

Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
**OpenSIUC**

---

Research Papers

Graduate School

---

Spring 2016

# Warning! You May Have ED: A Rhetorical Analysis of "The Male Predicament" from an Ecofeminist Perspective

Heather A. Abell

*Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, [hbell87@gmail.com](mailto:hbell87@gmail.com)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs\\_rp](http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs_rp)

---

## Recommended Citation

Abell, Heather A. "Warning! You May Have ED: A Rhetorical Analysis of "The Male Predicament" from an Ecofeminist Perspective." (Spring 2016).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at OpenSIUC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Papers by an authorized administrator of OpenSIUC. For more information, please contact [opensiuc@lib.siu.edu](mailto:opensiuc@lib.siu.edu).

WARNING! YOU MAY HAVE ED:

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF *THE MALE PREDICAMENT* FROM AN ECOFEMINIST  
PERSPECTIVE

by

Heather A. Abell

A.A., John A. Logan College, 2008  
B.S., Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 2011  
J.D., Southern Illinois University School of Law, 2014

A Research Report  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Arts Degree

Department of Communication Studies  
in the Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
May 2016

RESEARCH REPORT APPROVAL

WARNING! YOU MAY HAVE ED:

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF *THE MALE PREDICAMENT* FROM AN ECOFEMINIST  
PERSPECTIVE

by

Heather A. Abell

A Research Report Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the field of Communication Studies

Approved by:

Suzanne M. Daughton, Chair

Jonathan M. Gray

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
March 30, 2016

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research report to all of those who have been by my side throughout my academic journey. The love and support of my family, friends, and colleagues will forever be acknowledged and appreciated. It is because of each of you that I have been able to achieve my goals and ambitions, and for that I am forever grateful and blessed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
DEDICATION.....	i
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iii
RHETORICAL ARTIFACT .....	5
ECOFEMINIST FRAMEWORK.....	6
The Rise of Ecofeminism .....	6
History of the United States (U.S.) American Ecofeminism.....	7
Ecology and Feminism .....	8
Modern-Day Ecofeminism .....	9
ANALYSIS .....	11
Ecofeminism and Environmental Justice .....	12
A Female Issue: The Gendering of Nature and Endocrine Disruption.....	14
The Intersectionality of Race and Class .....	17
An Issue for the Politically-Empowered: The Intersectionality of Class and Education ..	21
Rhetorical Shock-Value.....	22
CONCLUSION .....	23
REFERENCES .....	26
VITA .....	30

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIGURE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Figure 1.....	6

“A baby is something you carry inside you for nine months, in your arms for three years, and in your heart till the day you die” (Sanchez, 2011, p. 31). I still can recall when I learned I would be expecting my first child. The doctor walked in with a huge smile on his face, as my partner and I anxiously awaited the news. “Well kids. You’re going to have a baby” (L. Cranick, personal communication, 2013). As my brain began to process these words, I remember looking at my partner of nearly six years. He<sup>1</sup> was grinning from ear to ear and appeared more excited than any kid I had ever seen on Christmas morning.

Since the time I was a sophomore in college, countless physicians and specialists had explained that due to having female-related health problems, I would never be able to have children without medical assistance. Needless to say, I had experienced a long, difficult, and emotionally and physically painful journey to this point in my life. As we were preparing to leave the doctor’s office, the nurse handed me a bag of paperwork and directions, and told me to read through all of the information. It was important for me to eat healthily, drink plenty of fluids, take prenatal vitamins, and avoid stress because I was not just caring for myself, but helping to provide the best care for my unborn child.

As we drove home, excited to tell our family, a flood of emotions began to take over as I reflected on my habits. At this point in my life, I was a first-year master’s student in the Communication Studies Department at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and concurrently, a third year law student at Southern Illinois University School of Law. I thought to

---

<sup>1</sup> As a scholar, I believe that it is my agenda to be inclusive of all bodies and identities. I have consciously utilized generic pronouns in order to be inclusive of all bodies when their preferred gender identity is unknown. However, where the preferred gender identity is known of a person, I defer to the preferred gender pronoun.

myself, “How will my child ever be healthy?” (H. Abell, personal communication, 2013). My type-A organizational/planning personality began to take hold as I made the following list in my head: (1) Everything is going to be great. (2) Stay positive because this baby will be healthy. (3) I have no stress. I am only pregnant, an active member of my community, a first-year master’s student, a third-year law student, and starting to study for the Illinois Bar Exam. (4) Everything will be fine. (5) I do not take vitamins on a regular basis. (6) I should have exercised more. (7) I have on-going health issues. (8) I do not have the healthiest eating habits. (9) I have no stress. (10) Everything is going to be fine if I can just stop worrying.

