAKE LOVE WITH THE EARTH.** We are aquaphiles, teraphiles, pyrophiles and aerophiles. We shamelessly hug trees, massage the earth with our feet, and talk erotically to plants. We are skinny dippers, sun worshipers, and stargazers. We caress rocks, are pleased by waterfalls, and admire the Earth's curves often. We make love with the Earth through our senses. We celebrate our E-spots. We are very dirty.

(iii) **WE ARE A RAPIDLY GROWING, GLOBAL, ECOSEX COMMUNITY.** This community includes artists, academics, sex workers, sexologists, healers, environmental activists, nature fetishists, gardeners, business people, therapists, lawyers, peace activists, eco-feminists, scientists, educators, (r)evolutionaries, critters and other entities from diverse walks of life. Some of us are SexEcologists, researching and exploring the places where sexology and ecology intersect in our culture. As consumers we aim to buy green, organic, and local. Whether on farms, at sea, in the woods, or in cities small and large, we connect and empathize with nature.

(iv) **WE ARE ECOSEX ACTIVISTS.** We will save the mountains, waters and skies by any means necessary, especially through love, joy and our powers of seduction. We will stop the rape, abuse and the poisoning of the Earth. We do not condone the use of violence, although we recognize that some ecosexuals may choose to fight those most guilty for destroying the Earth with public disobedience, anarchist and radical environmental activist strategies. We embrace the revolutionary tactics of art, music, poetry, humor, and sex. We work and play tirelessly for Earth justice and global peace.

(v) **ECOSEXUAL IS AN IDENTITY.** For some of us, being ecosexual is our primary (sexual) identity, whereas for others it is not. Ecosexuals can be GLBTQI, heterosexual, asexual, and/or Other. We invite and encourage ecosexuals to come out. We are everywhere. We are polymorphous and pollen-amorous, We educate people about ecosex culture, community and practices. We hold these truths to be self evident; that we are all part of, not separate from, nature. Thus all sex is ecosex.

(vi) **THE ECOSEX PLEDGE.** I promise to love, honor and cherish you Earth, until death brings us closer together forever.

The ecosex revolution wants **YOU**. Join us.

Elizabeth M. Stephens & Annie M. Sprinkle

The Ecosex Manifesto showcases the kind of absurdist, tongue-in-cheek humor or “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019) and irreverent environmentalism (Seymour 2012; 2018) that pervades the ecosexual movement, especially the performance art branch led by Stephens and Sprinkle. For example, the wording in section (ii) beginning with, “WE MAKE LOVE WITH THE EARTH” captures that spirit with phrases like “talk erotically to plants,” “admire the Earth’s curves often,” and “celebrate our E-spots.” It ends with, “We are very dirty” in a nod to reclaim the derogatory puritanical use of “dirty” to represent both nature and sexuality. This is the same intersectional strategy used in the “Dirty Girl Zine!” by Sequoia Redd and Hobo Stripper during the first phase of the ecosexual movement (see Chapter 4).

Section (v) of the Ecosex Manifesto proclaims “ECOSEXUAL IS AN IDENTITY” and then plays with the concept of identity, introducing new language that plays with the familiar term “polyamory” by expressing, “We are polymorphous and pollen-amorous.” Likewise, the manifesto ends with a familiar format, borrowing from the structure of a well-known line in the U.S. Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self evident: that we are all part of, not separate from, nature. Thus all sex is ecosex.”

At the same time, the Ecosex Manifesto displays serious and radical aspects, both for activism and identity. The tenets are non-hierarchical/horizontalist and extend to non-human species. As expressed in the manifesto and later summarized by Stephens and Sprinkle (2016:315), the ecosexual movement has the potential to be radically inclusive:

Anyone and everyone who wants to be ecosexual can be. This is a self-identified and self-defined movement. Part of the appeal of this new identity is that it can be radically inclusive. From our point of view, all humans are always already in any number of long-term, intimate ecological relationships; anyone can choose to identify or understand these relationships through adopting ecosexuality for her or himself.

In other words, the ecosexual movement recognizes every human as an ecological citizen (Curtin 2002; MacGregor 2014) and a sexual citizen (Lister 2002; Plummer 2015). In the introduction to the edited collection, *Handbook of Political Citizenship and Social Movements*, Hein-Anton van der Heijden (2014) pointed to the common ground between social movement and citizenship studies. Struggles for inclusion

and belonging, framed in terms of rights and recognition by social movements, are ultimately about citizenship (Isin and Turner 2002).

Deane Curtin (2002) contended the dominant understanding of citizenship in Enlightenment cultures of the modern era has been that its benefits and duties apply to humans. The concept of “ecological citizenship” extends to nature as part of ecological communities rather than merely extrinsic goods to be used as resources by humans. Much like ecofeminism, Curtin critiqued the nature/culture divide and the view of people regarded as closest to nature, such as indigenous people and women, as less powerful. According to Sherilyn MacGregor (2014), given the transboundary nature of environmental problems such as climate change and toxic pollution, “the ecological citizen will be at the centre of environmental governance at all levels for the foreseeable future” (p. 107). The concept of ecological citizenship must embrace acting collectively in public spaces to achieve sustainability. It also requires resisting individualism as well as the conflation of citizen and consumer (Curtin 2002; MacGregor 2014).

Lister (2002) argued that until recently, the concept of “sexual citizenship” would have been rejected as an oxymoron because sexual relates to the private sphere whereas citizenship concerns the public sphere. As such, the concept has the potential to break down modern binary ideology or divisions. Lister mentioned the connections between gendered and sexual citizenship. She also discussed different dimensions of “people’s lives as citizens (or partial citizens) and their relationship to citizenship (as) not lived in neat, separate compartments labelled ‘gender’, ‘sexuality’, ‘race’, ‘disability’, and so forth” (Lister 2002:191). Rather, these dimensions of citizenship are intersectional.

When a reporter asked Stephens if people who identify as asexual can be part of the ecosexual movement, she replied by explaining the inclusion of asexual in the Ecosex Manifesto:

You can be asexual and still be ecosexual. It has to do with your feelings toward the earth. We’re not actually out there humping trees – even though sometimes we will kind of perform that – but it’s more about breaking down separations between humans and nature. If you can separate yourself from nature, then you don’t have much of a problem killing nature, exploiting it for resources, and so on. But if you look at a tree as your lover, you’re going to think twice before you cut it down or burn it (Callaghan 2016).

In an entry about ecosexuality in the *Gender: Nature* volume of *Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks*, Stephens and Sprinkle (2016a) wrote about the inclusive nature of ecosexuality as an identity relative to other gender and sexual identity concepts:

Ecosexuals are comprised of all genders and sexualities, including heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, celibate, and asexual. Being ecosexual can sometimes (but not always) be akin to identities such as pomosexual (the postmodern challenge to the assumptions of gender and sexuality), pansexual (the perceiving of all activities as sexual), queer (meaning outside of or not recognized by heteronormativity), metamorphosexual (referring to a person who sees sexuality as always being in state of change and who evolves from one choice to the next), or omnisexual (entailing sexual attractions that go beyond gender).

Each of these identity concepts emerged and has circulated within different contexts and communities, often responding to different concerns, and sometimes with correlation to distinct understandings of similar or intersecting experiences of sexuality. We view ecosexuality as an identity capable of including or complementing these and other sexual orientations and identifying terms (pp. 315-316).

Ecosex Symposium II

The second Ecosex Symposium served to further integrate the various networks, establish more processual notions of justice, and democratize the notion of an ecosexual collective identity. I attended the Ecosex Symposium II in San Francisco in the summer of 2011 as a participant observer and presented on one of the four panels the first afternoon titled, “Theories of Ecosex.” The other three panels were entitled, “Ecosex and Art,” “Ecosex Activism, Environmentalism, and Politics,” and “Ecosex Practices.” Each panel lasted 90 minutes and included four presenters and a moderator. Figure 6.2 displays an advertisement for Stephens and Sprinkle’s Ecosex Manifesto and Ecosex Symposium II event (screenshot from loveartlab.ucsc.edu).

Figure 6.2 Ad for Stephens & Sprinkle's Ecosex Manifesto & Ecosex Symposium II.

Femina Potens Gallery in collaboration with
the Center for Sex & Culture present

**ELIZABETH STEPHENS & ANNIE SPRINKLE'S
ECOSEX MANIFESTO &
ECOSEX SYMPOSIUM II**

ECOSEX MANIFESTO ART EXHIBIT
AND OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION
FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2011, 7:00 - 9:30 PM
EVERYONE WELCOME. OPENING NIGHT IS FREE

ECOSEX SYMPOSIUM II
SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2011, 10:30 AM - 10:45 PM
SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM
SYMPOSIUM PASS ONLY \$35
Ecosexi-love-a-licious vegan raw lunch
by Brazernectar & Mister Cream-\$15 extra

FOR INFORMATION & TICKETING
WWW.SEXECOLOGY.ORG

Collaborators / Speakers: Amy Champ, Amy Marsh, Becka Shertzer, C. Finley, Carol Queen, Dalia Anani, Dragonfly, Danny Wasko, Dylan Bolles & Sasha Horn, Gregory Manitsas, Jennifer Reed, Joseph Kramer, Kirk Read, Kurt Schlaefter, Lady Monster, Linda Montano, Liz Burke, Madison Young, Mella Schlaefter, Mari Kono, Marine Debris, Michael Morris, Nada Mijakovic, Naomi Pitcairn, Penny Slinger, Praba Pilar, Reid Mihalko, Robert Lawrence, Ruby Pearl, Scarlet Harlot, Scott Calamas, Serena Anderini-D'Onofrio, Sharon Mitchell, Stephanie Iris Weiss, Tania Hamidi, Tessa Wills, Travis Williams, and others.

EVENTS WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE NEW
Center for Sex & Culture
1349 MISSION ST (BTWN 9TH/10TH)
SAN FRANCISCO, CA



LOVE ART LAB ORG | SIF AIC | CSC CENTER FOR SEX & CULTURE | Qccc | femina potens

Foot of post card image designed by Naomi Pitcairn, w/photos by jukandash.com. Post card design by Mella Schlaefter w/ Dalia Anani



The program kicked off at 11 A.M. on Saturday, after a half-hour for registration and light refreshments. Ninety minutes were dedicated to the initial session, “Welcome to Ecosexuality” where five key figures shared various perspectives of the ecosexual movement. Stephens and Sprinkle talked about their collaborative *Love Art Laboratory* performance art wedding series and “Assuming the Ecosexual Position” beginning in the fourth year of the seven-year project. Then the pair presented separately with Sprinkle covering an overview of “WTF is Ecosex? Exploring the Places Where Ecology and Sexology Intersect” and Stephens discussing “SexEcology-Ecoactivism as Art.”

Carol Queen – staff sexologist of Good Vibrations sex shop and the owner of the Center for Sex and Culture, both well-known sex-positive San Francisco institutions – covered “The Sexology of Ecosexuality” while her partner, Robert Lawrence talked about “The Senses” referring to ecosensuality. Feminist pornographic performer, director, and author, Madison Young closed with the topic, “Greening the Sex Industry.” Sprinkle refers to Madison Young as her daughter and wrote the forward to her memoir in 2014. Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio gave the 30-minute keynote speech, “What Is Ecosexual Love? A Guide to the Arts and Joys of Amorous Inclusiveness” just before lunch. It was a long day with a break for dinner between sets of panels. The first day wrapped up at 10:45 P.M.

Resist Recreating Oppressive Systems: Moving Beyond Hierarchical Dualisms

An incident I was involved in surrounding sameness and difference demonstrated the challenges of intersectional movements and “the importance of attending to intersectionality as an ongoing, multidimensional *process*” (Luna 2016:787) to maintain an inclusive ecosexual collective identity. The first time I performed a more active role in the ecosexual movement was during the Ecosex Symposium II. I had submitted a paper that was accepted to the theory panel. After I finished presenting with my accompanying slides, I was questioned by an audience member about the white, male theorists from environmental sociology whose work I discussed. I responded that the field was dominated by white, male scholars which is problematic. At that point, the critique became directed at me personally for presenting the paper as a presumably white, heteronormative, female academic.

Stephens jumped up immediately. “Woah, woah, woah!” she exclaimed. First, she said that a lot of assumptions were being made. Then she pointed out that she was also a white, female-presenting academic and that recreating binaries is unhelpful even if you’re championing the other side. She further cautioned against disparaging the institution of academia as it represents the pursuit of higher education, research, and scholarship, while encouraging critique of its biases and shortcomings. Stephens described it as a welcome strategy for individuals to become part of the academic community to help make it better and more representative of diverse groups and perspectives. After all, as a part of the budding ecosexual movement, we want to be careful to avoid recreating hierarchies that simply shift power in another direction. In this way, Stephens championed in practice – backed by the tenets of the newly unveiled Ecosex Manifesto – the dismantling of oppressive systems based on “either/or” hierarchical dualisms and being a part of creating a new, non-hierarchical/horizontalist, radically inclusive, “both/and” dialectical way of being in the world. It’s inclusiveness also supported actors with more privilege (e.g., white, cis-gender, academics) as long as they were consciously aware of their positionality and leveraged it toward justice.

A few years later, I was asked by Sprinkle and Stephens to present some of my preliminary research on the ecosexual movement at a public production planning meeting. I was again in San Francisco in the summer of 2015, this time to help plan and document the first ecosexual contingent of the city’s annual Pride Parade, sponsored by the Center for Sex and Culture. I remembered the prior incident at the symposium surrounding my subjectivity and momentarily considered turning down the offer. Instead, I graciously accepted the opportunity and was mindful to introduce myself more fully before the presentation. In my introduction, I was honest about my outsider status as a scholarly researcher documenting the ecosexual movement. Furthermore, I elaborated on my insider status to the group as well as shared marginalized positionality with some of its members. By authentically sharing my perspective as both an insider and an outsider to the ecosexual movement, I found that I better connected with and was more accepted by the audience. I also became more comfortable with my insider-outsider

status and occupying the complex space somewhere between both (Acker 2000; Dwyer and Buckle 2009).

Frame Disputes

Eco Versus Sexual

Framing contests or “frame disputes” happen within a social movement (i.e., intraorganizational disputes) when members disagree on meanings and interpretations of reality (Benford 1993; Benford and Snow 2000). I documented several incidences of frame disputes related to language, meanings, and recruiting new participants to the movement from various networks and communities. I documented instances on social media in the Facebook group dedicated to the topic of ecosex entitled, “Ecosex, Sexecology and Sustainable Love.” For example, on July 29, 2012, Deborah Anapol posted:

Interesting comment from the sustainability marketing copy ([sic] the shift network: “sustainability is NOT sexy! But sexy is not always what we need. And right now our world doesn’t really need a lot more SEXY. Our world needs more people focused on creating lives of meaning and balance and living in ways that bring sanity, strength AND sustainability to our communities and to this planet.

Living sustainably may not be sexy and it may not be a path to more money but it is a path to a life of deeper meaning and connection! To live a truly sustainable life you must be in deep contact and even communion with the world around you, with the people in your life, the plants, the animals, and even the unforeseen forces moving through your life.”

I think it expressed the majority of eco/sustainability activists who are tired of sex being used to sell products. And is the reason ecosex is problematic as far as appealing to environmental activists goes ...well trained consumers are a whole other deal. Is ecosex willing to write off the environmental movement?

On August 7, 2013, Annie Sprinkle posted that when traveling transnationally to share material about ecosex, she has experienced that some people in target audiences are turned off by the word “eco”:

Curious what you all think about this. As we roam the globe doing our ecosex research and sharing info about ecosex as we imagine it, I’m finding that a lot of our target audiences (queers, arts community people, sex workers, punks, edgy people, academics, BDSM people, etc.) are turned off to the word “Ecosex”, or anything ECO, because it simply sounds “too granola, too hippie, too new age, too bland or a turn off because environmental issues are just too overwhelming and uninteresting.” While I’m definitely a new age hippie girl at heart, I’m looking to give ecosex a different look/feel/focus/design... in order to garner a wider audience and not preach to the already converted. Are any of you feeling similarly? I want to reach those folks that are turned off to the word “eco.” Are you?

A Facebook group member, Tom, replied:

I don't think the resistance is such a bad thing. My background here is from the enviro side of things. I've been an activist for a long time. However, in recent years I've developed an aching feeling that we need a new paradigm. Too many activists want to work within the current POV [point of view] - or change it just enough so we all have solar. I suspect we need to change all of it. I have no idea how to, but when I first saw the term "eco-sexual" it was a real ah-ha moment.

It is a paradigm shift. Some of it is just a gut feeling - I can't really explain it, but the same people who want to tear everything they can set on fire out of the earth, are the same people who really can't stand the thought of unruly vaginas. So there seems to be a link, and perhaps that link should be better defined.

Carla commented:

I think if we all keep identifying as ecosexual, it will help. I agree it is pagan or indigenous in concept, as it's connected to the old religions concerned with fertility of earth, animals and humans. Fear of dirt and fear of sex have the same origin.

Randy also responded:

Eco-* has been co-opted by the money makers and been dragged down. I think this is where the skepticism comes from when new people hear these terms (ecosex, ecosexual, ecosexuality). They feel they are being sold something, instead of invited to return to themselves and their true nature.

According to Jay Rothman (2014), engaging internal identity-based conflicts about *outgroups* within *ingroups* may lead to new ways to foster intergroup collaboration. In other words, Rothman argued the process of conflict engagement by group members, for example hashing out complexities of eco versus sexual in an intersectional movement, can unify them and lead to acting in cooperative ways internally and then eventually with outside groups.

Can't We All Get Along? Internal Sex-Positive/Sexual Justice Movement Tensions

Social movements regularly develop factions. Sex-positive or sexual justice movement tensions already existed before the ecosexual movement developed, for example, between polyamorous, sex worker, and queer groups. A couple of internal points of contention between sex-positive factions I encountered included: 1) because someone performs sex work as a job does not mean they identify as polyamorous, and 2) the queer activist critique of the recreation of heteronormativity in polyamorous

groups. However, this may be reflective of pre-existing tensions in older generations, particularly among Baby Boomers.

I documented that as the ecosexual movement becomes more intergenerational over time – such as when I was a participant observer at two events in 2015 discussed later in this chapter, the Ecosex Convergence and the “Here Come the Ecosexuals” parade contingent – younger activists seem to experience fewer tensions. This is probably because more Millennials and especially iGen’ers (internet generation also known as Generation Z/Gen Z) accept non-binary gender identities, reject identifying as exclusively heterosexual, accept same-sex relationships and marriage, and are more willing to explore polyamory (Hy 2018; Parker, Graf, and Igielnik 2019).

Identity as Problem

New social movements, such as the ecosexual movement, tend to focus on identity politics (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability). Identity politics are based on social categories people can relate to and organize a collective identity around. What happens when these social categories on which identity are based are contested by activists? For example, when I interviewed Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio and asked how she identified within the ecosexual movement, she responded that she doesn’t identify, because she finds the concept of “identity” itself problematic. Anderlini-D’Onofrio stated:

I don’t believe in “identity,” and so I don’t identify. That’s why I always say that I have three *matrias*, three motherlands, and I identify *with* all three...because they’re not the same thing. One is Italy, one is California, and the other one is the Caribbean. And I really avoid identity as much as possible, because historically it has caused a lot more trouble than anything else... “national socialism” that some people have heard about. So really, I am just shy of entering that phase where people feel united by identifying as say, “ecosexual” or “bisexual” or “monosexual” or any kind of dot dot dot “sexual” thing. I definitely am, and I engage in action as an ecosexual activist. And typically, the way I define myself as a participant in all these movements that have at times also kind of midwived into some bouts of academe by sort of opening up... or allowing the discourse of academe to touch on these kinds of studies... what I call myself is a scholar-activist and a participant observer in the community that I study. ...

