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Ecofeminist movements around the world: Commonalities and differences between the Chipko, Green Belt and Love Canal movements

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Ecofeminist Movements Around the World

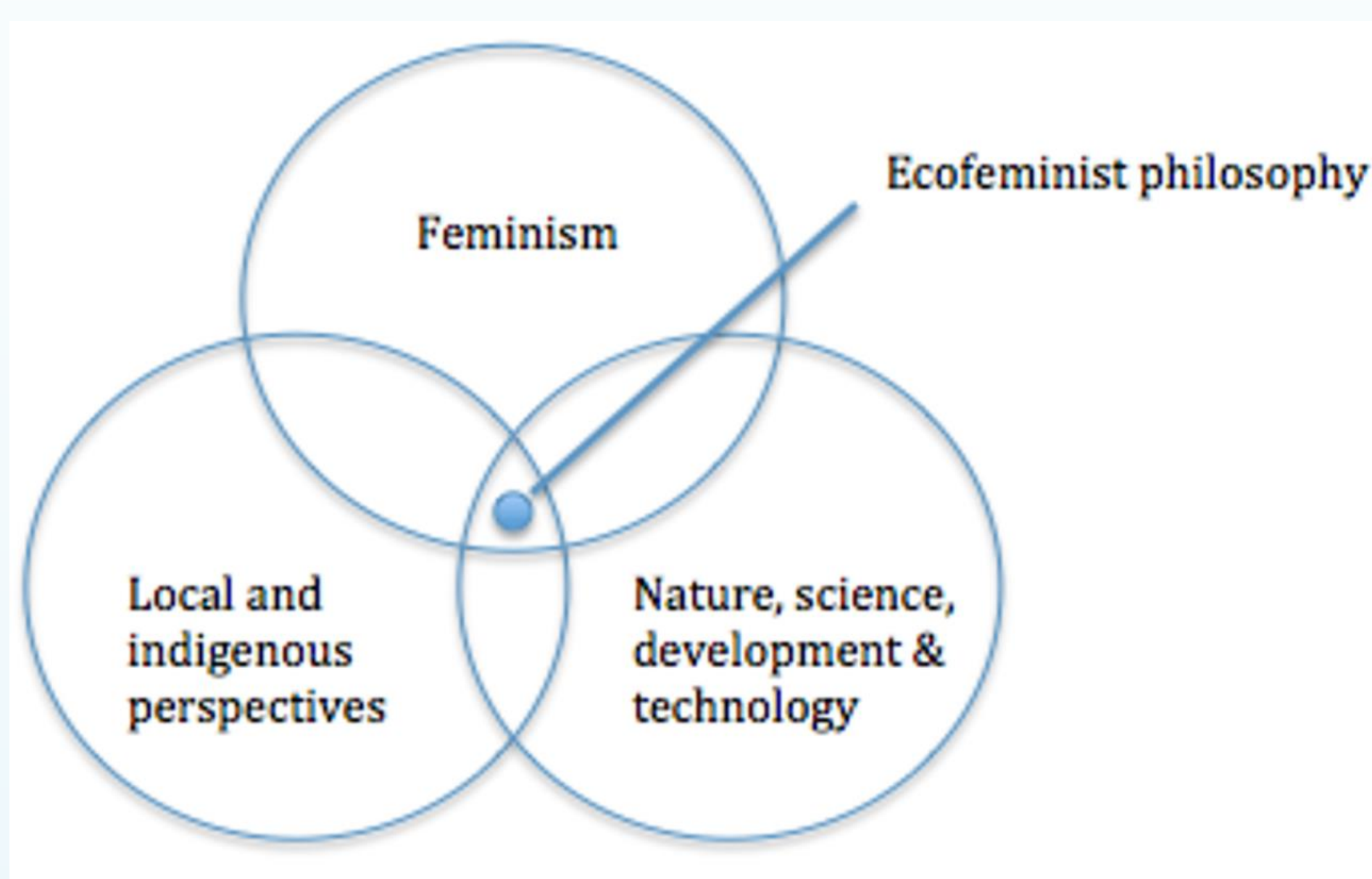
Commonalities and differences between the Chipko, Green Belt, and Love Canal Movements

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What is Ecofeminism?

- Idea that women's ethics are closer to nature than a man's
- Coined in 1974 to look at cultural and social concerns with the relationship that the oppression of women has with the degradation of nature
- Relationship is evident in the gendered language "mother earth" and "mother nature"



The three building blocks of Karen Warren's ecofeminist framework for practice and policy.

Chipko Movement

- During the late 1900s in India women were tasked with working the fields while the men would work in the city
- Deforestation from development was causing floods, sweeping homes and endangering people, during the monsoon season but the government ignored this
- When women of the Lata village heard that their forest and fields were going to be cut down, they rushed to hug the trees and save their community
- Villages heard about this, and women replicated it until the government put a ban on cutting trees in the areas
- Now the Chipko movement can be seen in modern protests around the world like in West Bengal and India



Women hugging trees to protect them from being cut down.

Green Belt Movement

- Dr. Wangari Maathai noticed women in Kenya were struggling due to deforestation
- Dr. Maathai started the Green Belt Movement with the aim of planting trees to replenish the soil, protect waterbeds, and train women to grow food
- Women faced resistance from the government and society believing that uneducated women could not rear and tend to trees
- When Dr. Maathai heard about the government's plans to take 1.3 acres away from Uhuru park, she started a campaign to stop any further construction leading to protests at the park until development was halted
- Government still brings up construction now and then and protests can still be seen in the trending tweet #HandsOffUhuruPark



Women of the Green Belt Movement.

Summary

- Chipko and Love Canal movements rose due to a lack of government officials listening to their concerns while the Green Belt movement (GBM) never sought government help or attention
 - Likely because the Kenyan government ridiculed the women of the GBM and was looking to develop forests, contradicting the GBM's goals
- Green Belt movement and Love Canal are continuing through nonprofits compared to the Chipko movement which is still alive through replicated movements

Love Canal Movement

Younger generation joins Love Canal protest.



- 9th street elementary and a nearby neighborhood was built over Love Canal, a chemical waste dump for 30 years
- Lois Gibbs having read this was denied for her sick son to be transferred to a safer school, turned to her community to get government attention
- State Department conducted a study that resulted in 239 families of the Canal being evacuated but left hundreds susceptible to the canal's chemicals
- Inaction from the government caused a study that found residents were 3x as likely to suffer birth defects, urinary disease and have a miscarriage but was dismissed as "useless housewife data"
- Caused protests such as a march on the state capital until President Carter ordered the community evacuated
- President Carter's order also led to the creation of the Superfund; which holds the polluters responsible for paying for the long-term cleanup but is controversial

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