I would like to mark my privileged body in this space. Identifying as a female, White, upper-middle class, educated, United States (U.S.) American, native English speaker, able-bodied, heterosexual, Catholic person, I am both privileged and marginalized in varying aspects. I am fortunate that I was not worrying about the following issues that many people do worry about during pregnancy: How will I afford a baby? How will I afford to feed myself, purchase prenatal vitamins, buy diapers, and buy baby items? Where will I deliver my baby? Do I want to keep this baby? Who will emotionally support me? While I acknowledge my privileged identities and feel grateful and fortunate that I did not have to struggle in the ways in which some people struggle, I have consciously chosen to address specific questions in order to provide background and a framework for this analysis.

As the fall semester of school began and my second trimester was drawing near, I was excited and anxious about everything I had to accomplish. However, I thought to myself that whereas most expectant mothers played music for their unborn children, my child was going to be born reciting Illinois statutes and case law. I was also excited about the opportunity to take a class I had been looking forward to taking since my days as an undergraduate student:



environmental rhetoric. From my perspective as someone who was pregnant, taking a course focusing on environmental rhetoric was personally challenging for a plethora of reasons. The course I took focused a lot on chemicals, toxins, and a myriad of other detrimental and potentially harmful substances, which can have a negative effect on our environment including our bodies, the bodies of others, current and future fetal development, and our ecological systems.

In addition, if I was advising other expectant parents or parents-to-be, I would also suggest not practicing or reading about cases involving child abuse and neglect. As a third-year law student during this time, it was difficult for me to read about and serve as a guardian *ad litem* for children who had suffered severe mental, emotional, and physical abuse. It made me often question why anyone would bring a child into a world filled with hate, despair, neglect, and abuse towards the most innocent of those among us, children. In fact, I would argue that a fetus is often abused before states legally recognize it as a child (Abell, 2013).

I can still recall the outpouring of compassion by my environmental rhetoric professor. He would occasionally check-in with me to see how I was doing both physically and emotionally. He always reassured me that it was alright to engage in self-care, that it was healthy to step away from emotionally difficult topics when needed, and that taking care of myself both physically and mentally was most important.

I still remember sitting in his class as we discussed the impact that bisphenol A. (BPA) has on our environment. I use the term environment very broadly, since our discussions included topics such as a person's womb as an environment for an unborn child. While I found this extremely fascinating, it was also horrifying. My thoughts quickly went to the fact that I was drinking from a disposable, plastic, water bottle. I had no idea what conditions this bottle had

endured before it came to be in my refrigerator. It may have been on a hot truck, which would have allowed the non-BPA free plastic to break down and to slowly contaminate my water. Then, when I drank the water, because it was important to stay hydrated during pregnancy, that BPA would slowly make its way into my womb. This toxin, even in a small amount, could interfere with the growth and development of my child by disrupting the normal function of the extremely sensitive endocrine system, (Dr. Theo Colborn refers to this substance as an endocrine disruptor) (TerraVision Media, 2009).<sup>2</sup> What was even scarier was the fact that thousands of environmental toxins, including BPA, have been linked to behavioral disorders, mental disabilities, cancer, infertility, and death. Although one could say that I was being extremely judgmental and hard on myself, I could not help but think, “Will my baby be alright? What have I done? How can I be such an educated person, but have so little knowledge about these toxins?” (H. Abell, personal communication, 2013).

For the purpose of this analysis, and in accordance with what I learned in environmental rhetoric, I will be considering the womb as an environment. I will be analyzing an image from Dr. Theo Colborn’s video lecture, *The Male Predicament*, which was produced by TerraVision Media (2009) for The Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX). Dr. Colborn, who died in 2014, was a leading researcher and scholar in the field of endocrine disruption (Lofholm, 2014). She

---

<sup>2</sup> At the end of *The Male Predicament*, TerraVision Media is listed as the producer (2009).

Currently, there is no year provided for the video lecture, either online or on the digital video disc (DVD) available through The Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX). However, through email correspondence with Kim Schultz, a research assistant with TEDX, she confirmed that the year for a proper American Psychological Association (APA) citation would be 2009 (K. Schultz, personal communication, April 6, 2016).