I think that this is a way, perhaps a round-about way to address your question, but I don’t know of an easier way. Because precisely I think that identity, it’s convenient, but then it is just so dangerous that I’d rather not go there. And I would rather model a way to be part of something

without identifying with that one thing... being that uniformity that then sends (leaves) everyone else out.

In my interview with Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens, they discussed their sexuality as fluid and evolving. In other words, they both said that how they identified has changed many times over the course of their lives. Sprinkle recalled:

I was straight as an arrow in my 20s and early 30s. I was heterosexual. So then, ah, you know, going through all the letters [chuckles] [i.e., LGBTQ(E)]. ...

Then became sort of bisexual. Then I became tantric. Oh, I was kinky in my 20s too...in mid-20s. Pro-domme, sub, and Hellfire Queen (the Hellfire Club was a former underground club in New York City). Golden shower queen... I was a gay guy, actually for... until AIDS came along. Like the years before AIDS, all of my lovers were gay guys. You know, hardcore gay guys... that I was the token female. Which I liked that. ... But I was really... gay men were my sexual mentors.

Then I became interested in women... definitely about 40 or mid-30s... 40, definitely. Then I became interested in monogamy for the first time, which I was never interested in monogamy or coupledness at all.

But then definitely had a few months of lesbian separatism. Just a few months... try that on. Which was very interesting. I couldn't deny... half the humans. Then, had a moment of celibacy for a year. ...

Ecosexual now. Totally. That's the only one... that's the best fit. ... So, I really love this really expanded idea of sex as a kind of ecstatic, you know... making love with the sunrays and the air we breathe in. ... It's such an expanded concept and it's an experimental concept of what sex is... and what society thinks sex is, is so freaking limited.

Similarly, Stephens said:

I mean it's almost been like an evolution. You know, I was heterosexual, I was bisexual, I was a lesbian, I was a queer and now I am an ecosexual. [chuckles] That really is the truth of my life. ...

Well we believe that humans are nature so that when we're making love to another human being, we are making love to nature.

When Stephens and Sprinkle discussed the ecosexual component of their *Love Art Laboratory* wedding project with me, they talked about wanting to create an alternative, more radical concept than LGBTQ people fitting into mainstream institutions with the focus on same-sex marriage and equality in the military. As quoted near the beginning of Chapter 6:

Beth: The queer community was becoming increasingly predictable and mainstream with the sort of focus on marriage and equality in the military. Which I understand but people need to

understand that our multiple weddings are really sort of a push against that one big day in a person's life. You know what I mean?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. The weddings were about us trying to play with a ritual that is really beautiful in many ways, but also that people take far too seriously in some ways. Like for a woman to marry and what she wears to her wedding is the biggest thing in her life?

Beth: It really is. Ecosexuality was in part born about wanting a new concept as opposed to being... whatever...

Annie: Just gay. We wanted something bigger and wider than "gay."

Beth: Whatever that thing is that same-sex couples felt that (they) needed to become mainstream.

Another challenge to the concept of identity is that sense of self or the perception of who one *is* can differ from behavior or what one *does*. For example, a white female-presenting participant's response to sexual orientation was, "Gay; straight for pay." In other words, she identified as having same-sex sexual attraction in her personal life but was willing to engage in heterosexual sexual behavior in exchange for money or other items of value in the sex trades.

Multiple Meanings of Ecosexual

As summarized by reporter, Mary Katharine Tramontana (2017) for an article in *Teen Vogue*:

The term ecosex is like the word "queer"; its meaning varies — a movement, an identity, a sexual practice, an environmental activist strategy — depending on who you ask.

In formal interviews and several informal conversations with ecosexual activists, organizers, and leaders, I asked a version of the question, "What does the term 'ecosexual' mean to you/ how would you define 'ecosexual'?" The following is an excerpt from an interview I conducted with Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle on the topic:

Jennifer: If somebody comes and asks you, just like with the [San Francisco Pride] Parade the other day, people were like, "What is an ecosexual? What does ecosexuality mean to you?" What would you say to them?

Beth: I say someone who loves the earth. That's my answer. In fact, yesterday at the 24th and Mission Street bar. Several people were asking me that, you know? [chuckles]

Jennifer: [chuckles] Yes.

Beth: They were like, these city guys, right?

Jennifer: Mm-hm.

Beth: It's just someone who loves the earth. This one guy says to me, "We need water because earth needs to have a wet pussy." And I'm like, "Yeah!"

Jennifer: [chuckles]

Beth: So, he got it, you know? Cool.

Annie: I basically say it's when you imagine the earth as your lover. I think a lot of people love the earth as a mother. That's really deep in our culture and many other cultures. Obviously, we're a native land and that's how they saw the earth, as a mother. And the earth is a mother to us. I mean we're all mothers to each other. I think this whole realization...we are the earth, we're not separate. It was just such a paradigm shift that we're excited about. On the other hand, we try not to take ourselves too seriously because we know ecosexual is a label.

Beth: We really think of it as a conceptual art piece.

Jennifer, Annie & Beth: Yeah.

Annie: Life as art.

In another interview, ecosexual burlesque performer, Lady Monster responded:

I tell them that it's an environmental art movement. That it's transformative and very fluid and opened... art, environmental movement. And to change the phrase "Mother Earth" to "Lover Earth"... and that it's our time that we need to give back to the earth. That with a mother, we just take and take, and she doesn't want to give... she's not giving like she used to... she's tired... and that it's our turn now to give back to her. And that we need to change the way that we think about her... and think about her as a lover... and think of all the ways that she loves us.

During a telephone interview, the author of *Eco-Sex: Go Green between the Sheets and Make Your Love Life Sustainable*, Stefanie Iris Weiss had the following to say about defining the word,

"ecosexual":

When people ask me this question, "What is ecosex? What does it mean to be an ecosexual?" it's such a hard question to answer. There's no elevator pitch response to it. It's constantly evolving, it's still quite new and it's different for everyone. Everyone who identifies as an ecosexual identifies, I think, in a different way. We're still figuring out what that definition really is. But, for me, personally, I think that's the best way to describe what I believe it to be, from a very personal perspective... for me, it's about merging my relationship with my own body and holistic health with my relationship to the environment. And recognizing that there is, you know, sort of an intersectional, holistic thing going on there where everything that I do to or with my body has an effect on the planet and everything that the planet is subjected to, my body is also subjected to.

Weiss continued by talking about how she identified herself within the ecosexual movement:

I identify myself as an activist and an author because I wrote the book, *EcoSex*. I think a particular sort of... although I support everything that everyone is doing... when I first conceived of my own idea of ecosex, it was a very particular segment of what is becoming the wider ecosex movement. It was more limited to our relationship to our own body and holistic lifestyle stuff. So yeah... I love the stuff, for instance, that Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens are doing, but that is not how I originally saw my role in ecosex. They've opened my mind to a lot of stuff that I wasn't thinking about initially.

The term ecosex didn't really occur to me until 2008, I guess. But, I think I was... now I realize that I've always been an ecosexual, what we refer to as an ecosexual. I think I've always sort of thought that way. I became an eco-activist when I was in college, between 18 and 20. Although, it very much...my values were always there, but I started participating when I was in college. I began thinking about it in terms of wow, something was really happening here when I was doing the research for the book. So around 2009, 2010 when the book came out, that is when I realized that wow! other people are doing ecosex stuff all over the country and the world that I hadn't really known about until I punched into the research.

Public health scholar and musician, Amanda Morgan shared her perspective of the term

“ecosexual” when we met for an interview:

Ecosex to me is understanding that the earth is a sensual being and that we are sensual beings, and that that interaction is part of the reason that we exist. So being conscious of the fact that we are a product of the earth. And that the earth is this sensual, living being that we can experience through our sexuality and it can give us stuff back for our sexuality. So, it's the cycle, kind of the circle of life. And truly acknowledging that we are of the earth. And that in our sexuality, especially because I teach sex education, thinking of the impact of our sexuality on the environment. So, in terms of condom wrappers in the landfills, thinking about the hormones in the water from our birth control, thinking about our impacts, even just the population. Our population is hurting the planet. Being aware of that interplay of our human sexuality and reproduction and the impact it has on the earth as well as the earth impacting us. And I truly believe that if the earth is dirty, we're dirty. We are of the earth.

Morgan went on to explain how she personally categorized her place in the ecosexual movement:

I would call myself an ecosexual. I actually even have it on my Facebook... as my sexual orientation or religion or something, I think I put ecosexual. So, I would say I'm an ecosexual. I would also say I'm an activist, because I use it as a tool to talk about environmental health and the role that we play as basically stewards of the planet. We're not here to control the environment; we're here to work in it, and the earth birthed us. We are here working with that. Like Annie Sprinkle said, changing that paradigm from earth as mother to earth as lover, was really powerful for me. Because I do love the earth, and the earth is sexy, and if the earth wasn't having sex with itself... then we wouldn't have oxygen, and we wouldn't have food and we wouldn't have so much of the components that keep us alive. Right now, it's allergy season. There is tree sperm everywhere [motioning to the visible pollen around during the interview outside]. [Laughter]

I met Michael J. Morris, a dance scholar, at the Ecosex Symposium II in San Francisco where we both presented on the “Theories of Ecosex” panel. In an August 13, 2015 email to Stephens and Sprinkle

later printed in the 2016 edition of the *Gender: Nature* volume of *Macmillan Interdisciplinary*

Handbooks, Morris shared their definition of ecosexuality:

“Ecosexuality is a term used to indicate the ecological entanglements of sexuality. The concept of ecosexuality indicates the ways in which sexuality is already ecological, and the ways that recognizing and appreciating ecological entanglements can affect understandings of sexuality” (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016a:315).

For the 2015 edited book, *Ecosexuality: When Nature Inspires the Arts of Love*, SerenaGaia (formerly Serena) Anderlini-D’Onofrio went through two co-editors before settling on a third because of different definitions and perspectives around framing the collection of essays on ecosexuality. The book was eventually published with Lindsay Hagamen as co-editor. Hagamen shared more in common with Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s approach toward polyamorous arrangements in ecosexuality. Anderlini-D’Onofrio also backed out of the deal with the first book publisher due to framing issues around promotion and decided to self-publish through her non-profit organization, Three Way Kiss. Interestingly, the individuals who stepped back as co-editors still contributed pieces to the collection. So, while conflicts over meanings and framing occurred, varying voices in the ecosexual movement ultimately made their way to the pages of the same edited book resulting in an eclectic assortment of writings. A theoretical chapter I wrote was also included which is how I gained insider knowledge on the process behind the publication.

As became apparent in the conflicts surrounding the edited book, ecosexuals are comprised of different groups, some of which relate to other social movements. Involvement in various networks, communities, and social movements may influence how one relates to the word “ecosexual.” As expressed by Stephens and Sprinkle (2016):

Ecosexuals who are feminists are interested in many of the same issues raised by ecofeminism. But not all ecosexuals are feminists. Nor are all ecosexuals interested in sustainability based on a whole-systems approach to ecosystems of which humans are a part. ...

Not all ecosexuals are involved in the environmental movement, which generally focuses on reducing the impact of humans on nature. While some ecosexuals engage with other movements and groups, such as the sex-worker rights movements, nonmonogamous movements, and environmental or ecofeminist movements, this is a developing field made up of diverse groups of people, and as such we continue to discover what defines us, makes us unique, and what traits and influences we share with other groups (p. 318).

Website and Event Disputes

2012 Portland EcoSex Symposium in Oregon

The Portland EcoSex Symposium held from June 29-July 1, 2012 in Oregon was co-produced by Gabriella Cordova of Portland and Reverend Teri D. Ciacchi who was living in Seattle, Washington at the time. Cordova is a sex-positive sexuality and relationship coach, author, and presenter. Rev. Ciacchi is the founder of “Living Love Revolution Church” and promotes her beliefs in the connection between doing personal sexual healing work and being able to heal the Earth. According to the press release for the event:

Ecosex is a new field of study that looks at the intersection of Ecology and sexuality to answer the question, “How do our belief systems and attitudes about human sexuality affect the way we treat each other, other life forms, and the ecosystem, and what can be done to rectify the current situation to create a more sustainable planet? (Cordova 2012).

Cordova raised \$1,640 for the symposium on the crowd source site, Indiegogo.

Kim Marks – Greenpeace organizer, thyroid cancer survivor, and founder of the adult pleasure store, “As You Like It” that specializes in non-toxic, sustainable sex toys and other products – was also a presenter. Marks said she started her activist work more from the perspective of environmental justice as an organizer for Greenpeace rather than the sex-positive/sexual justice viewpoint. With ecosexuality and her green adult pleasure business, she has now merged environmental and sexual justice interests. In an interview, Marks expressed that the Portland EcoSex Symposium skewed to the sex-positive/sexual justice side of ecosexuality with few presentations and events giving equal weight to environmental concerns.

The promotional website for the Portland conference was ecosex.org. Conference organizers posted to the website explaining the view of ecosex promoted by the symposium as follows:

We believe that this new and emerging field, where ecology and sexuality meet, is a new and exciting frontier where real world problems can be solved, love can be restored to the planet, the war of the sexes can be healed, and we can learn how to honor and cherish the earth.

What is Eco Sex?

1. Going Green between the sheets with body/earth safe products,
2. Green Dating, ecosexuals only date other ecosexuals,

3. Choosing life and love styles that are sustainable,
4. Creating a culture that values nature, even our sexual nature
5. My body, my gender, my orientation: Baby I was Born This Way!
6. Nature is sexy - Let's make Nature our lover, not our mother.

A contention over the conference website led, in part, to this being the only Portland EcoSex Symposium thus far. Cordova bought the web domain ecosex.org for the Portland ecosex symposium. Ciacchi expressed that she thought the domain should be turned over to Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle. Stephens and Sprinkle said they never owned the term “ecosex.” They were aware the term was being used in the public domain before they started the ecosexual portion of their wedding project or hosted ecosex symposiums. The pair ultimately opted to build their own website dedicated to sharing their ecosexual work on a different domain reflecting a word they had coined, “sexecology.” However, Ciacchi and Cordova parted ways and never co-sponsored another ecosexual event together. In May 2018, the ecosex.org web domain still contained information about the 2012 ecosex symposium in Portland. As of this writing, the web domain redirects to sexpositiveworld.com.

Virtual Presence and the Launch of Sexecology.org

The ecosexual movement has had a virtual presence in many constantly evolving forms since its inception. For example, several internet dating sites have sprung up focused on finding compatible ecosexual or green dates (see Chapter 4). The earliest website featuring Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle’s ecosexual work was loveartlab.org that catalogued their seven-year wedding series project that shifted to an ecosexual theme in year four (see Chapters 4 and 5). On Valentine’s Day of 2012, Stephens and Sprinkle officially branded their branch of the ecosexual movement “sexecology” by launching the first website to exclusively display their ecosexual work, sexecology.org. As previously mentioned, the couple coined the word “sexecology” defined on their website as, “A new field of research exploring the places sexology and ecology intersect.”

While they avoided engaging in the conflict surrounding the ecosex.org web domain, at the time of this writing, the web domain ecosexual.org redirected to the sexecology.org website. Stephens and Sprinkle’s friend, Daniel Wasko – artist, web designer, and self-defined ecosexual (who passed away

suddenly in 2018) – designed the website. On February 6, 2012, to promote the upcoming launch, he posted a preview image of the couple from the site to his Facebook page, Daniel Wasko Design. The image contained the words “SexEcology.org” at the top and “Launching Valentine’s Day 2012” at the bottom. Wasko included the following text in the Facebook post:

I am putting the finishing touches on an amazing new site I've been designing for pioneering Ecosexual artists and activists, Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens. The site will showcase their new work in depth. Here is a sneak peek.

Stephens and Sprinkle wrote a press release for the occasion to draw attention to unveiling the new website. On February 14, 2012, another image was posted to the Daniel Wasko Design Facebook page reading “A site is born” (see Figure 6.3). The picture shows Stephens and Sprinkle standing outdoors on the green grass with cherry blossoms blooming. Behind them is the blue sky with white fluffy clouds. They are both smiling, dressed in short leopard print outfits, and have their arms around each other. Stephens’ hand is resting on Sprinkle’s stomach. Sprinkle is holding a basket with the graphic from the homepage of the sexecology.org visibly setting inside of it. The couple is coyly looking up toward the corner of the image at the sky. However, instead of seeing the sun in the sky, there is an Earth that appears to be radiating light. Above the image, Wasko wrote, “Just launched a big new beautiful site. <http://sexecology.org>” along with the text of the press release.

ECOSEXUAL ARTISTS LAUNCH WEBSITE FOR THEIR NEW INSTITUTE OF SEXECOLOGY

Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14, 2012

Movers and shakers of the ecosex revolution, artists Elizabeth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, launched a new web site, which will be the online gathering place for ecosex art, theory, practice, and activism. Sexecology.org is designed to blossom and grow over the coming years. However, the new website is already chock full of goodies, such as photos and documentation from their ecosex weddings, workshops, performance art, ecosex walking tours, visual art, and their Ecosex Manifesto. Visitors can find ecosex related resources, posters and bumper stickers. A free download of the first issue of the Journal of Ecosex Research is a real score.

Although Stephens and Sprinkle use a lot of humor, they are serious about ecosex education as viable strategy to help the Earth. Their aim is to “make the environmental movement a little more sexy, fun and diverse.” One day they’d like to see an “E” added to GLBTQI. People of any sexual orientation can be ecosexual, however they admit that “this budding sexual identity, with its eroticizing of nature, can be rather queer and kinky in some people’s minds. But all sex is actually ecosex, as we are really part, not separate from nature. After all, humans are made up mostly of water.”

The new website was designed by artist Daniel Wasko, who is himself an ecosexual. With his sex positive attitudes, and personal fetish for waterfalls, Wasko is poised to become the web master to the ecosexuals. Wasko has been working with other creative artists in order to create affordable solutions that enable them to better promote themselves and their work. He says, “Art excites me most when it can transform the way you see yourself and the world around you. I love when art is trailblazing and revolutionary and envisions possibilities never imagined. I think websites offer a unique way of announcing yourself to the world and I get a big charge from being able to show off the work of other artists through my design work.”

Figure 6.3 Sexecology.org Website Launch via Daniel Wasko Design.



In 2013, the 1st International Ecosex Symposium, a three-part production by Stephens and Sprinkle, took place in Europe. The sequence of events (or as Sprinkle likes to write in typical tongue-in-cheek fashion, “sequins of events”) was held in Madrid, Spain; Bourges, France; and Colchester, England with an add-on event in London, England. The symposium was advertised and catalogued on the website, ecosexlab.org.

The Ecosex Convergence and Intentional Community

Social movements commonly garner participants from subcultures and counterculture that can provide spaces for activists to learn about the beliefs and practices of the movement and build relationships with other participants. Intentional communities are a form of subculture or counterculture. An intentional community can be defined as, “A group of people who live together or share common facilities and who regularly associate with each other on the basis of explicit common values” (Fellowship for Intentional Community N.d.). Because the collective identity of the ecosexual movement resonated so strongly with existing members, long-established intentional communities where some ecosexual events have been held – Windward in Washington state and La'akea in Hawaii – rebranded as “ecosex” communities. These groups strive for political and social change in a subcultural manner. Alberto Melucci (1989, 1996) argued that living out alternative lifestyles was a way for contemporary movements to communicate a message of difference to society, thus symbolically challenging dominant homogenizing cultural codes.