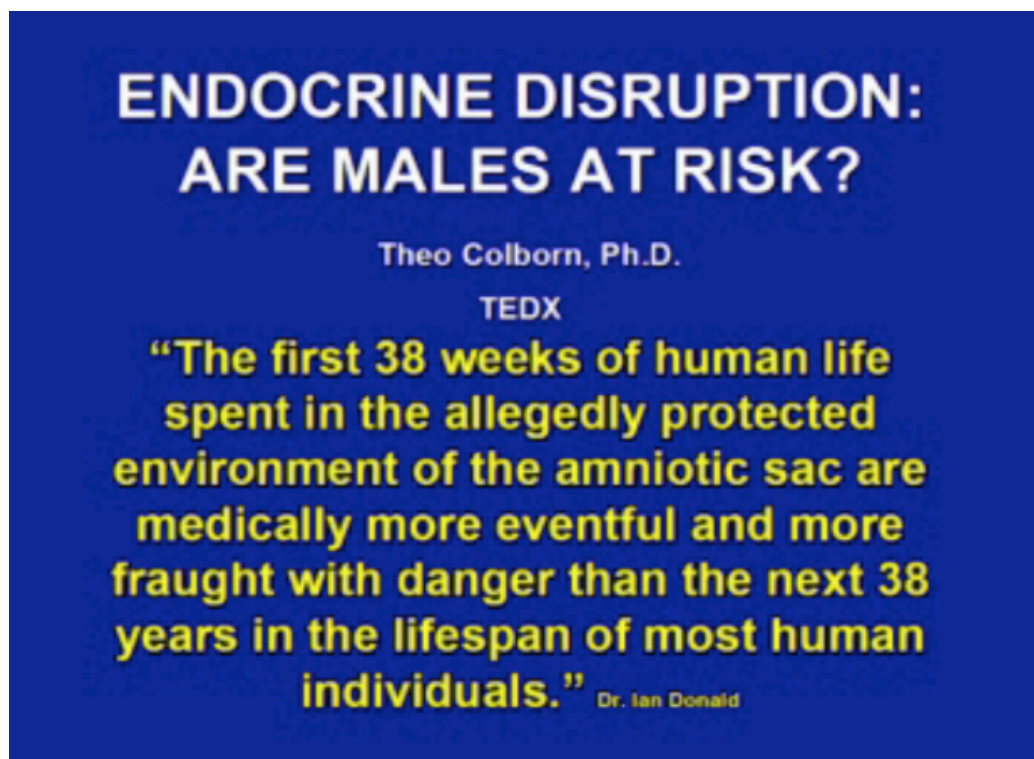
was the founder of TEDX, and her video lecture, which I have viewed in its entirety, was created to bring awareness to the fact that males, as well as females, are vulnerable to endocrine disrupting chemicals. In this report, I will provide deep context and close analysis of a representative moment from early in that video lecture. Dr. Colborn references a quote by Dr. Ian Donald, which appeared in the *Journal of Perinatal Medicine*, in an article by Stephen J. Genuis (2006). The image, on which the quote appears, is entitled *Endocrine Disruption: Are Males at Risk?* (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). The purpose of this video lecture is to inform the audience about endocrine disruption, and to persuade viewers to take action to regulate and be aware of dangerous toxins known as endocrine disruptors. Therefore, she is likely addressing an educated, upper-middle class audience based on the vocabulary she utilizes, the subject matter of her video lecture, and the fact that viewers must access this video lecture online. By applying an ecofeminist framework, I will argue that Dr. Colborn's quote of Dr. Ian Donald reinforces an androcentric view. Ironically, then, as I will demonstrate, I believe that this makes Dr. Colborn's presentation, as represented by this important early image, less likely to make an audience aware of endocrine disruptors (TerraVision Media, 2009). Ultimately, I will argue that her rhetorical strategies do not further her goal of environmental protection.

#### **RHETORICAL ARTIFACT: *ENDOCRINE DISRUPTION: ARE MALES AT RISK?***

Typically, when U.S. Americans hear the word environment, many thoughts may come to mind such as being outdoors, encountering wildlife, and enjoying wilderness. However, it is more rare to consider that the amniotic sac as the environment in which a fetus grows and remains until the pregnancy is either terminated or viable for delivery. So, when the following image describes the womb as an environment, this is a newsworthy shift from my perspective.

Dr. Colborn's video lecture, *The Male Predicament*, begins with the following image

(TerraVision Media, 2009):



*Figure 1.* Rhetorical artifact. An image from a video lecture produced by TerraVision Media (2009) for TEDX at 0:02. *The Male Predicament*, a video lecture by Dr. T. Colborn, is available from <http://endocrinedisruption.org/endocrine-disruption/the-male-predicament>.

This quote is the very first image that the audience is introduced to once Dr. Colborn's video lecture begins (TerraVision Media, 2009). The image has a blue background, the font of the title is in white, and the quote appears in yellow (TerraVision Media, 2009). I will discuss the appearance of the image, as well as the words on it, in greater detail below.

## **ECOFEMINIST FRAMEWORK**

### **The Rise of Ecofeminism**

Ecofeminism is a philosophy that connects the oppression of females and the environment by converging ecology and feminism (Lahar, 1991). It is important to note that there are several feminist approaches to environmental issues, and that separately there are varying waves of both feminist and environmental movements. The term ecofeminism was

developed in 1974 by Francoise d'Eaubonne, and is deeply rooted in French feminist theory (Glazebrook, 2002). The philosophy was based on the connections d'Eaubonne made between the exploitation of the female reproductive ability resulting in overpopulation, and the exploitation of natural resources resulting in a "double threat" to humankind (d'Eaubonne 1974, p. 221). Therefore, ecofeminism arose as both a philosophical and political movement that, according to Glazebrook (2002), aims to reveal "oppressive ideologies, practices and structures within patriarchal social systems that support these interconnected exploitations, and seeks their elimination; as such, it is diagnostic and future oriented" (as cited in Chircop, 2008, pp. 138-139).

### **History of the United States (U.S.) American Ecofeminism**

In U.S. American culture, the idea that ecofeminism was a philosophy born of both ecology and feminism arose out of the Women and the Environment Conference hosted by Sandra Marburg and Lisa Watson in 1974 (St. John, 1987). Then, in 1975, Rosemary Ruether stated, "Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination" (p. 204). This means that in order to successfully advocate and overcome oppression, both feminists and ecologists must work together by merging the philosophies of ecology and feminism (Ruether, 1975). Dominant ideology sets standards and removes the choice of marginalized identity groups (Lorde, 1983). This is important to note because social identities should not be placed in a hierarchy where one identity group is more important than another group (West & Turner, 2010). For example, race is not more important than gender, and gender is not more important than class. However, the ways in which people are oppressed can have an impact on which of their marginalized identities they choose to forefront and discuss, or

whether they choose to forefront and discuss them at all. Ruether (1975) argues that such an approach will allow us to shift from a patriarchal, possessive society where there is a constant separation between the privileged and the marginalized, and to create space, acceptance, and equality among all identities.

Moreover, in 1991, Karen Warren brought the philosophy of ecofeminism to light once again by editing an issue of *Hypatia* (Glazebrook, 2002). *Hypatia* is a journal that recognizes approximately two guest-edited issues per year on a myriad of topics. This particular issue focused solely on the philosophy of ecofeminism (Warren, 1996). Later, this article was further developed and then republished as *Ecological Feminist Philosophies* (Warren, 1996). Warren's (1996) repositioning of the *Hypatia* article, along with a vast collection of a diverse female voice, created a space for ecofeminism to once again emerge as a site of discussion among varying audience members.

Finally, in 2000, after a decade of ecofeminist study and engagement, Karen Warren published *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters*, which reincorporates the voices of the groundbreaking ecofeminists, d'Eaubonne and Ruether (Warren, 2000). This book serves as a platform answering many critiques of ecofeminism.

Li (2007) states that it is possible to argue that ecofeminism is a political discourse that alters and integrates both environmental and feminist movements. Unfortunately, even though ecofeminists have made significant progress through the decades since the theory's emergence, it is still a specific and marginalized discourse only studied in certain disciplines (Li, 2007).

### **Ecology and Feminism**

To better understand ecofeminism, it is necessary to understand ecology and feminism in their individual capacities (Mellor, 2002). Ecology is the discipline that focuses on a systematic

approach to biological life and habitats, as both interconnected and interrelated (Carson, 2002). The destruction of nature by humans situates humans in a hierarchy of oppressing nature, and allows for a social acceptance of this oppression, as opposed to a mutually coexisting relationship with one another (Soper, 1995).

In addition to ecology, understanding the root of feminism(s) is essential in being able to conceptualize ecofeminism. Again, there are many feminist approaches to issues concerning the environment, and it is important to remain mindful of this fact. Feminism(s) is generally concerned with the oppression of females in a patriarchal, male-dominated society (Mellor, 2002). Hart and Daughton (2005) state that many feminists are also humanists who believe that no one marginalized identity group should limit another's ability to develop and to mobilize.

Here, it is important to note that both ecology and feminism have various waves and competing theories within each theory (Li, 2007). However, the overarching theory upon which feminism draws is that female oppression is the result of a patriarchal, oppressive society, and that in order to eliminate oppression, the cultural perception of gender roles must change (Mellor, 2002).

Stereotypes surrounding gender roles deeply plague our society. For example, males within a U.S. American patriarchal society are viewed as strong, in charge, and rational (Chircop, 2008). On the other hand, females are perceived as weak, passive, inferior, emotional, and irrational (Chircop, 2008). It is critical to understand that the goal of feminism is not for females to be superior to males, but rather for females to overcome the oppression of sexism (Chircop, 2008).