The first “Surrender: The Ecosex Convergence” multi-day event was held at an intentional community in the Northwestern United States in 2013. As a form of ecosexual practice intended to move away from conferences held indoors in the city, the event took place at a primitive campground located in the deep woods of the intentional community and sustainability research center, Windward (see Figure 6.4, photos by the author). Windward is situated in an unincorporated community of Southern Washington state near the Klickitat River. It was the co-vision of Lindsay Hagamen, Executive Director of the Windward Education and Research Center and Reverend Teri Ciacchi, creatrix of Living Love Revolution. Ciacchi and Hagamen met at the 2012 Portland EcoSex Symposium which Ciacchi had co-hosted. They discussed holding a future ecosex gathering in a more natural setting. “Surrender” evolved out of their mutual desire to develop regional sustainability, cultivate love-based living, and actively midwife the transition to a culture that partners with the Earth. All proceeds from the event were donated to the Living Love Revolution Church and the Windward Center 501(c)3 nonprofit organization to further the vision of creating an ecosexual world.

Figure 6.4 Ecosex Convergence at Windward Cooperative Community, Wahkiacus, WA, USA.



At the 2014 ecosex convergence, attendees were given a choice of staying either three or five days. According to the website, the Windward community “has been exploring the intersection of polyamory, sustainability, and community with the goal of creating a working model of a better way.” While some people involved in the ecosex convergence practice polyamory, it is not a “free love” event. All physical touch must be based on explicit verbal communication to obtain consent. There was a strict “Ecosexual Etiquette and Ethics” agreement established and signed ahead of time to create a safer environment. One of the goals stated on the event’s 2014 ecosexconvergence.org website was to build community “to nourish, strengthen, and transform the *EcoSexual Community Body*.” Furthermore, the following was posted on the website:

It’s important for the success of the event that we create a balance between self expression, personal boundaries, and everyone’s need for safety. This requires that we adopt constellational thinking so that we think beyond our individual selves to include all those attending the event as well as the land itself in our decision making processes.

Some potential remedies included a statement posted on the website prior to the event regarding sexual behavior: “Some people get very excited about the *sex* in EcoSex and we want to be very clear about what kind of sexual expression we are supporting in large-group settings” (ecosexconvergence.org 2014). Given a rather limited vision of what is considered sexual in our dominant culture, lengthy postings followed about understanding an expanded notion of sexual energy as life force and creativity (and not just physical sex with a partner). While explicit personal verbal consent was emphasized as key, the idea was put forward to question how much states and religions should dictate our forms of intimate personal relationship. It was further stated that a person is not more enlightened for making one conscious choice over another as to their personal intimacy, but in critically thinking about the options.

When I attended the 2015 ecosex convergence event, attendees were required to participate in a 90-minute consent workshop, “Conscious Touch and Communication 101” on early Friday evening to be able to enter the Lilith’s Forest area. I attended and documented the workshop. The facilitators discussed and modeled scenarios regarding asking for and giving verbal consent for any physical touching behavior. Then attendees were asked to rehearse similar scenarios with someone in the group they didn’t know.

This included role-playing saying “no” to someone’s verbal request, having “no” said to you after making a verbal request, and responding “thank you for taking care of yourself” when a “no” was given. After each role-playing scenario, the larger group talked about how playing each part made people feel.

Reflecting on what was written on the website, receiving explicit verbal consent for physical touch was emphasized because of an awareness of the prevalence of personal boundary violations and sexual trauma in our wider culture. Practicing thanking someone for saying “no” addressed the potential feeling of personal rejection someone may experience in that situation. Instead, the situation was consciously reframed as to respecting another person for having their own boundaries for their own reasons of which someone else can’t fully know. Also, someone expressing “no” frees a person to move on and possibly ask another person who may be more agreeable. Facilitators were all female-presenting or genderqueer.

When I interviewed Stephens in 2015, she explained how their ecosexual movement branches differed: “I think the thing that we do differently from, say the ecosex convergence people, is that we’re really doing this as art. ...I think that we’re very dedicated to the aesthetic.” Still, she and Sprinkle were invited and attended the 2016 “Surrender: The Ecosex Convergence” after talking with me about my positive experience at the event the previous year. The pair presented a series of ecosexual workshops and conducted ecosex walking tours to introduce attendees to their performance art branch of ecosexuality throughout the week-long event.

Ciacchi sent an email on May 1, 2017 to those subscribed to the Living Love Revolution newsletter that the organization was going on hiatus for one year. She wrote that she was “called-in” by people involved in the community for problematic behavior. Once the situation was resolved, a split took place between those holding the “Surrender: The Ecosex Convergence” events. In early 2018, the ecosexconvergence.org website displayed two separate events with different corresponding web links which read:

Teri Ciacchi (of Living Love Revolution), one of the original co-creators of Surrender, will be hosting an event by the name “Ecosex: Celebrating Lover Earth” on Orcas Island, WA June 20-24, 2018. www.ecosexorcasisland.org

Walt Patrick and Katessa Harkey (of Windward Education and Research Center) will be hosting an event by the name “Surrender: the Ecosex Convergence” in Wahkiacus, WA June 14 -17, 2018. www.encounterecosex.com

The name of the other original co-creator of the ecosex convergence event, Lindsay Hagamen was glaringly absent. In the meantime, Walt Patrick and the Windward Education and Research Center filed lawsuits against Ciacchi, in part for the use of the name and intellectual property of “Surrender: The Ecosex Convergence” claiming it was their property. Ciacchi countered that the event was her intellectual property and a part of her life’s work at Living Love Revolution. Ultimately, Ciacchi won that case in court for lack of evidence. However, more lawsuits were pending at the time of this writing and the web address ecosexconvergence.org was displaying a white screen with an error message.

Another cooperative or intentional community that has hosted ecosexual events is Lolia Place EcoVillage located in Pohoia, Hawaii. Whereas Lolia Place is located on prime real estate, Walt Patrick, the last original founder left at Windward, differentiated their community in rural Washington by its location on marginal land. The 1st Annual Gathering of Ecosexual Love at Lolia Place was planned for November 1-6, 2017 with three collaborators including Anderlini-D’Onofrio from Puerto Rico, and Saffire Bouchellion and Karen Henry both from Portland, Oregon (Anderlini-D’Onofrio and Henry 2017). I met Karen Henry at the 2015 ecosex convergence when she was co-facilitating part of the ecosexual path I joined titled, “Healing Self, Restoring Community.” She and Bouchellion also presented “Practices of Ecosexuality” as part of Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s wedding to the beach series in Puerto Rico.

Maintaining an Inclusive Ecosexual Collective Identity

Ecosex Walking Tours

For their Ecosex Walking Tours, Stephens and Sprinkle conduct site specific tours that last from one hour to a whole day. They can include only a few participants and up to about sixty. On their website, sexecology.org, the couple provided an example of an advertisement for a short Ecosex (or SexEcological) Walking Tour:

Join Beth & Annie as they point out the ecosexy sites around _____. Experience the fun when you shift the metaphor from “Earth as mother,” to “Earth as lover!” You’ll learn 25 ways to make love to the Earth, find your e-spot (ecosexy spot), and explore the eroticism of nature through your senses. In this unique tour, art meets theory meets practice meets activism. Adults only. Rain or shine (Stephens and Sprinkle N.d.).

In 2014, I organized an ecosexual sequence of events at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) that brought Stephens and Sprinkle to campus for Earth Day. One event was a short Ecosex Walking Tour around the xeric garden area of UNLV. The pair held a brief “ecosex orientation” with refreshments in a nearby conference room before heading outdoors. There were about 20 participants, mostly college students. A local news reporter was also in attendance and wrote the following afterward:

As Elizabeth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle wrapped their arms and legs around a tree in UNLV’s Xeric Garden this afternoon and Sprinkle quipped, “We often have treesomes,” it all came together – **sexology and ecology, lighthearted lasciviousness and serious activism**. The pair of self-described sexecologists was, literally, hugging a tree. And yet, it felt more pornographic than environmental, perhaps because, leading up to the tree hug, they’d already felt up a yucca plant and licked a rock (Kyser 2014, emphasis in original).

As mentioned in the ecosex walking tour advertisement, a feature of the tours is for participants to find their e-spots or ecosexy spots. This is done by slowing down and paying attention to nature, experiencing nature through one’s senses and finding what appeals to each person, such as the soft texture of a leaf.

After the reporter’s initial critique of the ecosex walking tour and admitted struggle to wrap her head around the concept of ecosexuality as presented by the couple, she concluded:

Sprinkle and Stephens provide an **alternative entrée to environmentalism for people who otherwise might not respect the Earth or lift a finger to protect it** – specifically, people who relate to the world through glamour and sex and titillation. I don’t need this entrée, already being someone who respects and works to protect the Earth. The fact that I see it more as a sister than a lover means their approach wouldn’t have drawn me in anyway, but kudos to them for looping in a huge population that the traditional environmental movement has missed. The way things are going, Earth needs all the **mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and lovers** it can get (Kyser 2014, emphasis in original).

First Ecosexual Film

In August 2013, Stephens and Sprinkle’s first documentary film from an ecosexual perspective, *Goodbye Gauley Mountain: An Ecosexual Love Story* was released in the United States. The story takes place in Stephens’ hometown in West Virginia. It focuses on the devastating effects of mountaintop

removal coal mining on the region and performance art activism to help save it. In the director's statement for the film, Stephens wrote:

My hope for this film, is that in addition to it being a compelling story, it will inspire and raise awareness in groups of people not normally associated with the environmental movement, and especially in GLBTQI communities. (We'd like to see an E added for ecosexual!) There are relatively few films about environmental issues that feature out queers. Queers, gays, lesbians, and transgendered people can live without marriage, but they cannot live without clean air and water, and fertile soil to grow healthy food. This is why GLBTQI folks need to Wage Ecosex!!

The 70-minute documentary ends on a hopeful note of irreverent environmentalism (Seymour 2012; 2018) with scenes from Stephens and Sprinkle's ecosexual Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains. The film was selected for and won several awards at various film festivals in 2013 and 2014. Starting in 2015, it became available to view on Netflix for a while as well as iTunes and for purchase and screening options through film and video distributor, Kino Lorber.

Ecosex Manifesto 2.0

In 2015, a condensed one-page version of the ecosex manifesto, "Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0" or "Ecosex Manifesto 2.0." was developed. This second version was originally created for the 2015 San Francisco LGBTQ Pride Parade. Stephens and Sprinkle led an ecosexual contingent in the city's annual Pride Parade sponsored by the Center for Sex and Culture with support from the Queer Cultural Center, two San Francisco-based sexual justice organizations. The couple wanted a more concise edition of the manifesto to share with the parade audience.

While the ecosexual contingent was marching, several members of the group held signs with a quick response code (QR code) on one side. A QR code is a type of black and white barcode designed to access content, such as a website, when scanned with a mobile phone camera that has an application to interpret it (Techopedia N.d.). The QR code shown on the signs carried in the ecosexual pride contingent was designed to access a webpage displaying the condensed version of the ecosex manifesto. Figure 6.6 features an image of the sign used by ecosexual parade contingent members showing the scannable QR code (screenshot from Isabel Carlier of the French arts organization Bandits-Mages' film, *Ecosex User's Manual* in the production phase at the time of this writing).

Figure 6.5 QR Code to Access Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0, Displayed at 2015 SF Pride Parade



This more succinct version of the ecosex manifesto was devised in collaboration or “cross-pollination” with Guillermo Gómez-Peña, one of the original founders of La Pocha Nostra. Founded in 1993, La Pocha Nostra is an ever growing cross-disciplinary arts organization and non-profit based in San Francisco, California with branches in Central and South America, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific. Guillermo Gómez-Peña is a self-defined Chicano originally from Mexico City, Mexico. Those who are a part of La Pocha Nostra express that their common denominator is the desire to cross and erase dangerous borders including those between art and politics, art practice and theory, artist and spectator - ultimately to dissolve borders and myths of purity whether they be specific to culture, ethnicity, gender, or language.

Stephens and Sprinkle (2016) clarified:

Subsequently, in 2015, Chicano performance artist and writer Guillermo Gómez-Peña collaborated with us to update the Ecosexual Manifesto to 2.0, a more condensed and poetic version. We then presented this version to the public at the San Francisco Pride parade in June 2015 as part of our “Here Come the Ecosexuals” parade contingent of 130 ecosexuals. ... Both versions of the manifesto seek to bring visibility and recognition to ecosexuality, to provide the public with sites of identification, and to position ecosexuality within the larger world of sexual politics (pp. 316-317).

The following is the full text of the more concise version of the manifesto, Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0:

ECOSEXUAL MANIFESTO 2.0

We are Ecosexuals: the Earth is our lover.

Fiercely in love, we are permanently grateful for this relationship. To create a more mutual and sustainable union with our lover, we collaborate with nature. We treat the Earth with respect, affection & sensuality.

We are aquaphiles, teraphiles, pyrophiles and aero-philes.

We are skinny dippers, sun worshippers and stargazers.

We are artists, sex workers, sexologists, academics, environmental and peace activists, feminists, eco-immigrants, *putos y putas*, trans/humanistas, nature fetishists, gender bending gardeners, therapists, scientists and educators, revolutionaries, dandies, pollen-amorous cultural monsters with dogs and other entities from radical ecologies...

Whether LGBTQI, hetero, asexual or “Other”, our primary drive and identity is being Ecosexual!

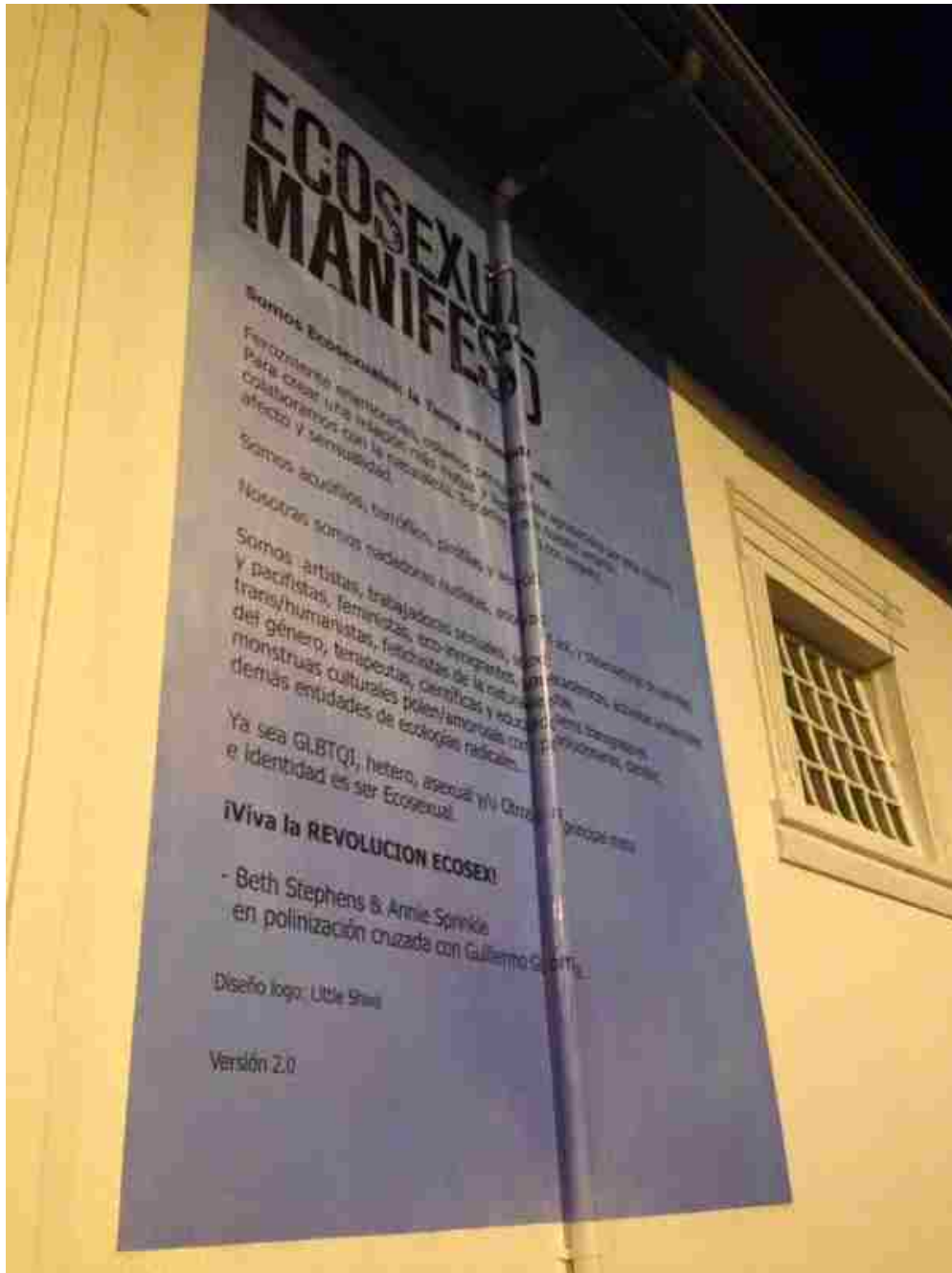
Viva la ECOSEX REVOLUTION!

Annie Sprinkle & Beth Stephens in cross-pollination with Guillermo Gómez-Peña

Figure 6.7 below features an image of the Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0 in Spanish on the side of a building in Costa Rica painted with large black letters and a blue background (screenshot from Annie Sprinkle’s Facebook page, October 23, 2015). Sprinkle posted the image with the following comment expressing excitement:

The Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0, that I did with Beth Stephens and Guillermo Gomez-Peña is huge on the side of a building in Costa Rica! I’m getting a kick out of knowing that everyone on the street passing by can read our text and hopefully it will provoke some thought and conversation. Maybe even get graffitied! I love that! I never had something big on a building before!

Figure 6.6 “Ecosexual Manifesto 2.0” in Spanish, Painted on a Building in Costa Rica.



“Here Come the Ecosexuals!” Contingent in the 2015 San Francisco Pride Parade

Stephens and Sprinkle invited people to participate and collaborate in an ecosex contingent performance for the 2015 San Francisco Pride Parade under the banner of the Center for Sex and Culture.

The ecosex contingent, “Here Come the Ecosexuals!” in cross-pollination with La Pocha Nostra performance troupe, would be filmed for inclusion in their new ecosexual documentary about water. The following excerpt is from Stephens and Sprinkle’s call for participants for the event posted at theecosexuals.ucsc.edu/sf-pride:

OUR INTENTION AND PLAN IS...

...to make the environmental movement more sexy, fun and diverse and to show our love, appreciation, and concerns for nature - especially water. We will be co creating a contemporary performance piece in the form of a parade contingent that will appear in San Francisco Pride Parade. The morning will kick off with a ribbon cutting ceremony to officially add the E (for ecosexual) to GLBTQI. Also, before we march, we will do a water toast ritual with a few short performances. ...

Make up and hair code for all the participants and contingents:

Please use black and electric blue as main base colors. Create and play with your own reinterpretation of David Bowie’s electric blue glam make up and hairstyle. Try to avoid as much as possible other colors.

NOTE: You are more than welcome to bring your own costumes and performance personas! Just try to add one or more of the elements mentioned above. Try to adapt it somehow, if possible. Be sure that we will find you a special place in this Ecosexual poetic universe! ...

AND WE’RE MAKING A MOVIE!

The contingent performance will be filmed for our new documentary about water.

A link to more information about the documentary film production was also provided. The opening vignette in Chapter 1 describes detailed elements of the ecosexual contingent performance. Figure 6.8 below features two images of ecosex contingent participants performing during the San Francisco Pride Parade in the summer of 2015 (screenshots from Annie Sprinkle’s Facebook page, July 1, 2015).

Figure 6.7 “Here Come the Ecosexuals!” Contingent, 2015 San Francisco Pride Parade.



Several participants in the ecosex contingent in the 2015 San Francisco Pride Parade cheered about this media coverage and the alternative of ecosexuals mentioned alongside corporate participants.

Playing with Identity: Adding an “E” to LGBTQI

To kick off our (ecosexual) contingent (in the 2015 San Francisco Pride parade), we held a ribbon-cutting ceremony where we marked the official addition of the letter E, for ecosexual, to the acronym LGBTQI. We now encourage everyone to write the acronym as LGBTQIE (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016a:317).