### **Modern-Day Ecofeminism**

Ecofeminism, as I mentioned previously, represents a convergence of theories of ecology

and feminism (Lahar, 1991). Ecofeminism accentuates the intersectionality of sexism with other forms of oppression, rather than emphasizing only gender oppression (Mellor, 2002). By taking into account other forms of oppression (based on factors such as race, ability, age, and sexual orientation), ecofeminists aim to empower activists by integrating both feminist and environmental agendas into other social movements (Li, 2007).

Additionally, the convergence of ecology and feminism allows for “the symbolic aligning of ‘woman’ with ‘nature’” (Soper, 1995, p. 314). Ecofeminism challenges the view that nature is inhuman, and the female is inferior, further reflecting oppressive ideology of both nature and the female body, and reinforcing androcentrism. This concept gives rise to the criticism of viewing the female as nurturing, delicate, and as “mother earth” (Li, 2007, p. 356). However, Soper (1995) notes that there is tension between some feminists and ecologists because many ecologists view ecofeminism as reinforcing the notion of equating the female body with nature, rather than as a philosophical notion that takes an intersectional approach, encompassing a vast array of marginalized identities.

Today, U.S. American ideals of ecofeminism have expanded the philosophy to move beyond the philosophical implications of first-wave feminism,<sup>3</sup> and incorporate a myriad of marginalized identities and the intersectionality of a person’s identities such as race, gender, age, class, ability, etc., as well as the environment (Chircop, 2008). This means that within the institution of patriarchal power, identities are considered, and they cannot be viewed as being

---

<sup>3</sup> First-wave feminism was a period of the feminist movement that occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries throughout the world. However, the movement was very active in Europe and the United States as it focused on political issues. In particular, the political agenda was women’s suffrage (Henry, 2004).



independent from one another, but rather interdependent and in relation to the environment. Moreover, while ecofeminism can be viewed as females having dominion and control over a particular identity group and/or nature, and having power within a patriarchal society, it has to gain power through working with other oppressed groups, rather than creating a hierarchy and placing the ecofeminist agenda above other social and political agendas (Lorde, 1983).

Ecofeminists argue that we must deconstruct power and privilege within society (Lahar, 1996). As a result of that deconstruction, a space is created in which society, its citizenry, and its political structures can become viable in a more equal forum (Lahar, 1996). To be clearer, by one group acting alone to gain power in society, that group is simultaneously oppressing another group. Both feminists and ecologists must simultaneously work together to create and equally share power in order to avoid further oppression of each other, which would only hinder their separate efforts. Therefore, by looking at the quote by Dr. Ian Donald, as utilized in Dr. Theo Colborn's video lecture in *Endocrine Disruption: Are Males at Risk?*, the analysis will demonstrate that Dr. Colborn's statement reinforces androcentrism, and that she is less likely to make an audience aware of endocrine disruptors because her rhetorical strategies do not further her goal of environmental protection (TerraVision Media, 2009).

### ***ANALYSIS: THE MALE PREDICAMENT***

Ecofeminism serves as the most effective philosophical framework for critiquing the first image, *Endocrine Disruption: Are Males at Risk?*, of Dr. Theo Colborn's video lecture, *The Male Predicament* (TerraVision Media, 2009). An ecofeminist framework allows for critically challenging the effectiveness of the video lecture in raising awareness of endocrine disruptors and environmental protection. This artifact is clearly designed for an educated, politically-empowered audience, but such an audience is least likely to be affected, and least likely to see

themselves as vulnerable to endocrine disruptors. Therefore, understanding the rhetorical effectiveness of this artifact will help to further determine the effectiveness of Dr. Colborn's message.

### **Ecofeminism and Environmental Justice**

Ecofeminist and environmental justice movements both developed largely during the 1990s, and both of these movements have been active for decades (Anstey, 2006). The environmental movement, in particular the issue of environmental racism, emerged and became especially prevalent in the early 1980s with the mobilization of the citizens of Love Canal (Dickinson, 2012). Love Canal was a tract of land located in Niagara Falls, New York (Hay, 2009). It was predominantly a working-class, Black community where "over 22,000 tons of hazardous wastes" were buried by Hooker Chemical Company that was owned by Occidental Petroleum (Hay, 2009, p. 502). The ecofeminist movement also grew out of the 1980s with second-wave feminism being a main catalyst of the ecofeminist movement, as ecology and feminist politics combined to spark a common interest (Mellor, 2002).