Jorge Molina, an indigenous Shaman of the Mission District in San Francisco, performed the water blessing ritual before the water toast and ribbon cutting ceremony to “officially” add the letter “E,” for ecosexual to the LGBTQI“E” acronym (see Figure 6.9, screenshots for both images from [SSEX BBOX] public Facebook page, July 19, 2015, photos by Priscilla Bertucci).

Figure 6.8 Shaman Jorge Molina Performs a Water Blessing Ritual.



Not everyone agreed that adding an “E” for “ecosexual” to the LGBTQI moniker was a good idea. Paul B. Preciado critiqued the strategy and the concept of identity in general:

“I don’t see ecosexuality as an identity [or] another letter to be added to the already ridiculous LGBTQ list” says Spanish writer, philosopher, and transgender activist Paul B. Preciado. Preciado curated documenta’s (an enormous, prestigious modern art exhibition held in Kassel, Germany every five years, which was extended to a joint program with Athens, Greece for documenta 14, 2017) public programs and is a leading thinker in gender theory and sexuality, who was mentored by the hugely influential French philosopher Jacques Derrida. “We don’t need identities, but processes of critical de-identification.” ...

“The strength of ecosexuality is the re-erotization of the totality of the body [and] of everything that surrounds us,” says Preciado. Often, the only body parts considered erotic are those linked to reproduction. This segmenting of ‘sex organs’ is a staple of the ‘sex-binary regime’” (Tramontana 2017).

However, according to globally recognized scholar of intersectionality theory, Ange-Marie Hancock (2011), “Intersectional approaches neither eschew identity nor remain mired in it” (p. 51).

When I interviewed the pair, Sprinkle shared that she was friends with Loraine Hutchins, co-editor of the anthology, *Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out*, when she fought to have the B, for bisexual, added to gay and lesbian pride. While this experience was influential in the couple’s strategy to have E, for ecosexual, added to the LGBTQI acronym, Stephens and Sprinkle’s effort is both serious and humorous. In their ecosexual movement efforts, they “neither eschew identity nor remain mired in it” (Hancock 2011:51). Instead, they opt for a dialectic “both/and” approach to the concept of identity, both using it when it’s useful and acknowledging that sometimes it isn’t.

Alternative Ecosexual Experimental Art Projects

In this section, I discuss two alternative ecosexual experimental art projects using theater and irreverent environmentalism that sprung up separately from Stephens and Sprinkle’s ongoing ecosexual artistic endeavors. However, the organizers of both art projects were influenced by the couple’s work indicating social movement spillover (Meyer and Whittier 1994). The Queer Climate Chautauqua festival curator at the People’s Climate March in New York, New York shared a queer arts network with Stephens and Sprinkle. Also, the art duo who created the “Ecosexual Bathhouse” immersive art display in Australia were inspired by the Ecosex Manifesto.

Queer Climate Art and Theater at the 2014 People's Climate March in New York City

In 2014, the New York-based collective Queers for the Climate – using the hashtag #Q4C for social media – marched as a contingent in the historic People's Climate March in New York City. A Facebook group, "Queers for the Climate" with 389 members emerged shortly beforehand to promote organizing. The group description read, "A new group dedicated to putting queer ingenuity, creativity and passion for justice to address the crisis of human-caused global climate change." During the march, contingent participants chanted: "We're here! We're queer! We're here to save the planet!" Nicole Seymour (2018) included a segment about this group's "artist" performances in her book, *Bad Environmentalism: Irony and Irreverence in the Ecological Age*.

Drawing inspiration from the Chautauqua movement of the early 20th century, an artist, curator, and producer, Earl Dax organized the "Queer Climate Chautauqua" in New York City as part of the annual "2014 Queer New York International Arts Festival." It began one week before the People's Climate March. From the 2014 queerny.org website: "An empowered new concept of queer as a wider platform for excellence in arts, capable of tracking, discovering and interpreting new trends while daring to speak openly about the norms that constitute society and artistic practices." Dax emailed me to see if I could participate because he found a sociology conference paper of mine online about ecosexuality, but I declined. Through our correspondence, I discovered that the arts festival curator, Zvonimir Dobrovic was good friends with Sprinkle and Stephens.

The Queer Climate Chautauqua kicked off the week with "a series of open studios and community workshops in puppet building, prop making and other activities leading to the creation of a temporary installation in the Experimental Theater." The day before the march there was a day of workshops, films, and performances ending in a dance party held at the Abrons Arts Center. Participants were encouraged to bring a sleeping bag, stay for the overnight slumber party, and depart for the People's Climate March together in the morning following a pancake breakfast. Colorful twelve-foot tall puppets were created and then carried during the parade to represent the four elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

One of the Queers for the Climate contingent marchers, Peterson Toscano described himself as an ecosexual and “quirky queer Quaker concerned about Climate Change.” He started the Climate Stew podcast as a queer response to climate change that “takes a serious look at global warming but doesn’t try to scare the snot out of you.” Toscano produced fifty podcast episodes on that platform. He explained: “While I could have marched with the Quakers or the Citizens Climate Lobby, in the end I opted to march with the Queers for the Climate” (Toscano 2014). Figure 6.5 below depicts an Internet meme generated by Toscano with an image of what appears to be an LGBTQ Pride Parade with the humorous text, “Dammit! We get the right to marry just in time for Global Warming” (screenshot from petersontoscano.com on the theme of Queer Climate Action).

Figure 6.9 Queer Climate Action Meme by Peterson Toscano of Queers for the Climate.



As of early 2019, Toscano was producing and hosting a monthly podcast, Citizens’ Climate Radio using his comic storytelling and featuring diverse guests from around the world who actively pursue climate solutions. The podcast – a program of the nonprofit organization, Citizens’ Climate Education – is “designed to inspire climate advocates and equip them with effective communication skills” (Citizens’ Climate Education 2019).

“Ecosexual Bathhouse” Immersive Art Display Opens in Australia

“Ecosexual Bathhouse” is an immersive experimental art display by Australian-American art duo, Loren Kronemyer and Ian Sinclair also known as Pony Express. Inspired by Stephens and Sprinkle’s Ecosex Manifesto which indicates social movement spillover (Meyer and Whittier 1994), the ecosexual art display opened as part of the Next Wave Festival 2016 in Melbourne, Australia in May of that year (Parkes 2016). On their website, helloponyexpress.com, the “Ecosexual Bathhouse” was described as an immersive alternate reality and “multi-chamber walk through labyrinth that plunges participants into the world (of) environmental eroticism, testing the boundaries of evolution and inhibition.”

In an article by Lambert (2016) in news.com.au entitled, “People Are Having Sexual Fantasies about the Biosphere” (which appears to aim to disparage the concept with several pictures featured): Ecosexuals have fantasies about nature and use their senses of touch to strengthen their romantic and sensual feelings towards the environment.

The whole idea is if somebody can develop sexual attraction and a love for the biosphere, they will in turn look after it going into the future — it’s said to be a type of activism. ...

Melbourne’s Ecosexual Bathhouse is being funded by taxpayers, with Melbourne City Council giving the Next Wave Festival \$90,000.

However, the “Ecosexual Bathhouse” apparently struck a chord. In November 2016, the live immersive art project was presented again as part of Liveworks at Carriageworks in Sydney, Australia, this time by Performance Space as well as Pony Express. According to the performancespace.com.au website, the “Ecosexual Bathhouse” is:

an immersive experience inviting you to leave the urban wasteland behind and open yourself up to an intimate encounter with the biosphere.

Perth-based artist collective Pony Express offer up a cave of wonder with a variety of eco-erotic experiences. Experiment with pollination, unwind in the sauna or be guided by a bathhouse regular toward your own organic awakening. Catering to all—from the mildly bio-curious to the environmentally experienced—we encourage you to embrace the earth and give in to your budding naturist.

Drawing on the Eco-sex manifesto by Annie Sprinkle and Dr Elizabeth Stephens, Ecosexual Bathhouse explores a radical environmentalism where the political becomes very personal. The six awe-inspiring spaces of Ecosexual Bathhouse invite us to reconsider the relationship between humans and nature: because if we can learn to love the Earth, then maybe we can save it.

The performance duration was listed as approximately one hour with patrons admitted every twenty minutes. In an article titled “The Ecosex Movement: Intersecting Environmental Activism with Sexual Identity” published in *Study Breaks*, a magazine and website designed by college students across the U.S., Kristian Porter (2016) provided a description of the interactive art display experiences:

Ecosexual Bathhouse presented people with six different rooms they could explore, promising a variety of eco-erotic experiences. You could pollinate flowers with finger condoms or stick your arm elbow-deep in the “composting glory hole,” a bathtub filled with dirt and worms. After entering the exhibition, participants were asked if they would like any morphs, pseudo-sex to be used in conjunction with the natural elements. Among the options was the Squirter, a strap-on spray bottle used to shower the plants and people with water, and the Paw, a glove prohibiting the use of the thumb—an animalistic bondage device.

This exhibit brought people together to celebrate the intimate relationship between humans and the Earth and to raise awareness of the way the relationship has become an abusive one.

Figure 6.10 below features two female-presenting persons sticking their arms elbow-deep in the “composting glory hole” art display at the “Ecosexual Bathhouse” [image via Performance Space, screenshot from an article by Kristian Porter (2016)].

Figure 6.10 “Ecosexual Bathhouse” Art Display.



“Ecosexual Bathhouse” was also featured as part of the festival, Dark Mofa 2017 at Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Tasmania, an isolated island state off Australia’s south coast and Reckless Acts 2017 at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA). The artists continued touring Ecosexual Bathhouse as part of Santarcangelo Festival 2017 in Italy and Forum of the Future 2017 in Portugal. A difference in Pony Express’s presentation of ecosexuality is the apocalyptic feel.

Beyond being a pretty wild experiment in experiential art, Ecosexual Bathhouse is a provocative twist on its roots in intersectional queer and environmental activism—it shifts the utopian ideal of its predecessors towards a darker, more dystopian view of humanity’s changing relationship with the environment (Parkes 2016).

Faculty member of dance and queer studies at Denison University in Ohio, Michael Morris used Pony Express’s Ecosexual Bathhouse immersive display in their 2018 Ecosexuality and the Arts college course. They designated it as an example of what is described in the introduction to the edited book, *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire* as “the redrawing of conceptual boundaries [that are] intimately linked to the transformation of material practices involving both human and more-than-human natures” (Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson 2010:45).

Legitimation: Mainstream Media Coverage of Ecosexuality as a Social Movement, 2016-2017

Over the span of less than a year, ecosexuality was the topic of several articles in mainstream media publications. Two of these were feature articles from very different popular magazines, one representing environmental interests and the other representing the men’s lifestyle genre that arguably helped to spark the U.S. sexual revolution (Barford 2015). This mainstream media coverage represents the beginning of legitimation for the ecosexual movement.

On the environmental side, *Outside* magazine published an article including an interview with Stephens and Sprinkle in early October of 2016 titled, “We’re All a Little Ecosexual” (Callaghan 2016). *Outside* magazine’s mission statement as posted on their website reads: “To inspire active participation in the world outside through award-winning coverage of the sports, people, places, adventure, discoveries, health and fitness, gear and apparel, trends and events that make up an active lifestyle.”

On the sexuality side, a full-length article was featured in *Playboy* for Earth Day on April 21, 2017 titled, “When Water Makes You Wet: Inside the Ecosexual Revolution.” As stated in an excerpt from the beginning of the article:

In honor of Earth Day 2017, *Playboy* thought it would be interesting to explore a very queer iteration of sexual identity that relies on one’s wiliness to think of our home planet as not just a cosmic force, but as a sensual one too. Ecosexuality is more than a fetish; it’s a movement. Many of its participants are activists with a mission to save the planet by making love to it and ridding the world of toxic products. It’s literally a sexy new take on environmentalism that cross-pollinates between artists, queers, scientists, scholars, sexologists, permaculturists and activists (Venkatesan 2017).

On June 30, 2017, *Teen Vogue* – a U.S. magazine that has seen a resurgence in popularity with its unapologetic style of confronting politically charged contemporary social issues – published an article titled, “Ecosexuals Are Queering Environmentalism.” Interestingly, I noticed that when the article was shared via social media, it would show up with the clickbait-style headline, “Ecosexuals Want to Use Sex to Save the Planet.” From the article:

The ecosex sphere may still be evolving, but one thing is clear, with the Trump administration’s threat on environmental protections, women’s bodily autonomy, and queer and trans rights, it’s necessary to find new ways to get people motivated to come together to protect the planet and sexual freedom. Perhaps it would be better to create an erotic landscape which doesn’t add more categories of difference, but expanded possibilities (Tramontana 2017).

When I interviewed Stephens and Sprinkle, they had this to say about reaching mainstream media:

Beth: We’re not looking for commercial success. We don’t really believe that this work is going to make us rich and famous. We don’t really want this work to make us rich and famous because when you’re rich and famous, you have to answer to your fans and all of the expectations that society has. And we want to undermine those expectations. [chuckles] You know? And you just can’t do it in this system of capitalism.

Beth: So, we are really and truly doing our own thing. Our message reaches the people it needs to reach. If we have mainstream media coverage, that’s great. But that’s not really what we’re crafting our work towards at all. I think it’s important... That’s why we’re... that’s why *I*, I don’t really want to speak for you here [directed towards Annie], but I think it’s so important we have so many different voices represented in what we’re doing. And that they don’t all make sense and we don’t all agree. There are people that, maybe I don’t even like personally.

Annie: Yeah, that’s right.

Beth: I think that that is really important.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: We're not allowed to do that in a sort of monocultural, monolithic, monoracial, mono... you know, political and economical [sic] system. Yeah, it's really one way or the highway. We want to counter that by inviting as many different people into what we're doing as possible. The weirdos, the freaks, the people that are not welcome in our society.

Annie: Mm-hm.

Beth: Including ourselves.

Ecosexual Movement Institutionalization? E.A.R.T.H. Lab at University of California, Santa Cruz

In 2015, the E.A.R.T.H. Lab began producing experimental art in collaboration with the Earth. The acronym E.A.R.T.H. stands for Environmental Art, Research, Theory, Happenings. The center is housed within the Arts Division at UCSC where Stephens works and serves as the center's executive director. Stephens and Sprinkle are listed as the E.A.R.T.H. Lab's co-founders with Sprinkle serving as director of research. Stephens shared that she received a financial gift from an old friend which enabled them to establish the center. The center's research model is described on the projects page of the website – which launched in July 2015 – earthlab.ucsc.edu as follows:

E.A.R.T.H. Lab supports new projects and working methods by inviting pioneering artists, theoreticians, and others who are working on the boundaries of environmentalism, social justice, gender and sexuality studies and technology as visiting artists and scholars in residence. E.A.R.T.H. Lab mentors undergraduate and graduate students and includes them as assistant researchers and collaborators. An array of art forms including performance art, visual art, film and digital media, art/life and writing are incorporated and explored.

The center's research is made available to broad audiences through artworks, performances, seminars, symposiums and publications focusing on interdisciplinary projects organized around environmental, ecological and social justice issues and projects. Communities that are often excluded from environmental and ecological projects, such as the LGBTQIE community, communities of color, and other marginalized communities are particularly encouraged to participate (E.A.R.T.H. Lab N.d.).

Located in the UCSC Digital Arts New Media Building (DARC), E.A.R.T.H. Lab's (N.d.) mission is stated on the website as follows:

E.A.R.T.H. Lab's mission is to create new forms of environmental art while developing related theories exploring nature with a fresh gaze and researching more inclusive, diverse and playful possibilities. UC Santa Cruz, whose current motto is "The Original Authority on Questioning Authority" is the perfect place for this center since E.A.R.T.H. Lab questions prevailing notions of environmental art in order to entice new audiences to participate, to renew and strengthen the interests of existing allies.

In May 2017, the E.A.R.T.H Lab hosted the two-day seminar, “Environmentalism Outside the Box: An Ecosex Symposium.” (see Figure 6.11, screenshot from Beth Stephen’s Facebook page, May 1, 2017). Stephens and Sprinkle invited anthropologist Kim TallBear, professor of Native Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, to speak at the symposium. Her talk was entitled, “Decolonizing Settler Sexuality.”

Figure 6.11 E.A.R.T.H. Lab’s “Environmentalism Outside the Box: An Ecosex Symposium” Poster.

E.A.R.T.H. LAB presents ...

Environmentalism Outside the Box: An Ecosex Symposium

May 18–19, 2017 10am–10pm
Digital Arts Research Center 108 (DARC Building) UCSC

Decolonizing Settler Sexuality
Kim TallBear
Professor of Native Studies, University of Alberta

Love and Struggle: Grounding Against Environmental Fatalism
Chris Cuomo
Professor of Philosophy and Women's Studies, University of Georgia

Donna Haraway: Story Telling for Earthly Survival
Documentary Film & Discussion
with Donna Haraway (Distinguished Professor Emerita UCSC) and Fabrizio Terranova (Filmmaker)

Academic Freedom In An Ecosexphobic World
Slow Dancing with Horses
Unsettling Our Earthly Pleasures
The Ecosex Bath House
Larval Rock Stars
Tree Huggers Unite!
Going Green Between the Sheets
Pollination Pod Punks
Got Woodwinds?
The Art of Eco-burlesque
Animal Performativity
Ecosex Art, Theory, Practices and Activism
Bees, Bathhouses & Beyond
The Explorer's Guide to Planet Orgasm
A Book Reading Event at Pure Pleasure Shop

Plus these Presenters

Kevin O'Connor	Praba Pillar	Kim Russo
Lori Halliday	Anuj Vaidya	Lisa Rofel
Beth Stephens	Michael Morris	Kim Marks
Annie Sprinkle	Stefanie Iris Weiss	Lady Monster
Melissa Nelson	Keith Wilson	Betty Grumble
Leahla Berlin	Dylan Bolles	Tessa Willis
Frances Blaker	Joe Dumit	Zem Cohen
Sarah Fyjak	Tanya Augsburg	Luke Dixon
July Cole	Loren Kronmeyer	Isabelle Carlier
Lahua Tallano	J. Dellecave	T.J. Demos
Cleo Wolfe-Eskirne	Qosmos	Kimball Barton
Natalie Taber	Xandra Coe	Andrea Fender
Sarick Matzen	Judy Meath	Joseph Kramer
	Buddhajak	

<http://earthlab.ucsc.edu>

Everyone is welcome. Symposium is free.
There is a fee to park in UCSC parking lots.

Thanks to all our sponsors: Dean's Fund for Excellence, UCSC's Office of Research, and the following:

THE ARTS INSTITUTE OF ARTS & SCIENCES ARI PORTER COLLEGE SCIENCE JUSTICE mindPleasure Sustainability Office

TallBear was interviewed for the 2017 piece about ecosexuality in *Teen Vogue*. In the article, TallBear was quoted as saying:

Ecosexuality is not going to appeal to most indigenous people. ... I teach it in my classes and my students are viscerally like, "This is weird, self-indulgent white people." ...

When people talk about the Anthropocene they typically say, "We as a species are now coming to realize that we have to stop putting humans at the top of the hierarchy. Other beings have agency," and I'm like, "No, it's not we who are just now having this revelation; it's a bunch of white guys" (Tramontana 2017).

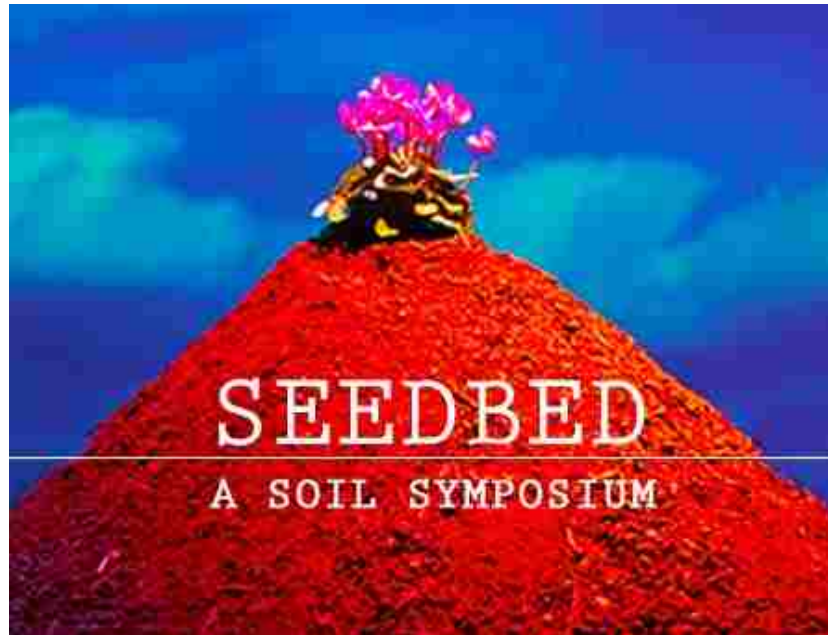
TallBear continued, "Don't forget that what you're saying about humanity probably doesn't apply to indigenous people. And, yes, we're still here." In 2012, TallBear wrote a blog post, "What's in Ecosexuality for an Indigenous Scholar of Nature?" In it, she identifies herself as an ecosexual ally (but not an ecosexual) and a friend of Stephens and Sprinkle. She admitted that when Stephens first told her about ecosexuality, it didn't resonate with her. Furthermore, TallBear (2012) cautioned against "the appropriation of Native American knowledges and motifs to the ecosexual ceremonial and artistic repertoire." However, she also discussed the importance of building relationships and continuing the dialogue, because she trusted that they could teach each other.

We (Kim TallBear and Beth Stephens) both come from economically and geographically marginal backgrounds, from places and peoples with rich cultures, lands, and resources, thus the exploitation of our peoples and lands. I come from a South Dakota reservation and Beth from the coal mining country of West Virginia. We both ended up in Northern California eco-feminist academic worlds. I liked Beth from the beginning, and trusted that she had something to teach me as well (TallBear 2012).

Additionally, the documentary film, "Donna Haraway: Story Telling for Earthly Survival" was screened at the symposium. The film screening was followed by a discussion with Donna Haraway, Distinguished Professor Emerita at UCSC and filmmaker, Fabrizio Terranova.

Another two-day event was co-hosted in April 2018 by the E.A.R.T.H. Lab, the UCSC Farm and Garden, and the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) with the title, "Seedbed: A Soil Symposium" (see Figure 6.12, screenshot from earthlab.ucsc.edu).

Figure 6.12 E.A.R.T.H. Lab’s “Seedbed: A Soil Symposium” Graphic.



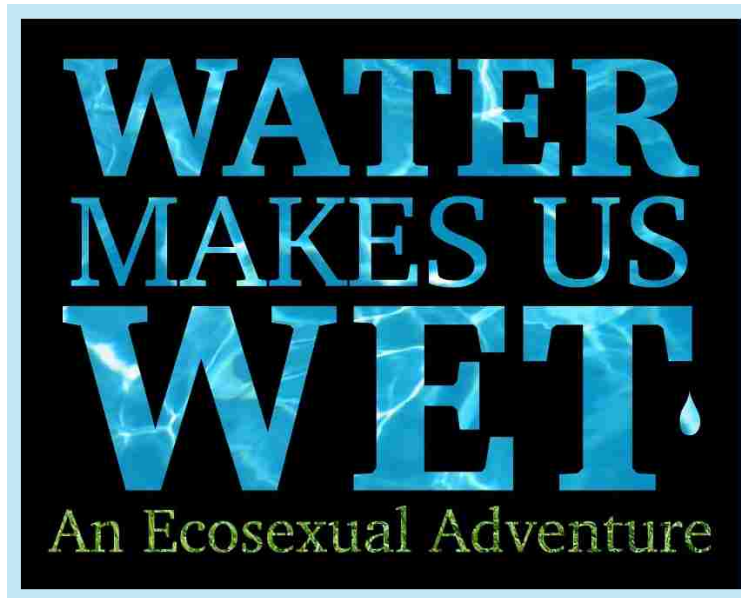
First Book and Second Film

Stephens and Sprinkle are completing a book, *Assuming the Ecosexual Position* contracted to be published by the University of Minnesota Press.

This book will chronicle our ongoing collaboration (since 2002) and the development of our ecosex art, theory, practice, and activism. Our book will explore what combining sex and gender activism with environmental activism looks like as we construct ourselves as “sexecologists.” As we discuss our work, we posit a radical relationship with environmentalism that is nonheteronormative and nonhuman centered (Stephens and Sprinkle 2016:319).

Additionally, Stephens and Sprinkle’s co-directed their second documentary film from an ecosexual perspective, *Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure*. Figure 6.13 below is a screenshot of the film logo posted on Annie Sprinkle’s Facebook page on July 24, 2017 with the caption, “A little film logo. You saw it here first. Just one of the many things Beth Stephens and I did today on our film.”

Figure 6.13 Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure Film Logo.



As noted by the artists in their Director's Statement:

Water Makes Us Wet flowed from various impulses: a deep concern for the natural world, a love of water, an appreciation for the possibilities of performance art, and our adventurous, creative partnership. The documentary is our attempt to compassionately co-align queer perspectives and environmental action. It also is part of our ongoing efforts to explore and expand what can be considered erotic and sexy. We believe, as filmmakers, activists, and artists, that the environmental movement is in desperate need of narratives that don't only offer doom, gloom, and guilt but also offer sensual pleasures and joy within environmental action.

The experience we try to communicate with *Water Makes Us Wet* is that of possibility. While this documentary highlights environmental dangers and corporate irresponsibility, it's also about beginnings, change, and how we can better love and nurture the creatures and ecosystems we share our lives with (Stephens and Sprinkle N.d.).

Stephens and Sprinkle emphasized the intersectional standpoint of their ecosexual documentary, "co-align(ing) queer perspectives and environmental action." In addition, they noted the expansion of ideas about what "can be considered erotic and sexy," including nonhuman nature elements. The couple mentioned providing different narratives than offered by traditional environmental movements, getting away from the "doom, gloom, and guilt" and moving toward joy, humor, and pleasure with irreverent environmental action. Their new film not only looks at ecological problems and the sources of them, but potential solutions in alternative futures. Stephens and Sprinkle closed the statement by mentioning that

none of their environmental passions were dampened by completing the film, and they were already working on the next ecosexual film in their trilogy that will focus on environmental artists and their art.

The *Water Makes Us Wet* film made its world debut in September 2017 at the gigantic art exhibition, documenta in Kassel, Germany during the special film program. Considered by many to be the most prestigious art exhibition in the world, documenta is held in Kassel, Germany every five years, and was extended in 2017 to a joint program with Athens, Greece for documenta 14. In the spirit of taking familiar concepts and adding their own spin, the pair staged a satirical “blue carpet event” signifying water while mimicking the standard red carpet events of celebrities at movie premieres, award shows, and other formal events. In Figure 6.14, the blue carpet is rolled out in front of the cinema with the film co-directors standing on it and posing for pictures. The words “documenta 14” and “Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure” (along with another film title) were lit up on the sign overhead. The image is a screenshot of a Facebook post where Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle were tagged by Mam Ita on September 7, 2017, making the post visible on their personal Facebook pages.

Figure 6.14 Stephens and Sprinkle at Blue Carpet Event for Premiere of their 2nd Film, Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure at documenta 14 in Kassel, Germany.



In the spring of 2018, I was included on an email list of “a few friends and colleagues” that received a link to preview their new ecosexual film about the pleasure and politics of water. The video required a password to access it. We were asked to refrain from posting the link publicly because Stephens and Sprinkle were just getting the documentary into film festivals at that point. I received a Valentine’s Day 2019 update that “the film we all made together” – since I was present for part of the filming – was selected for a screening during the Doc Fortnight Film Festival 2019 at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan, New York City (The Museum of Modern Art 2019). Doc Fortnight is an annual event showcasing the best innovative nonfiction films from around the world. In 2019, it featured over seventeen films with most directed by female filmmakers. Guest curator Kathy Brew, who organized the series for the third consecutive year, said in the age of #MeToo she thought it was important to highlight female documentarians (Levere 2019).

“An Evening with Annie Sprinkle & Beth Stephens” was scheduled for MoMA’s once a month event, “Modern Monday,” on February 25th where they could make their screening into a happening. The event was advertised as a screening of their film, *Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure* followed by a live discussion with the filmmakers and a post-screening performance with a dozen of their ecosexual friends who also worked on the film. Furthermore, it included a screening of their ecosexual friend and collaborator, Keith Wilson’s short film (i.e., 15 minutes), “The Tree.” I met Wilson during the 2015 San Francisco Pride Week series of events that included the ecosexual contingent in the parade. He served as the co-producer, director of photography, and editor of *Water Makes Us Wet*. In an article for *Variety*, an entertainment industry news publication, Variety Staff (2019) described MoMA’s ecosexual film screening and happening:

In a poetic blend of curiosity, humor, sensuality, and concern, Annie Sprinkle (a former sex worker), Beth Stephens (a professor), and their dog, Butch, cruise the state of California, meeting a diverse group of people—performance artists, biologists, water-treatment plant workers, scientists, and others— who reaffirm the power of water, life, and love. The film chronicles the politics and pleasure of H₂O from an ecosexual perspective. Live presentation by Sprinkle, Stephens, and special guests.

Stephens and Sprinkle’s “Modern Monday” event sold out the night before at \$12 per ticket. The top of their film poster – with the couple dressed in black and blue punk-style outfits standing in front of their sparkly blue camper trailer (see Figure 6.15, screenshot from Beth Stephens’ Facebook page, February 16, 2019) – was even the feature image for *Forbes* magazine’s article about MoMA’s Doc Fortnight 2019 film festival. Unsurprisingly, the irony of ecosexuals being featured in *Forbes*, an American business magazine known for its definitive list of the world’s billionaires, wasn’t lost on them. The evening before their event, Stephens posted the article featuring their picture on her Facebook timeline with the caption, “Finally, I think my father is giggling in his grave.” I responded, “Wowsa! covered in *Forbes*. This is truly a form of queer, absurd art!” followed by a laughing emoji and a heart. Stephens never missed a beat in her brilliantly funny reply, “I believe that this is post queer in a circular kind of way. Yaaay Hillbillies and Whores!” Touché.

Figure 6.15 Beth Stephens Holds a Film Poster for *Water Makes Us Wet – An Ecosexual Adventure*.



Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the third and most recent phase of the ecosexual movement, from mid-2011 to present. The third phase is characterized by actively constructing the ecosexual movement's meaning through collective identity development. Framing and collective identity are highly interactive (Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994). At the start of this phase, performance art couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle unveiled the Ecosex Manifesto which became the principal collective identity piece for the ecosexual movement. I analyze the Ecosex Manifesto's use of queer, erotic "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) and "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019) and its possibility for radical inclusion that also encompasses nonhuman nature elements. Furthermore, I consider how conflicts are negotiated among ecosexual activists around intersectional framing, including sameness and difference, and problems with the notion of identity. Engaging internal identity-based conflicts about *outgroups* within *ingroups* helped foster intergroup collaboration (Rothman 2014).

During this period, the ecosexual movement experienced continued transnational growth with further events. The resources brought by Stephens and Sprinkle centralized the ecosexual movement's inclusive collective identity at a key moment and helped sustain it. Symposiums and more localized performance art tactics gained media attention and could be performed by anyone, anywhere, serving to define collective identity. The ecosexual movement gained legitimation through mainstream media coverage – including major publications focusing on the environment and on sexuality – and two documentary films produced through an ecosexual lens. The first move towards institutionalization of the ecosexual movement was evidenced with the founding of the E.A.R.T.H. (Environmental Art, Research, Theory, and Happenings) Lab at the University of California, Santa Cruz. As co-founders and directors, Stephens and Sprinkle started utilizing the center to produce "experimental environmental art in collaboration with the Earth," which included their branch of ecosexual projects.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Earth justice, human rights
One and the same thing
Bullets, lies, pesticides
One and the same thing
Choke holds and GMO
One and the same thing
Ferguson cops 'n Monsanto
One and the same thing
Not two killers not two courts
One and the same thing
Not two issues, go to the source
One and the same thing
Fear of life and fear of blacks.
One and the same thing
Human justice, Earth rights
One and the same thing

- Reverend Billy Talen and the Stop Shopping Gospel Choir, public Facebook page post, October 4, 2014.

The ecosexual movement is a transnational grassroots social movement that has worked at the intersection of environmental and sexual justice over the past twenty years. The intersectionality of this movement made it an important site to examine the frame alignment processes, strategies and tactics, and collective identity development as they bridge different collective action frames. Social movement researchers have examined intersectionality, but more research examines movements that mobilize multiple identity groups and/or multiple issues, as a strategy used by an otherwise single-issue movement (e.g., Cole 2008). But relatively few have looked at social movements (e.g., Sbicca 2012) or social movement organizations (e.g., Gentile and Salerno 2017; Luna 2016) that promote intersectional organizing from the start.

In this dissertation, I studied how social movements negotiate intersectionality through a case study of the ecosexual movement. I identified three distinct yet overlapping and interconnecting phases in the movement's development. In the first phase, starting in the late 1990s/early 2000s to about 2010, I described the early formation of the ecosexual movement through strategic "frame alignment processes" (Snow et al. 1986). I traced the framing processes through a largely chronological discussion of the activism that began to link environmental and sexual struggles through: 1) early performance-based

radical protest and arts-based environmental adult film, 2) green lifestyle and green consumption frames in dating, sex toys, and other green sexual practices and products, 3) queer, sex-positive, and environmental art in performance, installations, and print media, and 4) presentations, performances, and discussions at workshops and symposia. During the initial phase, the framing of the “ecosexual” collective identity moved from more individualistic lifestyle choices of finding green dating partners and consuming green sexual products to challenging heteronormative social structures to challenging the ideology of modern hierarchical dualisms starting with the human/environment or Nature/Society division. I concluded with an overview of the first formal ecosexual gatherings of previously disparate networks among scholars, artists, performers, and environmental, sex worker, and sex-positive activists to explore the linking of environmental and sexual struggles to explore the meaning of ecosexuality. Through the first ecosex symposium, categories emerged that were used in Stephens and Sprinkle’s later ecosex symposia: ecosexual art, theory, practice, activism, and research.

In the second phase, from 2008 to 2011, experimental artistic tactics were used that successfully spread and popularized the movement, originally through an endurance art project including a four-year series of large-scale ecosexual performance art weddings to various nonhuman nature elements staged mostly throughout the Western world. These ecosexual wedding ceremonies became highly recognized in well-resourced and high-profile arts communities leading to invitations to perform additional ecosexual marriages transnationally. The dominant collective action frame that emerged linked sexual and environmental justice through irreverence, humor, satire, celebration of eroticism as well as queerness, radical participatory performance art, and media as disruptive strategies to mainstream discourses and modernist binaries. More specifically, I analyzed the ecosexual component of Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle’s transnational *Love Art Laboratory (LAL)* wedding project that began in the Santa Cruz, California redwoods and primarily took place in Western countries. I centered their project as an example of queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019) that popularized the ecosexual movement. I also documented two alternative wedding performance projects to nonhuman nature elements: 1) Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio’s *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You*

ecosexual wedding to the beach ceremonies in Puerto Rico, and 2) Richard Torres' transnational *Marry A Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project across Latin American countries. I discussed the similarities and differences of these two wedding projects compared to the *LAL* project and whether they represent social movement spillover or diffusion. While Torres' tree wedding project is not directly related to the ecosexual movement, I included it because it is significant that similar non-traditional artistic tactics are being used in the Global North and the Global South to address the same types of struggles during the same historical period. I closed by investigating attempts at social control of some of the eco-themed performance art weddings.

In the third phase, from mid-2011 to early 2019, a radically inclusive collective identity that also recognized the nonhuman nature realm was negotiated and reinforced initially through well-resourced individuals in the arts community. Central to the ecosexual movement's collective identity development was the unveiling of the Ecosex Manifesto by Stephens and Sprinkle at the beginning of this phase. While the pair's performance art branch was not the only faction of the ecosexual movement, the Ecosex Manifesto provided an inclusive umbrella of cohesion as the movement grew and became more popular. The document championed the same queer, erotic, "irreverent environmentalism" (Seymour 2012; 2018) and "eco-camp" (Whitworth 2019) found in Stephens and Sprinkle's ecosexual wedding performances. Later, seminars and more localized tactics that gained media attention and could be performed by anyone, anywhere, served to define the movement's collective identity. I presented examples of how ecosexual activists negotiated conflicts regarding intersectional framing as well as sameness and difference, both in online social media groups and at ecosexual events. The ecosexual movement gained legitimation through mainstream media coverage and the production of two documentary films from an ecosexual perspective. During the final phase, I documented the first sign of social movement institutionalization with the opening of the E.A.R.T.H. (Environmental Art, Research, Theory, Happenings) Lab at the University of California, Santa Cruz, co-founded and directed by Stephens and Sprinkle, which provided a center for their branch of ecosexual projects.

Overall, I found that the ecosexual movement's attention to challenging the cultural discourse and social organization based on modern hierarchical dualisms while creating postmodern alternative narratives that reflect the dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015) through the dominant framing, strategies, and tactics used – queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and participatory, collaborative experimental art, radical performance, and symposia – has been key to how intersectionality is negotiated. The ecosexual movement drew on a general intellectual critique of modernity's dominant dualistic worldview, rejecting binaries and hierarchical dualisms of all kinds beginning with the Nature/Society division and including binaries related to all identity categories with a focus on sex, gender, and sexuality as well as sacred/profane, human/environment, culture/nature, and reason/emotion and embraced processual notions of justice. Furthermore, I observed that resources involving university and art community funding and the networks and social capital of well-known radical performance artists and activists in queer, sex-positive, and environmental networks provided primary direction, sustenance, and focus for the ecosexual movement over several years.

Implications for Negotiating Intersectionality in Social Movements

How the ecosexual movement negotiated intersectionality tells us some important concepts about how intersectional movements work. Some scholars have expressed concern that intersectionality may be divisive because it emphasizes difference (Ehrenreich 2002; Hancock 2007; Ludvig 2006). The ecosexual movement promoted conscious, participatory examination of the linking of multiple struggles – the parallels, similarities, and structural connections between the environment and sexuality – from the initial organizing of the social movement, facilitating participants identification with the movement as their own. In a September 21, 2014 interview by Frank Barat with Angela Davis reprinted in her book, *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle*, she explained about organizing intersectional movements:

(Y)ou can't simply invite people to join you and be immediately on board, particularly when they were not necessarily represented during the earlier organizing processes. You have to develop organizing strategies so that people identify with the particular issue as their issue. This is why I was suggesting ... that these connections need to be made in the context of the struggles themselves. So as you are organizing against police crimes, against police racism, you always raise parallels and similarities in other parts of the world.

And not only similarities, but you talk about the structural connections. What is the connection between the way the US police forces train and are armed and Israeli police and military.... So when you popularize that, encourage people to think about that.... (Davis 2016).

To do intersectionality without recreating oppressive patterns, Luft and Ward (2009) pointed to Chandra Mohanty's (2003) model of focusing on solidarity politics rather than identity politics. Identity politics are biological or cultural bases for alliances; solidarity politics are the political links that one chooses to make between and among multiple struggles (Luft and Ward 2009). According to Mohanty (2003):

It is not color or sex that constructs the ground for these struggles. Rather, it is the way we think about race, class, and gender – the political links we choose to make among and between struggles” (p. 46).