Returning to the rhetorical artifact discussed above, the quote from Dr. Ian Donald refers to the environment of the womb as being "allegedly protected" (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). This construction rhetorically creates the possibility that human life is not always protected when in utero, and begins to destabilize commonly held preconceptions about danger and safety, and nurturing and protection (TerraVision Media, 2009). What is even more interesting is Dr. Donald's statement that "The first 38 weeks of human life" are spent in the womb (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). Therefore, he and by extension, Dr. Colborn, are taking the stance that human life begins at conception, rather than at birth (TerraVision Media, 2009). This is important to consider, as there are ongoing controversial arguments within the U.S. about when

life actually begins, as evidenced by the continued debate over *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973). A more liberal, feminist approach, for example, may promote the belief that life begins once a child is born. Likewise, nearly half of all states in the U.S., either by criminal statute or by case law,<sup>4</sup> define the killing of a fetus as “assault,” “manslaughter,” “murder,” or “feticide” (N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. §631:1 (West 1996); Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. §750.14 (West 1999); Cal. Penal Code §187 (West 1999); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:32 (West 1995)).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> The following states have statutes that criminalize third party killing of a fetus: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington. Massachusetts, Missouri, and South Carolina have modified the traditional common law principle to make it a crime under certain circumstances for a third party to kill a fetus. Under the traditional common law principle, the law only applies to a child that is born alive. In Massachusetts and South Carolina, both states implement the fetal viability standard of the state to determine whether to charge for a crime (*Commonwealth v. Lawrence*, 536 N.E.2d, 571 (1989); *State v. Horne*, 319 S.E.2d. 703 (1984)). However, in Missouri, an appeals court has ruled that the state’s murder statute applies to all fetuses, regardless of viability (*State v. Holcomb*, 956 S.W. 2d 286 (1997)).

<sup>5</sup> Prosecutors typically charge the maximum penalty, so that even if they are unable to prove their case beyond a reasonable doubt to the maximum charge, they may still be able to obtain a conviction on a lesser charge. This process is also an attempt to reach a plea bargain agreement with a defendant or defendants, in order to most effectively utilize the scarce resources of the judicial system (White, 1971).

By centrally featuring this quote from Dr. Donald, Dr. Colborn is also making the statement that the long-term effects of endocrine disruption during the first “38 years in the lifespan of most human individuals” are less medically important when compared to the thirty-eight weeks that a fetus is typically in utero (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). This statement allows for several critiques, which I will further discuss. More importantly, I believe the title, *Are Males at Risk?*, demonstrates that while Dr. Colborn is addressing both a female and male audience, she is attempting to gain the attention of males in particular. She is wanting to call attention to the possible effects of endocrine disruptors on the male body, as a presumable rhetorical counterstatement to the fact that endocrine disruption is often viewed as a female issue in legislation (S. 1361, 2011). However, calling attention to the amniotic sac, which develops during pregnancy, implicitly reinforces attention from those who are usually most concerned with learning about pregnancy, females. Typically females of childbearing age, sometimes their partners, and other medical and political professionals are those most likely to focus on issues affecting fertility and fetal development. The image to which Dr. Colborn refers, thus encourages a stereotypically, female audience to take notice of this issue. Nevertheless, she consciously chooses to possibly focus on the male identity in order to demonstrate that the effects of endocrine disruptors are as much a male problem as a female problem.

### **A Female Issue: The Gendering of Nature and Endocrine Disruption**

However, what does it mean to consider endocrine disruption a female issue? To begin, a contentious argument among ecofeminists is the discussion concerning the link between nature and females (Mellor, 2002). In particular, the discussion surrounding issues of female health and endocrine disruptors is relevant to the Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011 (S. 1361, 2011). Initially, as Soper (1995) discusses, the word “nature” is often a

controversial term among ecofeminists (p. 314). The word nature has been equated with terms such as the “nurturing mother” and the “disorderly woman” (Li, 2007, p. 354). Moreover, the patriarchal society often uses the term “‘nature’ . . . to describe a connection to the earth and what exists ‘naturally,’ versus something human-created” (Anstey, 2006, p. 43).

Again, the tension among ecofeminists arises out of equating females with nature (Mellor, 2002). Some ecofeminists view equating the terms as a detriment to feminist movements because equating the terms can reinforce the notion that females are automatically more sensitive and weak. For example, Soper (1995) discusses how some feminists fear that concepts such as “natural” and “animal” will hinder feminist efforts by further conceptualizing the female body as something to be inferior to the male identity in a patriarchal society (p. 314). On the other hand, some ecologists view equating the terms as being detrimental to the environmental movement because it places more emphasis on the feminist movement, than on environmental issues (Soper, 1995). For similar reasons to some feminist apprehension, Soper (1995) discusses how some ecologists are resistant to being linked to the feminist movement, largely because some ecologists want to distance the conceptual notion of nature from the sexual notion of the female as something to be dominated by a male body.