I found that the dominant collective action frame of the ecosexual movement that popularized it recognized, discussed, and celebrated *both* identity politics *and* solidarity politics. Ange-Marie Hancock (2011) argued that taking groupings (e.g., race, gender, class, sexual orientation) seriously as analytical categories rather than just individual reified identities “accepts the lived experience of people without making it a condition of group formation, epistemology, or agenda setting. ... Instead the work opens up space for the first benefit of intersectionality: creating diverse coalitions that are nonidentity-based but may still generate identity-based benefits. Intersectional approaches neither eschew identity nor remain mired it” (p. 51).

Still, the ecosexual movement took this a step further with its potential for radical inclusion by also embracing the nonhuman realm as ecological citizens. Drawing from feminist theorist Elizabeth Grosz's (2002) “politics of imperceptibility,” Stephens and Sprinkle (2012b) said they see their ecosexual projects “as being much larger than relationships exclusively between humans” (p. 62). However, while establishing innovative intersectional narratives to express a new ideology, the ecosexual movement utilized recognizable concepts from the cultural discourse, such as wedding ceremonies, that are beneficial to build a bridge because of public familiarity (Gentile and Salerno 2017).

Beyond the intellectual critique of modern binaries, the ecosexual movement adopted and practiced a postmodern “both/and” ideology that is pragmatic in approach. The use of disruptive strategies incorporating a celebratory style of collaborative experimental art, radical performance, and other sensual, emotive, visceral tactics facilitated moving away from modern binary or dichotomous “either/or” ideology. The collective action frame of absurdity through queer, erotic, “irreverent environmentalism” (Seymour 2012; 2018) and “eco-camp” (Whitworth 2019) resonated in a time of mainstream apocalyptic narratives. The ecosexual movement not only challenged modern hierarchical dualisms that frame issues as a struggle between two opposing sides, it opened participatory space for creating potential alternative models that demonstrate a postmodern alternative discourse and social organization of the dialectic of humanity-in-nature (Moore 2015), situating all humans in “humanity” and humans in nature.

Ken Plummer (2015) brought back a concept originally used in feminism and applied to radical citizenship theory by Ruth Lister (1997/2003, 1998), “differentiated universalism.” In *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*, Ruth Lister (1997/2003) defined differentiated universalism as “a universalism that stands in a creative tension to diversity and difference and that challenges the divisions and exclusionary inequalities which stem from this diversity” (p. 66). The concept built on Will Kymlicka's (1995) book, *Multicultural Citizenship*. Plummer (2015) used it as a central point in his newer book, *Cosmopolitan Sexualities* about building transnational sexual justice. A major issue that keeps replaying in the world is how we do globalization in a way that creates and accepts diversification and heterogeneity rather than pushing for homogeneity and essentialist categories (Appadurai 1990; Plummer 2015). The ecosexual movement showed an example of differentiated universalism in practice.

It suggests moving between very detailed, local, unique and differentiated knowledge of specific cultures and making a linkage with their wider contexts: of general awareness, common grounds, universal principles, abstractions (Plummer 2015:93).

Co-authors, Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka (2011) later extended differentiated universalism to focusing on the relational obligations that result from the varied ways nonhuman animals relate to human societies and institutions. The concept of “ecological citizenship” goes further by situating nature as part

of ecological communities rather than merely extrinsic goods to be used as resources by humans (Curtin 2002).

In 2014, I was invited by Sprinkle to be part of a four-member panel to present at a session titled, “ECOSEX! Heat Up Your Sex Life as You Slow Global Warming” during CatalystCon, a U.S.-based conference created to inspire exceptional conversations about sexuality. Following the presentation, an audience member summarized a key struggle of the ecosexual movement: finding the balance between alienating people by being too fringe versus being co-opted by capitalist interests so that the radical potential for emancipatory change is subverted. Thus far, the ecosexual movement has seemed to find this balance as a non-traditional social movement. The resources Stephens and Sprinkle leveraged in building this movement centralized an innovative and inclusive collective identity at a key moment and helped sustain it.

Larger Sociological Relevance and Policy Implications

During his ASA Presidential address in 2000 – published in the *American Sociological Review* the following year – Joe R. Feagin shared his vision of the role sociologists play in promoting social justice at the turn of the century:

clearly, more sociologists should engage in the study of alternative social futures, including those of more just and egalitarian societies. Sociologists need to think deeply and imaginatively about sustainable social futures and to aid in building better human societies (Feagin 2001:1).

Furthermore, in 2016, the theme for the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA) was, “Rethinking Social Movements: Can Changing the Conversation Change the World?” Three years later, the upcoming ASA annual meeting theme is, “Engaging Social Justice for a Better World.” With the recent wave of global protest movements, intersectional activism and movements have become important as more social movements address multiple issues and struggles simultaneously in a quest for social and political justice.

Similarly, Erick Olin Wright (2010), the 2012 President of the American Sociological Association (ASA), stated:

Gramsci once described the struggle for social justice as requiring ‘pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will.’ I believe in the world today we need an optimism of the intellect as well: an optimism grounded in our understanding of the real potentials for emancipatory alternatives which can inform our practical strategies for social transformation.

This study has implications for environmental and sexual justice movements. The ecosexual movement represents the “second generation” of environmental justice movements with its intersectional focus on sexuality and gender (Pellow 2018). It also focuses on procedural justice, shifting the lens from distributive outcomes to the importance of recognizing marginalized groups with their unique experiences of oppression and including them in decision-making processes.

Environmental historian and sociologist Jason W. Moore (2015) argued that to open the cage of binary thinking “requires that we build an alternative to the logic of dualism, and this requires new methodological procedures, narrative strategies, and conceptual languages *all at the same time*” (p. 5, emphasis in original). The ecosexual movement provides an example of this possible alternative future in practice through its collaborative and participatory style of symposia, experimental art, and celebratory radical performance, as well as subcultural community formations.

Several contemporary social movements – for example, Occupy Wall Street and the Women’s March on Washington – have been intersectional, mobilizing multiple identity groups and/or multiple issues simultaneously (although not without challenges and controversy surrounding how well this has been done). More recently, the U.S. youth-led organization, the Sunrise Movement has gained popularity for its intersectional focus on stopping climate change and creating good jobs in the process through promoting a Green New Deal law at the federal level (Matthews, Bowlin, and Hulac 2018). Findings from studying intersectional movements, such as the ecosexual movement, can help to understand effective strategies to apply to intersectional movements, including those organizing for policy change.

Future Research

This work is the first in-depth sociological study of the ecosexual movement. Because it is a qualitative study, the first limitation is the lack of generalizability of findings to other similar groups. However, the trade-off is deriving a detailed understanding of the processes and meanings of the group

studied. Researching other social movements focused on different struggles that promote intersectional organizing from the beginning would provide additional studies for comparison purposes.

Another limitation is the bias of the researcher. I discussed in the methods section that I was reflexive of my positionality. Still, researchers can only provide a partial perspective of the phenomenon they are studying. Given the qualitative design of the study, the facets I decided to focus on would most likely differ from other investigators. For example, the events that I chose to attend were based, in part, on proximity; and the people that I interviewed reflect who I may have felt more comfortable with, or who may have felt more comfortable with me, which would be different from another researcher. Also, for this study, I conducted in-depth interviews with 15 people who were key organizers and emerging leaders in the ecosexual movement from the start. For future studies, researchers should conduct interviews with general actors at ecosexual events to get a better understanding of their reasons for attending, how they connected with the movement, and what it means to them.

I was also limited in the data I was able to access. With additional funding and time, I would have traveled to international locations to document more of the events by participatory observation. While I was able to track much of the ecosexual movement through websites, social media posts, and video, ethnographic fieldwork provides an in-depth dimension that is unable to be reproduced fully with online accounts. I am also limited by language. While I translated some of the online material about Richard Torres' weddings to the trees in Latin American countries, conducting interviews in Spanish, in this case, would be challenging for me. I'd have to rely on an interpreter, translator, or respondents who also spoke English, or train myself to speak multiple languages better.

In the future, I hope to continue to document the trajectory of the ecosexual movement. Where does the ecosexual movement go from here? Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle are undeniably charismatic leaders who popularized the ecosexual movement. Each brings a significant amount of social capital, including a network of different people and resources for various ecosexual projects, as they continue to generate interest in the concept of ecosexuality with wider public audiences. When I interviewed the couple, Stephens described the "little ecology" of their ecosexual collaboration:

Beth: What's really nice about our collaboration is that I bring people to this that Annie would never have access to. She brings people to this. People I wouldn't really have access to.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Beth: She makes me be nice when I'm being an asshole. I make her be like a little bit...

Annie: Smarter. [chuckles]

Beth: No, you're brilliant. I make her just focus a little bit. We balance each other in that way. It's like we're a little ecology with very different parts functioning here. And you know, as a whole, we work very well.

Will the ecosexual movement continue to grow, or at least maintain, if Stephens and Sprinkle are no longer leading the performance art branch that popularized it? Will new leaders emerge from younger generations? Will the E.A.R.T.H. Lab be able to stick to its mission with pressures for ongoing funding? Will the radical potential of the ecosexual movement eventually be co-opted by mainstream interests? Will the movement go into abeyance? Will more factions develop? Will a different collective action frame emerge?

Additionally, future research should document the diffusion of the ecosexual movement and its strategies and tactics to other parts of the world. For example, I was informed as I was finishing this project about a Hong Kong-based Chinese artist and professor, Bo Zheng who produces socially and ecologically engaged art and film. He recently interviewed Stephens and Sprinkle about ecosexuality and shared some of his similar work with them. Why is experimental art linking issues of the environment and sexuality resonating with people at this cultural moment in different parts of the world? Who is ecosexuality resonating with? What locations, cultures, and groups does it generally not resonate with? For example, in this study, we found that some indigenous people expressed an initial conflict with the concept of "Lover Earth," but after exploring it further, later identified as an ally to the movement. Why do some people choose to participate in ecosexual events without personally identifying as ecosexual? Similarly, historical research could explore past intersectional linkages of the environment and sexuality, such as in the German youth Wandervögel movement at the turn of the previous century (e.g., Heineman 1989).

APPENDIX A: ECOSEXUAL MOVEMENT TIMELINE

- circa 2000 – “ecosexual” used as a dating term in print and online; greening of sex toy industry begins
- 2000 – LaTigresa’s “Striptease for the Trees”
- 2004 – Nonprofit organization, Fuck For Forest founded in Oslo, Norway
- 2005 – Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle launch their *Love Art Laboratory (LAL)* performance art wedding project and website*
- 2006 – Online retail store, Earth Erotics became the first sustainability-oriented U.S. adult boutique
- 2006 – Planet Earth Singles green dating ecosexual website launched
- 2008 – Stephens and Sprinkle perform the 1st ecosexual wedding in their *LAL* project, Green Wedding to the Earth in Santa Cruz, CA, USA
- 2008 – “Queer Zagreb” Green Wedding to the Earth by Stephens and Sprinkle in Zagreb, Croatia
- 2009 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Blue Wedding to the Sky in Oxford, England
- 2009 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Blue Wedding to the Sea in Venice, Italy
- 2009 – *Ecosexual* cabaret debuts at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in Australia
- 2010 – 1st book on ecosexuality published, *Eco-Sex* by Stefanie Iris Weiss of New York, NY, USA
- 2010 – “Dirty Girl” Zine released online relating sex workers to the Earth by Sequoia Redd and Ecowhore
- 2010 – Ecosexual workshop exploring non-monogamy, fluidity organized by Serena Anderlini-D’Onofrio
- 2010 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Purple Wedding to the Moon in Los Angeles County, CA, USA
- 2010 – 1st Ecosex Symposium “Honeymoon,” held the day after Stephens and Sprinkle’s Purple Wedding to the Moon in Santa Monica, CA, USA
- 2010 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains in Athens, OH, USA
- 2011 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s White Wedding to the Snow in Ottawa, Canada
- 2011 – Unveiling of the Ecosex Manifesto to kick off Ecosex Symposium II in San Francisco, CA, USA
- 2011 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Silver Wedding to the Rocks in Barcelona, Spain
- 2011 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s Black Wedding to the Coal in Gijon, Spain
- 2011 – Stephens and Sprinkle’s White Wedding to the Sun in San Francisco, CA, USA
- 2012 – 1st Portland EcoSex Symposium in Oregon co-organized by Gabriella Cordova and Rev. Teri D. Ciacchi
- 2012 – Stephens and Sprinkle launch website, sexecology.org branding their performance art branch
- 2013 – 1st international ecosex symposium, a three-part production by Stephens and Sprinkle held in Madrid, Spain; Bourges, France; and Colchester, England (with an add-on event in London, England)

2013 – *Marry a Tree, Save Your Oxygen* project began by Richard Torres in Latin America**

2013 – 1st Ecosex Convergence held outdoors at an intentional community (that re-branded itself as ecosexual) in Wahkiacus, WA, co-produced by Lindsay Hagamen and Rev. Teri Ciacchi

2013 – 1st ecosex film debuted by Stephens with Sprinkle, *Goodbye Gauley Mountain: An Ecosexual Love Story*

2014 – *Te Amo Playa Azul I Love You*, 1st plural ecosexual wedding to the beach in Puerto Rico by Anderlini-D’Onofrio

2014 – “Queers for the Climate” #Q4C parade contingent and the Queer Climate Chautauqua + Queer Planet Installation at the Queer New York International Arts Festival to mobilize LGBTQ support for the People’s Climate March, New York, NY, USA***

2015 – *Ecosexuality: When Nature Inspires the Arts of Love* published, co-editors Anderlini-D’Onofrio and Hagamen

2015 – Condensed version of manifesto, Ecosex Manifesto 2.0 created in collaboration with Guillermo Gómez-Peña of performance art troupe, La Pocha Nostra

2015 – “Here Come the Ecosexuals” parade contingent in the San Francisco Pride Parade organized by Stephens and Sprinkle

2015 – E.A.R.T.H. Lab (Environmental Art, Research, Theory, Happenings) opens at University of California-Santa Cruz (UCSC), co-founded by Stephens and Sprinkle

2016 – *Ecosexual Bathhouse* radical live art encounters debuts at Next Wave Festival in Melbourne, Australia by art duo Pony Express

2016 – Ecosexual movement covered in mainstream media publication focused on the environment, *Outside* magazine

2017 – Ecosexual movement covered in mainstream media publication associated with sexuality, *Playboy*

2017 – 1st ecosex symposium hosted by E.A.R.T.H. Lab at UCSC, “Environmentalism Outside the Box: An Ecosex Symposium”

2017 – Ecosexual movement covered in mainstream media youth publication, *Teen Vogue*

2017 – 2nd ecosex film, *Water Makes Us Wet: An Ecosexual Adventure* by Stephens and Sprinkle debuted at the international art exhibition, documenta 14 in Kassel, Germany

2018 – E.A.R.T.H. Lab co-hosted “Seedbed: A Soil Symposium” with UCSC Farm and Garden, and the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS)

2019 – *Water Makes Us Wet: An Ecosexual Adventure* screened during the Doc Fortnight Film Festival at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan, New York, New York, USA

Forthcoming (2019) – Ecosex book by Stephens and Sprinkle contracted by U of Minnesota Press, *Assuming the Ecosexual Position*

* - denotes incorporated ecosexual events later

** - denotes not an ecosexual event, but same collective action frame and radical performance tactics

*** - denotes not explicitly an ecosexual event, but overlapping networks in addition to frame and tactics

APPENDIX B: STEPHENS AND SPRINKLE'S *LOVE ART LABORATORY* WEDDING SERIES

YEAR	CHAKRA	COLOR(S)	THEMES	LOCATION(S)	NATURE ELEMENT(S)
2005	1 st	Red	Survival/Security	New York, NY, USA	
2006	2 nd	Orange	Creativity/Sexuality	San Francisco, CA, USA	
2007	3 rd	Yellow	Courage/Power	Calgary, Canada	
2008	4 th	Green	Love/Compassion	*Santa Cruz, CA, USA	Earth
				*Zagreb, Croatia	Earth
2009	5 th	Blue	Communication/Sexecology	*Oxford, England	Sky
				*Venice, Italy	Sea
2010	6 th	Purple	Intuition/Wisdom	*Altadena, CA, USA	Moon
				*Athens, OH, USA	Appalachian Mountains
2011	7 th	White	Bliss/Union	*Ottawa, Canada	Snow
		Silver		* Barcelona, Spain	Rocks
		Black		*Gijon, Spain	Coal
		White		*San Francisco, CA, USA	Sun

* - denotes ecosexual wedding

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL *LOVE ART LABORATORY* WEDDING FIGURES

Green Wedding Queer Zagreb, Croatia (Year 4) Program Cover.

Elizabeth M. Stephens & Annie Sprinkle's

ZELENO VJENČANJE **GREEN WEDDING** **QUEER ZAGREB**

LJUBAVI/ SUOSJEĆANJE/ ZEMLJA/ EKOLOGIJA
LOVE/COMPASSION/ EARTH/ENVIRONMENTALISM

09. LISTOPADA 2008.



Mi, Elizabeth Stephens i Annie Sprinkle,
posvetile smo se stvaranju projekata koji istražuju i stvaraju ljubav.
Po uzoru na „14 Years of Living Art“ Linda Montano, svaka je godina posvećena drugoj temi i boji, i svake godine organiziramo vjenčanje. Ovo je naša četvrta godina.
Ne tražimo materijalne darove, već pozivamo ljude na suradnju u stvaranju vjenčanja. Ovo su divni ljudi koji su nam pomogli u stvaranju Queer Zagreb Zelenog vjenčanja. Zahvalne smo svakome od njih, i tebi jer si ovdje.

◆◆◆

We, Elizabeth Stephens & Annie Sprinkle,
have dedicated ourselves to doing projects that explore and generate love.
Inspired by Linda Montano's 14 Years of Living Art, each year is devoted to a different theme and color, and each year we do a wedding. This is our fourth year. We ask for no material gifts, however we invite people to collaborate of the creation of the wedding.
These are the wonderful people who have helped to create our Green Wedding Queer Zagreb. We are so very grateful to each of them, and to you for being here.

Green Wedding Queer Zagreb, Croatia (Year 4) Ceremony.



Blue Wedding to the Sky, Oxford, England (Year 5) Invitation.

Grove House
44 Ilfley Turn
Oxford, OX4 4DU


ANNIE SPRINKLE & ELIZABETH STEPHENS'
BLUE WEDDING #5

Be a part of an extraordinary day of art, performance, fun and celebration as renowned U.S. artists Elizabeth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle of the Love Art Lab are joined by a host of collaborators for a unique afternoon extravaganza.

Join ourosexual brides as they make sacred vows to their lover the SKY.

Sup blue bubbly, nibble on a slice of blue wedding cake, catch the blue bridal bouquet, come dressed in blue and win a prize for the best outfit, enjoy the entertainment, let the music wait over you, step out with Dorothy like Prior's dancing delights, take in the art works and explore the hidden delights of the garden at the delightful Grove House, previous haunting ground of Graham Greene and Lewis Carroll.

Book at www.grovehouse.info
Sunday 14th June
2 - 6pm
£12




For workshop booking email luki@dtheatronormed.com
0207 734 2492
An International Workshop Festival Initiative
In association with
theatre nomad
Love art Lab
Grove house

Associated workshops:

MAKING LOVE INTO ART & ART INTO LOVE
A week-long workshop programme led by Beth and Annie exploring ways of making performance, installation, intervention and fine art inspired by the work of their Love Art Laboratory.
Monday 8th to Friday 12th June - 11.30 - 4.30 - £180

ADVENTURES OF THE LOVE ART LABORATORY
An intimate, informal show and talk evening with Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens who will share their experiences of working with their Love Art Lab project through video and photo documentation, mini performances, and discussion. The evening will be inside the Rotunda at Grove House and numbers are strictly limited. You are advised to book early at www.grovehouse.info.
Friday 12th June - 7 - 9 pm - £20

BLUE
A workshop exploring the work of Yves Klein in which participants will be able to make prints from their naked bodies and also decorate the walls of the Rotunda at Grove House with prints of their bodies, as part of the installation for the following day's BLUE WEDDING. The workshop will be led by Luke Dixon with the participation of Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens.
Saturday 13th June - 11am and 3pm (separate workshops - book for one only) £20 (limited to 20 people each)



Blue Wedding to the Sky, Oxford, England (Year 5) Ceremony.



Blue Wedding to the Sea, Venice, Italy (Year 5) – Excerpt from the Artists' Statement.

THIS PAST YEAR, WE MARRIED the Earth in a magnificent redwood tree grove in California, we married the Sky in Oxford, England, and we had what may have been the first queer wedding in the Balkans, in Zagreb, Croatia. Hundreds of people attended these weddings and helped to create them through their generous collaborations.

FOR OUR SEVENTH WEDDING, AND IN OUR BLUE YEAR, we will marry the Sea. We are passionately in love with her and desire to take care of her in order to help save her. We are eco-sexuals, meaning that we find nature incredibly romantic, extraordinarily sensual, and an exquisite lover. Additionally, we are "sexecologists," who combine sexology and ecology, and we intend to make the environmental movement a little sexier.

WHY MARRY THE SEA IN VENICE? During the Renaissance, the Doge (chief magistrate) decreed that, "Venice must marry the sea as a man marries a woman and thus become her Lord." So each year the Doge would go out on a boat and drop a ring into the water. But can people really Lord over the Sea? What is perfectly clear, is that people do have the power to destroy her, and are rapidly doing so. We will follow the tradition of marrying the Sea in Venice—as two women who have moved beyond the dominant-male and submissive-female dynamic, as seductive eco-sexual artists, and as global citizens who care deeply about the welfare of our planet.

THE FEAR SOCIETY PAVILION IS THE PERFECT PLACE for this wedding as we are afraid of the total destruction of our beautiful environment. The Sea has a fast growing cancer made of islands of plastic the size of Texas. She is suffocating from gasses caused by our pollution. Globally, 90% of her large fish have been wiped out. She's overheating. Her reefs have been brutally destroyed. She's being raped and... Need we go on? And we simply can't live without her.

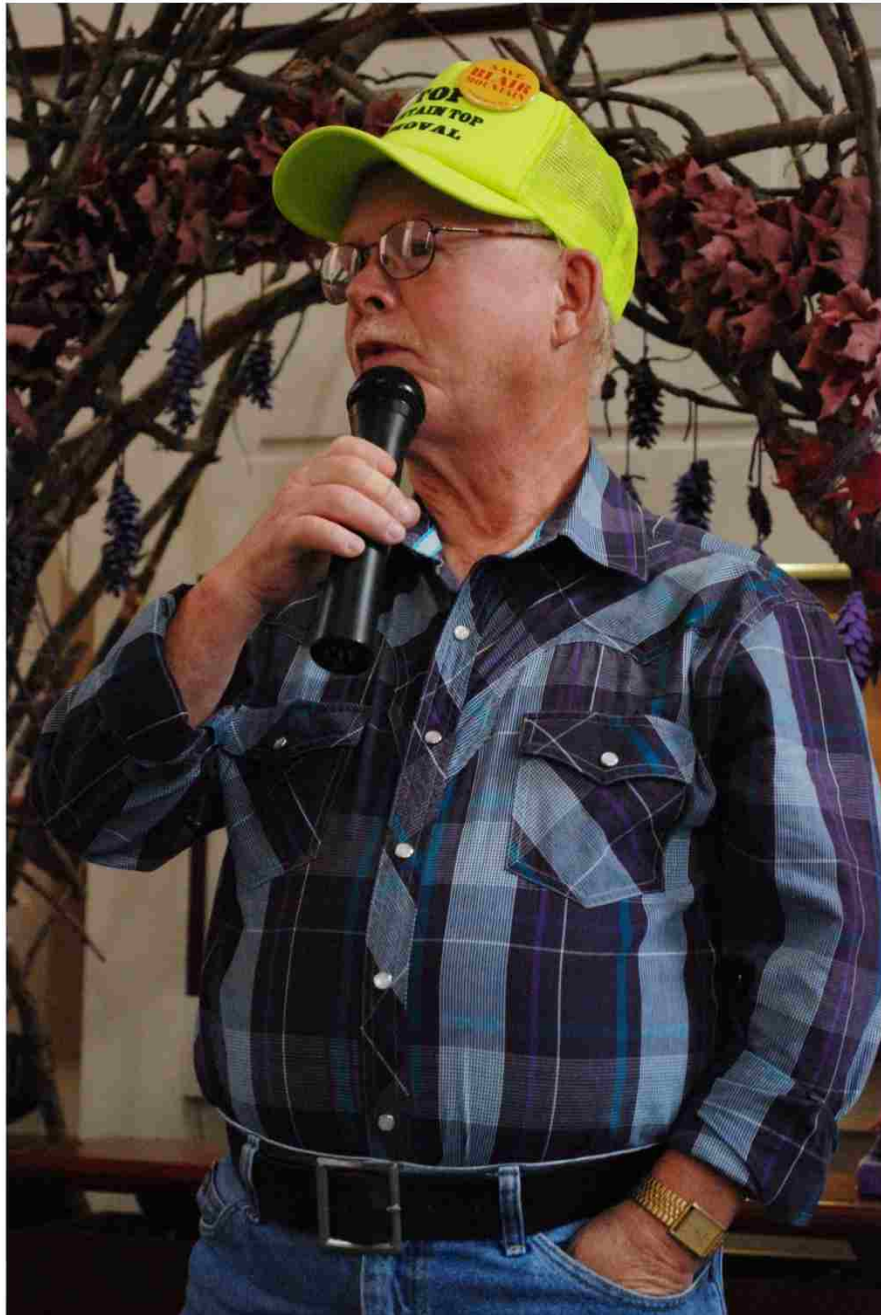
LOVING THE SEA EROTICALLY takes us all deliciously deep, deep, deep inside our primordial selves. Our bodies are made largely of water so in fact we are the Sea. We hope that our guests will take vows to love and protect Sea along with us. Now let's get wet!

ELIZABETH M. STEPHENS & ANNIE M. SPRINKLE

Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains, Athens, Ohio, USA (Year 6) – Ceremony at Galbreath Memorial Chapel at University of Ohio.




Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains, Athens, Ohio, USA (Year 6) – Larry Gibson also known as “Keeper of the Mountains” (1946-September 9, 2012).



Purple Wedding to the Appalachian Mountains, Athens, Ohio, USA (Year 6) – Performing the Song, “Let’s All Be Keepers of the Mountains.”



White Wedding to the Snow, Ottawa, Canada (Year 7) Invitation and Ceremony.



Annie Sprinkle + Elizabeth Stephens
White Wedding to the Snow

Presented by / Présenté par la **Galerie SAW Gallery** in collaboration with / avec la collaboration de **Inside Out LGBT Film and Video Festival, La Petite Mort Gallery, University of Ottawa / Université d'Ottawa, Sexual Overtones + Venus Envy**

Presented in collaboration with La Petite Mort Gallery, the University of Ottawa, Sexual Overtones, Venus Envy and the Inside Out LGBT Film and Video Festival

Saturday, March 26, 2011
Saint Brigid's Centre for the Arts
310 St. Patrick Street, Ottawa

Gather at 2:30PM
Ceremony at 3PM
Reception from 4:30PM to 6:30PM

DRESS: Please wear as much white as possible and dress in the themes of water, snow, bliss. Be as formal or informal, as costume-y or sculptural as you like. Please **DO** out-do the brides.

BRING: Each guest please bring ten pieces of recycled scrap paper to crumple and throw for a "snow ball fight"

Advance tickets: \$10. At the door: \$15.
Tickets are available at Venus Envy (320 Lisgar Street, Ottawa) and Galerie SAW Gallery (67 Nicholas Street, Ottawa), and by e-mail at clubsaw@artengine.ca.

Funders: The Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Trillium Foundation

Galerie SAW Gallery
67 Nicholas Street, Ottawa ON, Canada K1N 7B9
Information : (613) 236-6181

"Together we will shift the metaphor from 'Earth as Mother' to 'Earth as Lover' and marry the Snow in order to garner more love, care and appreciation for water—and for the sheer pleasure of it."

Annie Sprinkle + Elizabeth Stephens



Silver Wedding to the Rocks, Barcelona, Spain (Year 7) with Rock Sculpture “Mr. Rocco” and Cutting Wedding Cake.



Black Wedding to the Coal, Gijon, Spain (Year 7) Ceremony and Performance.



White Wedding to the Sun, San Francisco, CA, USA (Year 7) Performance and Celebration.



APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(IRB approval granted: Protocol #1408-4905)

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

OPENING QUESTIONS

Do you identify as an ecosexual activist? If no → Ecosexual advocate? Ally? Other?

How do you refer to yourself when people ask you what you do with the ecosexual movement?

How long have you been an ecosexual activist, ecosexual advocate or participated in the ecosexual movement (*or use their phrasing*)?

What does the term “ecosexual” mean to you/ how would you define “ecosexual”?

ACTIVIST PARTICIPATION

Tell me about your involvement in the ecosexual movement. What drew you to being active?
When did you get involved with the ecosexual movement/how long have you been involved?

What sort of everyday activities do you do to help with the ecosexual movement?

Have you helped with organizing ecosexual events or conferences? Which ones? In what countries or locations?

Have you actively participated in ecosexual events or conferences? In what role (e.g., speaking, performing)? In what countries or locations?

Have you attended ecosexual events or conferences (without organizing or actively participating in a role)? Which ones? In what countries or locations? Other stuff?

What do you think are the goals of the ecosexual movement?

Do you think these _____ goals have been achieved? If no → Why not? Are they achievable?

What’s the hardest thing you’ve faced as an activist? The easiest?

What’s worked within the movement?

What hasn’t worked for the movement?

Do you think things important to the movement get overlooked by media or researchers, but are important to the movement? Can you give me examples?

What do you think you have gotten out of being involved with the ecosexual movement?

Do you think the ecosexual movement leaves out anyone, makes it uncomfortable for someone to be involved?

Does it matter who the key organizers are in the ecosexual movement? How? Why/why not?

How would you personally benefit from the goals and societal changes of the ecosexual movement?

Indirectly, as a member of society (does changing environmental and sexuality beliefs and policy change society? If so, how?) Directly, to you as an ecosexual/ally?

If goals are achieved, would you continue to be an activist? Why?

Do you think the ecosexual movement has affected public perception? Media coverage? Public policy?

Do you **write or blog** publicly about ecosexuality? In what capacities? (*op-eds, blogs, about ecosexuality as a movement, about ecosexuality as an identity, about ecosexuality as a practice, fiction, etc.*)
- audience? (*other ecosexuals? General audience? Policy makers?*)

How does your writing support your beliefs as an activist?

Do you create art about ecosexuality, like for the ecosexual performance art wedding ceremonies? If yes → How does that support your beliefs as an activist?

What do you think about ecosexual performance art wedding ceremonies as a movement tactic?

Do you talk to the media to advocate for ecosexuality? If yes → in what capacity? How did it go? If no → Why not?

Describe your relationship to other folks in the ecosexual movement, friends? Associates? Family?

What role, if any, do you think research plays in advocating the goals of the ecosexual movement? Other strategies or tactics?

LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

Are there people within the ecosexual movement who do ecosexual work fulltime? What does that entail?

Do they get paid for it? If so, from where does funding come?

How do people within the movement stay in contact?

How did the ecosexual movement start? How do they/you recruit new members?

OTHER ADVOCACY, INTERSECTING ISSUES

What role(s) do you play within the ecosexual movement? What strategies do you most frequently use?

Were you part of another activist org, like one for environmental justice, LGBTQ rights, or other sexual rights (e.g., sex worker, polyamorous)? (if so, do these orgs work with the ecosexual movement? What do you bring to the ecosexual movement as a ____ activist?)

What do you do to advocate for other causes/what do you do with this other movement or organization?

Have you mimicked any of those strategies from other causes/organizations in the ecosexual movement?
Have they brought results?

Which other social movements or movement organizations inspire you?

Has the ecosexual movement attempted to connect with other pressure groups and organizations outside of the ecosexual cause? Do you think that's a good idea? If so, which? And how? What does that relationship look like now? Were there any goals that were reached because of this collaboration?

Does your family know that you're an advocate/activist? Do your friends? Why did you decide to come out to them about your advocacy work?

-How has being part of an activist movement helped your work/life?

MOVEMENT BRANCHES/FACTIONS

What branches or factions exist within the ecosexual movement? How do they differ? How did they form? How do they interact? What are the effects (positive or negative)?

With what branch(es) or faction(s) do you most closely identify? Why?

OPPOSITIONAL FRAMES

What do you think about climate change?

What do you think of people who say that climate change is a hoax (climate change-deniers), or that say humans are not causing/significantly contributing to climate change?

What do you think about the moral framing of sexuality?

What do you think about other activists who argue for only heterosexual, monogamous relationships? Can you describe and reflect on their activist tactics, their goals, as you see them?

POLICY

Do you believe you can achieve policy change, why or why not? How do you think policy change would make your life as an ecosexual different?

Have you ever required legal assistance, like from a lawyer or court advocate?

(If yes)→ For what? Has it been resolved? How did you find that person?

Are you familiar with the laws around sexual behavior? Environmental protection?

In general, what are your thoughts on the regulation of sexuality? The environment?

RESOURCES

Tell me about your ecosexual activist work or projects. Do you work independently? With collaborators?

Who helps you with your activist work?

How do you fund your ecosexual activism?

-How do you balance ecosexual activism with another job, or with family responsibilities?

NON-ECOSEXUAL ORIENTED WORK

Do you have another job(s)?

(if yes) → Doing what? Part time or full time?

If you are still engaged in ecosexual activism, do you plan on continuing to do ecosexual activism?

Why or why not?

How do you balance working and activism? Is it difficult?

DEMOGRAPHICS

What is your ethnic or racial identity?

I am going to read a range of ages, please stop me and tell me which one applies to you:

Are you:

18 to 22 years of age?

23 to 27 years of age?

28 to 32 years of age?

33 to 37 years of age?

38 to 42 years of age?

43 to 47 years of age?

48 to 52 years of age?

53 to 57 years of age?

58 to 62 years of age?

63 to 67 years of age?

Older than 67 years old?

Where are you from?

How long have you lived there?

Are you a U.S. citizen?

(If yes) → What state were you born in?

(If not) → What country(ies) are you a citizen of?

Why did you come to the U.S.? How long ago did you come to the U.S.?

Do you want to become a U.S. citizen?

(If yes) → Have you begun the application process? Why/Why not?

(If no) → Why not?

What is your gender identity?

(If transgender) → How long have you identified as (*the gender they indicated*)?

How do you identify your sexuality?

What is your current marital or intimate partnership status?

How many children under age 18 live in your household?

Including yourself, how many persons live in your household?

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

What is the highest degree or level of school your parents completed?

Mother?

Father?

What is your religious preference?

How many income earners live in your household (age 18 or older)?

I am going to read a range of yearly household incomes – the total combined money of all members of your household that are 18 years of age or older – please stop me and tell me which one applies to you:

Less than \$15,000

\$15,000-24,999

\$25,000-34,999

\$35,000-49,999

\$50,000-74,999

\$75,000-99,999

\$100,000-149,000

\$150,000+

CLOSING QUESTIONS

Is there anything you would like to tell me that you think is important, that I have not asked?

Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for talking with me! I may contact you in the future for a follow-up interview, if you are agreeable. Finally, if you have any recommendations for other people who might like to be interviewed, please let me know.

APPENDIX E: IRB INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT



INFORMED CONSENT

Department of Sociology

TITLE OF STUDY: In Pursuit of Social Justice at the Postmodern Turn: Intersectional Activism through the Lens of the Ecosexual Movement

INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Barbara Brents, Principal Investigator, and Jennifer Reed, MA

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Barbara Brents at **702-895-0261**.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu**.

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to examine the origins, development, organizational form, resources and ideologies of the ecosexual movement. The ecosexual movement blends environmental and sexual rights activism. We are conducting semi-structured interviews with self-identified ecosexual activists and current or former ecosexual movement leaders/organizers. This interview includes general questions about movement ideologies, activist participation and networks, basic demographics, resources and work.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you identify as an ecosexual or current/former ecosexual movement leader/organizer, who is over the age of 18 years old.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: Participate in a private interview with the researcher at a mutually agreed upon public physical location or, if more convenient, via telephone or internet (i.e., Skype or Google Hangout). The interview will take about one to two hours to complete. You will be asked questions about activist activities, your background, resources, work, and your life in general. You can choose to not answer any question and may suggest important topics to cover with the interviewer. You can choose to stop the interview at any time with no penalty. This interview will be audio recorded with your permission.

Benefits of Participation

There *may not* be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to contribute new knowledge to the growing literature on intersectional social movements. With the recent wave of global protest movements, intersectional activism has just recently become important as more movements focus on broader solutions to social justice challenges and address multiple issues simultaneously.

The ecosexual movement provides a case study of an intersectional movement – blending environmental and sexual rights activism – that has developed in the quest for broad social change in an increasingly global society. Examining its structure, development, and ideologies will contribute to understanding this recent wave of movements and their potential impact on social change.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. Some questions are of a sensitive nature and you may become uncomfortable answering some of the questions, including questions about gender identity and sexual orientation.

Cost /Compensation

There *will not* be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take one to two hours of your time. You *will not* be compensated for your time.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. However, since some prospective participants are so key to the movement and/or public figures, full anonymity may not be possible. Respondents can choose to use a pseudonym or their real names. As this research is sociological in nature, the researchers are examining structural reasons for respondents' involvement in the movement; therefore, the focus will be on stories and patterns rather than the identity of any individual. Researchers will honor respondents' requests to not be identified and to keep certain portions of information off the record by clearly marking on the informed consent forms and subsequent transcripts, thus making no reference in written or oral materials that could link them to the study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for 3 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with UNLV. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

Audio Taping:

I agree to be audio taped for the purpose of this research study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

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11, 2016 (<http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/madeliene-wilson/ecosexual-mff-179281>).

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Wright, Erik Olin. 2010. *Envisioning Real Utopias*. London and Brooklyn, NY: Versa.

Zimmer, Lori. 2010. "Wallpapered Dumpsters Change How We View Urban Waste." *Inhabitat*, December 28. Retrieved April 4, 2018 (<https://inhabitat.com/wallpapered-dumpsters-change-how-we-view-urban-waste/>).

CURRICULUM VITAE

Jennifer J. Reed

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Sociology. University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2019.

- Dissertation: *In Pursuit of Social Justice at the Postmodern Turn: Intersectional Activism through the Lens of the Ecosexual Movement*
(Committee: Barbara G. Brents, Chair; Robert Futrell, Ranita Ray, Marcia M. Gallo)

M.A., Sociology. The University of Akron (Ohio), 2000.

- Thesis: *Social Support and the Self in Computer-Mediated Communication*

B.A., Psychology. Mount Union College (Ohio), 1992.

- Graduated cum laude; Psi Kappa Omega; Kitzmiller Psychology Prize

Certificates

- CCAR Recovery Coach Academy Trainer. Center for Addiction Recovery Training, Connecticut Community of Addiction Recovery, 2018.
- CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). Cambridge Assessment English, University of Cambridge through ELS Language Centers-Seattle, 2017.