This continued tension is particularly relevant to the discussion of the politics of endocrine disruption in our environment. For example, U.S. American culture privileges a patriarchal, White, heterosexual, able-bodied, Christian, upper-middle class society. Goldberg (1999), for example, discusses that when many insurance companies made the decision to cover the popular male erectile dysfunction drug, Viagra, it sparked a push for state legislatures to pass bills requiring insurance companies to cover birth control for females. This structure holds true for how U.S. American politics are governed as well. Just as predominantly male bodies develop

legislation to regulate and control society, including a largely female society, many chemicals known to be endocrine disruptors have been, and continue to be, specifically developed to control nature. Endocrine disruption affects both females and males according to Dr. Colborn (TerraVision Media, 2009). However, endocrine disruption may often be viewed as only a female issue, instead of both a female and male issue, because endocrine disruption affects reproduction. Moreover, females are the ones who are often primarily held responsible for the health of a fetus in utero. Therefore, one can argue that there continues to be male control and domination over the female body. While both females and males are responsible for the passing of genes, which are affected by endocrine disrupting chemicals, to a child, frequently, it is the female who U.S. American culture deems as responsible for the health of a child by what the female does or does not do to promote the health of a fetus during utero. For example, when a female decides whether or not to smoke cigarettes or take prenatal vitamins while pregnant, society will habitually blame the female if the child is born premature, with a low birth weight, or with a disability. This blaming too often happens regardless of whether the female engaged in behavior that has been linked to the premature birth, low birth weight, or disability of a child.

In turning to the image to which Dr. Colborn refers, she attempts to frame her argument as being a male issue. She uses the color blue, the color typically equated with the male body in U.S. American culture, as a strategic method of attracting males, again reinforcing androcentrism. However, asking “Are males at risk?” rather than stating that they are, rhetorically allows for the possibility that males are not at risk, and that endocrine disruption is, therefore, only a female issue (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). The image also avoids using gendered pronouns in her quotation of Dr. Donald’s statement, and instead utilizes the word “human” as a likely attempt to be inclusive of all genders (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). The

word “human” would suggest that endocrine disruptors can affect all people, regardless of how they identify (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). The word “individuals” could suggest that this is not an issue of a particular identity group, but rather a problem that can affect anyone (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02).

On the contrary, the words “human” and “individuals” appear after the image references pregnancy: “38 weeks of human life [are] spent in the allegedly protected environment of the amniotic sac” (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02). That statement alone alluding to pregnancy, might encourage the audience to immediately view this as a female issue, since females are usually the identity group associated with bearing children. As a result, even though audience members will hopefully pay careful enough attention and be mindful that all human beings start out as embryos in an amniotic sac, linking the issue to pregnancy, a stereotypically female concern, may diminish the likelihood of retaining male audience members. Sadly, this happens within the first few seconds of the video lecture (TerraVision Media, 2009).

### **The Intersectionality of Race and Class**

The paradigmatic approach of intersectionality allows for the deconstruction of power and privilege in regards to social issues that are dependent upon one another such as race, gender, and class (Collins, 1990). According to Collins (1990), identities should be considered as intersecting and dependent in nature (Collins, 1990). Therefore, intersectionality will help to deconstruct, understand, and theorize social issues of race and class.

Unfortunately, it may come as no surprise that people of color and people who identify as the lower-working class, usually work in the most toxic environments throughout the world (Anstey, 2006). Too often it is these demographics of people who are working in the shipyards and construction industry. Thus, these people are being exposed to toxins such as asbestos, and

these are the same people who work with toxic chemicals in a cleaning capacity. The continued workplace exposure to these chemicals can lead to cancer, a myriad of diseases and medical conditions, and even death (TerraVision Media, 2009).

People exposed to such toxins pass on the effects of these endocrine disruptors to their posterity through genetics (TerraVision Media, 2009). It is in this moment that I choose again to mark my White, upper-middle class privilege. While I am sure I have been exposed to unavoidable endocrine disruptors, at least I have never had to take a job where I knowingly exposed myself to endocrine disruptors in order to feed and provide for my family. However, many people do not have the power and privilege to make that choice.

In returning to the artifact, race and class play a key role in having access to this knowledge. Persons identifying as lower-working class may lack access to the Internet to even be able to view this video lecture. Some may argue that the Internet is easily accessible to everyone because it can be accessed at several local food chains throughout the U.S. for free. Yet, in order to be a patron of a restaurant, one has to have the time to be able to patronize the establishment. In addition, restaurants are not free. One has to purchase some form of goods or services, and in return, may have free access to the Internet. Most restaurants that provide Wi-Fi expect customers to supply their own electronic devices to access the Internet. If a person is working multiple jobs to make ends meet, it is unlikely they would have the time, money, or education to gain access to the video lecture found online through using a computer or a smart phone, and to follow the relatively complex argument and scientific vocabulary Dr. Colborn utilizes.