AREAS OF INTEREST

Gender and Sexualities

Environmental Sociology

Law and Society

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Politics, Social Movements, and Social Change

Health and Medicine

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Crystal A. Jackson, **Jennifer J. Reed**, and Barbara G. Brents. 2017. "Strange Confluences: Radical Feminism and Evangelical Christianity as Drivers of U.S. Neo-Abolitionism." Pp. 66-85 in *Feminism, Prostitution and the State: The Politics of Neo-Abolitionism* (Routledge Studies in Gender and Global Politics), edited by Eilis Ward and Gillian Wylie. New York and London: Routledge.

- Review: Joyce Outshoorn. 2019. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*. doi: 10.1007/s13178-018-0369-2

Crystal A. Jackson and **Jennifer J. Reed**. 2016. "Missing Rights and Misplaced Justice for Sex Workers in the United States." Pp. 15-23 in *Agenda for Social Justice: Solutions for 2016*, edited by Glenn Muschert, Brian Klocke, Robert Perrucci, and Jon Shefner. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2015. "From Ecofeminism to Ecosexuality: Queering the Environmental Movement." Pp. 92-102 in *Ecosexuality: When Nature Inspires the Arts of Love*, edited by SerenaGaia Anderlini-D'Onofrio and Lindsay Hagamen. Puerto Rico: 3WayKiss/CreateSpace.

- Review: Nicole Richter. 2018. *Sexualities* 21(3):489-499.
- Winner of 2015 UNLV Sociology Outstanding Graduate Paper Award.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2015. "Sex Work and Sex Trafficking: Influencing State Policy on a Complex Social Issue." Pp. 124-128 in *Sociologists in Action on Inequalities: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*, edited by Shelley K. White, Jonathan M. White and Kathleen Odell Korgen. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2013. "Gender (Re)Production of Emotion Work and Feeling Rules in Second Life." Pp. 77-87 in *Women and Second Life: Essays on Virtual Identity, Work and Play*, edited by Julia Achterberg and Dianna Baldwin. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2010-Present **Intersectional Activism through the Lens of the Ecosexual Movement**
Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
Advisor: Barbara G. Brents
Supported by Barrick Graduate Fellowship and Summer Doctoral Research Fellowships, UNLV Graduate College.
- Managed multi-sited ethnographic field work at various social movement events across four U.S. Western states; conducted in-depth interviews with organizers and participants, and content analysis of websites and related literature
- 2013-2014 **Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Community Intervention Project**
Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
Principal Investigator, Las Vegas Site: Andrew Spivak
Supported by U.S. Department of Justice, Center for Court Innovation in New York.
- Conducted outreach and in-depth face-to-face interviews with youth involved in the sex trade in Las Vegas as part of a national multi-city ethnographic and social network study
- 2012 **Public Policy Research Consultant, Summer**
Sagebrush Institute, Las Vegas, Nevada.
Supervisor: Justin J. McAfee
- Synthesized research and co-wrote a policy guide covering the top ten social policy issues facing the state of Nevada
- 2009 **DUSK (Destigmatizing and Understanding Street Kids) Project: Stand Down for Homeless Youth, Spring**
Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
Supervisor: Kate Hausbeck Korgan
- Conducted in-depth face-to-face interviews with homeless youth in Las Vegas
- 2008-2009 **Environmental Research Consultant**
Department of Environmental Engineering and Stormwater Management Academy, University of Central Florida.
Principal Investigators: Leesa Souto and Brent K. Marshall
Supported by Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- Worked with an interdisciplinary team of environmental engineers, conservation biologists, and social scientists; conducted in-depth face-to-face interviews with homeowners on both coasts of Central Florida about 1) lawn fertilizer and water use, and 2) landscaping practices; analyzed interview and phone survey data using SPSS; co-wrote report

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Book Reviews

Jennifer J. Reed. 2019. Review of Robyn Lee, *The Ethics and Politics of Breastfeeding: Power, Pleasure, Poetics*. Toronto, ON: U of Toronto Press. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, May.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2016. Review of Kurt Schock, *Civil Resistance Today*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, January.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2015. Review of Hein-Anton van der Heijden (ed.), *Handbook of Political Citizenship and Social Movements*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, June.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2015. Review of Joel Best and Kathleen A. Bogle, *Kids Gone Wild: From Rainbow Parties to Sexting, Understanding the Hype over Teen Sex*. New York: New York U Press. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, February.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2014. Review of Robert K. Schaeffer, *Social Movements and Global Social Change: The Rising Tide*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, August. (Featured on publisher's website.)

Jennifer J. Reed. 2014. Review of Janice G. Raymond, *Not a Choice, Not a Job: Exposing the Myths about Prostitution and the Global Sex Trade*. Dulles, VA: Potomac Books. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, March.

Encyclopedia Entries

Jennifer J. Reed and Barbara G. Brents. 2016. "Sex Work and Prostitution, Female," and "Sex Work and Prostitution, Male." *The SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Research Reports

Sebring Frehner and **Jennifer J. Reed.** 2012. "Nevada 2012: A Vision for Our Future." Prepared for Sagebrush Institute.

Leesa Souto, Deborah Barr, Mary Collins, Gabrielle Milch, **Jennifer J. Reed**, and M. Denny Ritner. 2009. "Wekiva Residential Fertilizer Practices: A Phase II Report." Prepared for Florida Department of Environmental Protection with University of Central Florida Stormwater Management Academy.

Professional Newsletters

Jennifer J. Reed. 2013. Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities Division Newsletter, Society for the Study of Social Problems.

- "Notes on Teaching -- Class Exercise: Hooking Up in College." (Fall)
- "Featured Member: Interview with Verta Taylor." (Spring)

Jennifer J. Reed. 2012. "Building a Public Education Counter-Movement in Las Vegas." *In Critical Solidarity* 11(2):6-7. Labor and Labor Movements Newsletter, American Sociological Association.

HONORS AND AWARDS

2014-2015	Barrick Graduate Fellowship (\$15,000), UNLV Graduate College
2017 & 2018	Summer Doctoral Research Fellowship (\$7,000), UNLV Graduate College
2019	Medallion Recipient, UNLV Graduate College
2015	Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award, UNLV Department of Sociology
2014	Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) Merit Award, UNLV
2013	Outstanding Graduate Student Public Sociology Award, UNLV Department of Sociology
2013	American Sociological Association Student Forum Travel Award (\$225), Annual Meetings, New York, New York
2013	Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Inductee, UNLV
2013	GPSA Service Award, UNLV
2011	Society for the Study of Social Problems Thomas C. Hood Social Action Award (\$1,000), Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP)-Las Vegas
2010	Student Ambassador (Competitive), Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Christopher T. Conner, **Jennifer J. Reed**, and Cedric Gonzalez. 2018. "Opioid (Ab)Use in the Heartland: Moving from Theoretical Explanations to Applied Approaches." Annual Meetings of the Southern Sociological Society. New Orleans, LA.

Brents, Barbara G., **Jennifer J. Reed**, Jason Scott, and Kathryn Korgan. 2017. "Legal and Illegal Prostitution in the U.S.: The Two Faces of Neoliberalism." Panel: Policies and Policing: Regulating Sex Work. International Meeting on Law and Society. Mexico City (CDMX), Mexico.

Anna C. Smedley-Lopez, **Jennifer J. Reed**, and Barbara G. Brents. 2016. "Online Community of Practice: Creating a Master Introductory Sociology Course." Annual Meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association. Oakland, CA.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2015. "Where Intersectional Activism Intersects: Comparing the Ecosexual and Occupy Movements." Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Chicago, IL.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2014. "Why Evidence-Based Policy Is Imperative: The Real-World Consequences of Ideology-Based Sex Trafficking Laws." Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. San Francisco, CA. (*invited panel*)

Jennifer J. Reed. 2014. "*The Millennial Generation: Trust, Community and the Future of Democracy.*" Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. San Francisco, CA.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2014. "Behind from Top to Bottom: The Experiences of Women in the Academy." Winter Meeting of the Sociologists for Women in Society. Nashville, TN. (*panel participant*)

Jennifer J. Reed. 2013. "Challenging Ideology at the Intersections of Environmental and Sexuality Issues: The Ecosexual Movement." Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. New York, NY.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2013. "Organizing for Good Policy: Sex Trafficking and Beyond." Topic: Building Coalitions and Legislative Testimony. Desiree Alliance Conference. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2013. “What Is So Hard about Organizing for Sex Worker Rights in Sin City? Challenges, Successes and Politics in the Brothel State.” Annual Meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association. Reno, NV. (*invited panel*)

Jennifer J. Reed. 2012. “Sexecology & the Ecosexual Movement: Making Global Social Critique More Sexy, Fun, and Diverse.” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Denver, CO.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2012. Roundtable: Ethnographic Approaches to Health Care Delivery. Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Denver, CO.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2011. Special Roundtable: Social Action Award Winner, Sex Workers Outreach Project-Las Vegas. Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2011. “Marrying the Moon? Exploring Sexecology and the Ecosexual Movement.” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2011. “Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM): An Ethnographic Study of Practitioners and Practices in Las Vegas.” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Southwestern Social Science Association. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2011. “Marrying the Moon? The Symbolic Making of the Sexecology Movement and a Collective Ecosexual Identity.” Presented at the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction Couch-Stone Symposium. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2010. “Female (hetero)Sexual Desire: What Do Women *Really* Want?” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality. Las Vegas, NV.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2009. “Gender (Re)Production of Emotion Work and Feeling Rules in Second Life.” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. San Francisco, CA.

Jennifer J. Reed. 2008. “The Millennial Generation: Is Community Evolving?” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Southwestern Social Science Association. Las Vegas, NV.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

University of Nevada-Las Vegas

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2019 | Principles of Sociology Online, Spring - two sections (50 students each) |
| 2018 | Principles of Sociology Online, Spring and Fall - two sections (50 students each) |
| 2017 | Principles of Sociology Online, Spring and Fall - two sections (40-50 students each) |
| 2016 | Interdisciplinary Research Methods Online, Spring and Fall (20-25 students each)
Principles of Sociology Online, Spring and Fall (50-60 students each) |
| 2015 | Interdisciplinary Research Methods Online, Fall (20 students) |
| University of Mount Union (Alliance, OH) | |
| 2018 | Males and Females: Sociological Perspective (blended/hybrid), Fall (20 students)
Introduction to Sociology (blended/hybrid), Spring (25 students) |
| 2017 | Introduction to Sociology (blended/hybrid), Fall (25 students) |

College of Southern Nevada

2015 Introduction to (Social Science) Research Methods, Fall (25 students)
Principles of Sociology, Fall (45 students)

Curriculum Development Co-Team Leader

University of Nevada-Las Vegas, with Barbara G. Brents

2014 Online Master Course Development, Instructor's Guide, & Community of Practice for
Principles of Sociology course for the entire Department of Sociology

Instructor, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

2013 Gender and Society, Spring (35 students)

2012 Gender and Society, Fall (40 students)

Principles of Sociology, Spring - two sections, Fall (50-60 students each)

2011 Principles of Sociology, Spring and Fall - two sections (50-60 students each)

2010 Principles of Sociology, Fall - two sections (50 students each)

Selected Guest Lectures

- "The Influence of Occupy Wall Street on Contemporary Social Movements" for Social Movements and Social Change at University of Nebraska at Omaha
- "Global Prostitution Policy" for Human Sexuality at Hillsborough Community College (Tampa)
- "What Is Ecosexuality?" for Green Feminism at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- "Variations in Strip Club Policy" for Deviance at the University of Central Florida (Orlando)
- "Doing Gender in the Virtual World" for Social Problems at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Ad Hoc Reviewer

Journals: *Archives of Sexual Behavior, Critical Research on Religion, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Social Forces, Social Science Research, Studies in Law, Politics & Society*

Textbooks: *Macmillan Higher Education, SAGE Publications*

Conference Activities

2015 President, Social Movement Roundtable Session. Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Chicago, IL.

2014 Session Organizer, "Austerity Measures and the University: Workers, Students, and Social (Im)Mobility." Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. San Francisco, CA.

2013 Advisory Committee, "Media and Politics in the School Reform Movement: An Interactive Workshop" (William A. Gamson and Charlotte Ryan, coordinators). Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. New York, NY. (*invited session*)

Session Organizer, "Public Health Sustainability, Ecological Justice and Globalization." Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. New York, NY.

Panel Organizer, "Organizing for Good Policy: Sex Trafficking and Beyond." Desiree Alliance Conference. Las Vegas, NV. (*invited session*)

2012 Session Organizer and President, "Sustainability, Ecological Justice and Globalization." Annual Meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Denver, CO.

- 2011 Co-Organizer, Collective Behavior and Social Movements Workshop. Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Las Vegas, NV.
- Co-Organizer, Labor and Labor Movements Reception. Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Las Vegas, NV.
- Discussant, Poverty and Homelessness Session. Annual Meetings of the Southwestern Social Science Association. Las Vegas, NV.
- 2010 Ground Team Leader, “Working Sex: Power, Practice, and Politics.” Desiree Alliance Conference. Las Vegas, NV.
- 2008 Moderator, Latino Studies Session. Annual Meetings of the Southwestern Social Science Association. Las Vegas, NV.

University Activities

- 2018 & 2019 Grad Rebel Writing Boot Camp, Graduate College, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2014 Graduate Student Representative, Liberal Arts College, Student Technology Advisory Board, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2014 Graduate Student Representative, Nevada Faculty Alliance-AAUP Summer Institute, Hofstra University, New York
- 2014 Co-Organizer, “Assuming the Ecosexual Position: Making the Environmental Movement More Sexy, Fun, and Diverse” (Earth Day) featuring Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens, University Forum Lecture Series with UNLV Departments of Sociology, Gender & Sexuality Studies, and History
- 2012-2013 Graduate Student Marshal, Spring Commencement, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2012-2013 Treasurer and Government Relations Committee Chair, Graduate & Professional Student Association, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2012-2013 Graduate Student Representative, Office of Civic Engagement and Diversity Student Organization Funding Board, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2011-2012 Representative, Department of Sociology, Graduate & Professional Student Association, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- 2011-2012 Graduate Student Representative, Regents’ Teaching Awards Committee, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 2018-Present Board Member, Ohio CAN (Change Addiction Now)
- 2017-2018 Educational Committee Member, Ohio CAN (Change Addiction Now)
- 2017-Present Community Organization Advisory Board Member (Ohio CAN), ADAPT (Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention Team) Coalition, Columbiana County, Ohio
- 2016-2018 Assistant County Coordinator, Ohio CAN (Change Addiction Now), Columbiana County
- 2014-2016 Invited Community Member, Southern Nevada HIV Prevention Planning Group, Southern Nevada Health District, Las Vegas, NV
- 2014-2016 Invited Community Member, Nevada Teen Health and Safety Coalition, ACLU of Nevada
- 2010-2015 Organizer, International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP)-Las Vegas, NV
- 2014-2015 Invited Speaker, Gender Justice Nevada Queer Anti-Violence Project Advocate Training, Las Vegas, NV

- 2014 Invited Panel Speaker, The Business of Sex: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly, British-American Project Conference, Las Vegas, NV
- 2014 Invited Panel Speaker, ECOSEX! Make the Earth Your Lover: Heat Up Your Sex Life as You Slow Global Warming, CatalystCon West Sexuality Conference, Los Angeles, CA
- 2014 Invited Speaker, National Organization of Women (NOW) Southwest Regional Meeting, Phoenix, AZ
- 2014 Invited Speaker, Phi Alpha Delta Human Rights Symposium, UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law, Las Vegas, NV
- 2014 Invited Speaker, Southern Nevada Women's History Project, Las Vegas, NV
- 2013 Invited Speaker, Stonewall Democratic Club of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas, NV
- 2013 Organizer, Nevada Education Awareness Day, Nevada Legislature, Carson City, NV
- 2013 Testified at Legislative Hearing on Sex Trafficking, Joint Committee on Judiciary, Nevada Legislature, Carson City, NV
- 2012 Nevada State Delegate (Elected), Democratic National Convention, Charlotte, NC
- 2012 Invited Speaker, Unite Against the War on Women March, Las Vegas, Nevada
- 2011-2012 Researcher, Culinary Union Local 226, Las Vegas, NV
- 2011 Invited Community Representative by the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, Take Back the Capitol, Washington, DC
- 2011 Invited Speaker, Red Umbrella Diaries-Las Vegas edition, Las Vegas, NV
- 2009 Interviewer, DUSK (Destigmatizing and Understanding Street Kids) Project, Las Vegas, NV

PUBLIC MEDIA

Consults

HBO Media Consultant. 2017. Maggie Gyllenhaal, *The Deuce*.

Appearances

Pardo Ibarra, Tatiana. 2019. "Ecosexualidad: la Tierra entendida como una amante." ("Ecosexuality: The Earth Understood as a Lover.") *El Tiempo*, June 17. (<https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/medio-ambiente/jennifer-reed-explica-en-que-consiste-la-ecosexualidad-377052>).

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Spacek, Rachel. 2019. "At UNLV, about 15 Take Vows in Marriage to the Earth." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, May 3 (<https://www.reviewjournal.com/local/east-valley/at-unlv-about-15-take-vows-in-marriage-to-the-earth-1655518/>).

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Tayag, Yasmin. 2019. "Las Vegas Ecosexuals Married the Earth in a Nevada Wedding Ceremony." *Inverse*, April 23 (<https://www.inverse.com/article/55161-ecosexuals-marriage-to-the-earth-ceremony-unlv>).

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Bonos, Lisa. 2019. “‘How Ecosexual Are You?’: Why Some Prefer Lover Earth to Mother Earth.” *Washington Post*, April 22 (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/04/22/how-ecosexual-are-you-why-some-prefer-lover-earth-mother-earth/>).

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Silverman, Matt. 2018. “Ecosexuality: Because Mother Earth Is the Hottest MILF of All.” *The Daily Dot* (featuring “2 Girls 1 Podcast”), July 9 (<https://www.dailydot.com/irl/ecosexuals-2-girls-1-podcast/>).

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Bruzda, Natalie. 2018. “Intensive Writing Bootcamp Preps UNLV Grad Students.” *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, January 13 (<https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/education/intensive-writing-bootcamp-preps-unlv-grad-students/>).

Richardson, Jill. 2017. “Here Come the Ecosexuals.” *AlterNet*, August 18 (<http://www.alternet.org/sex-amp-relationships/here-come-ecosexuals>).

Williams, Ian. 2017. “Pay, Prey or Pray? Born Again and Feminists on Sex Work.” *Catskill Review of Books 90.5 FM-WJFF radio*, July 14 (<https://soundcloud.com/catskill-review/jennifer-reed>).

Rogers, Janet. 2017. “‘Steps of Change’ Helps Columbiana Families Dealing with Addiction.” *21 WFMJ-TV-Youngstown-Warren Ohio*, May 21 (<http://www.wfmj.com/story/35479961/steps-of-change-helps-columbiana-families-dealing-with-addiction>).

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- Reposted on Maria Shriver’s “Architects of Change” Blog. 2015. June 6.

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Kingsley, Amy. 2011. "Street Walk: Sex Workers in Las Vegas Say Their Need for Protection from Violence Must Be Taken Seriously by Society and Police." *Las Vegas CityLife*, December 22.

Tetreault, Steve. 2011. "'Occupy' Protesters Stage Sit-ins at Heller, Heck Offices." *Las Vegas Review-Journal, Washington Bureau*, December 6 (<http://www.lvrj.com/news/-occupy-protesters-stage-sit-ins-at-heller-heck-offices-135142793.html>).

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Face to Face with Jon Ralston (political TV show). 2011. "Social Inequality and the Occupy Movement." October 6 (http://www.clipsyndicate.com/video/playlist/25515/2911939?title=ralston_reports - at 10:20).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

American Sociological Association

- 2014-2016 Student Council Member (Elected), Environmental Sociology Section

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Law and Society Association

Alpha Kappa Delta – Sociological Honor Society

Association for Humanist Sociology

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