The irony of this artifact, a video lecture presentation, is that those individuals most likely to suffer from endocrine disruption are less likely to be able to encounter and understand the



message. Therefore, as Hart and Daughton (2005) note, the “digital divide” creates an obstacle for potential audience members (p.207). In this case, those audience members are those who most need to have access to this alarming health concern. Although important, technology is only part of the issue. Certainly, members of the lower-working class are less likely to have access to the Internet and/or computers to be able to view this video lecture. While computers are available at public places, such as community libraries, people who identify with this class are still unlikely to have access to these resources because of the following reasons: (1) When people must make the decision between going to the public library to research health issues or going to work to support their family, supporting their family by going to work everyday will likely prevent them from going to the library. (2) Members of the lower-working class are far more likely to work shifts in the evening, meaning they have to sleep during the day. Since libraries are generally only open during regular business hours, they will lack access to computers. (3) Finally, one must possess the language necessary to be able to research videos, even on websites such as YouTube. Since endocrine disruption is not something discussed regularly in popular culture, and members of the lower-working class often lack the knowledge and educational skills to be able to research with specific terms, they likely will not be able to locate the video lecture.

It is unlikely that someone who is marginalized, in terms of both race and class, would have access to the lexicon utilized in the video lecture. Persons of color are often marginalized in terms of class, and, as a result, they are often marginalized in terms of education. Education is necessary in order to develop an extensive and complex vocabulary, including familiarity with medical jargon. In particular, this artifact uses the term “amniotic sac,” which requires some level of biological background knowledge, more advanced and specialized than that required to follow the common usage of terms such as womb or uterus (TerraVision Media, 2009, 0:02).

Lacking the verbal knowledge necessary to understand this artifact, would obviously decrease the rhetorical effectiveness of the message for a person who is marginalized in terms of race and class. Therefore, it seems clear that Dr. Colborn is targeting a different audience. Specifically, it seems that she is focusing on a White, upper-middle class audience.

Historically, the environment has widely been viewed in U.S. American society as a White issue (Anstey, 2006). Although White, upper-middle class people hold the power and privilege to voice their concerns about the environment, more often than not, the environmental issues are those that most impact the lower-working class, as well as people of color (Anstey, 2006). Given that Dr. Colborn visually appears to identify as White and female, and it can be inferred that she identifies as a member of upper-middle class based on her educational credentials. The artifact's effectiveness again comes into question because if people viewing the video lecture are unable to connect ideologically in some regard to the rhetor, it is possible that endocrine disruption might be (mis)understood by audience members as being only a White, female, upper-middle class concern.

The ecofeminist movement has grown in recent decades as the call for scientific research has flooded the field of environmental health, in particular, with the growing concern of breast cancer (Middleton & DeGersdorff, 2013). There has been extensive research done in recent years concerning the link between environmental toxins and breast cancer (Middleton & DeGersdorff, 2013). Pezzullo (2003) writes that, alarmingly, the area with the highest rate of breast cancer for females under age forty in a Western country, is located in the San Francisco Bay Area, a predominantly Black community called Bayview/Hunter's Point in California. As a result of this disturbing statistic, groups such as Breast Cancer Action, Greenpeace, West County Toxics Coalition, and the Women's Cancer Resource Center established the Toxic Links Coalition

(TLC) in the Bay Area in 1994.

### **An Issue for the Politically-Empowered: The Intersectionality of Class and Education**

This artifact is undoubtedly designed for the politically-empowered and, thus, educated. As previously mentioned, race and class both affect access to education. In order to have access to this artifact, as well as the knowledge to understand it, one must have the financial means and the educational understanding of how to interpret this artifact. In addition, the issue of endocrine disruption is for the politically-empowered. Endocrine disruptors are not often discussed in mainstream media, and are only occasionally discussed in certain political arenas. Therefore, one would need to understand basic politics, especially, in terms of how legislation is introduced and passed, to be able to affect political change in having legislation passed to regulate endocrine disruption. It is clear that Dr. Colborn is targeting an audience that has the power and privilege to bring about the change she seeks. In U.S. American politics, this also means that the audience must have money to influence that change. She, in turn, is likely uninterested in reaching an audience that is uneducated and members of the lower-working class.

In terms of the Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011, it is important to note that the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pension is the committee responsible for this Act (U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, 2016). Just as importantly, the committee chair is the person responsible for determining whether this bill will move past the committee stage of the legislative process (U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, 2016). This is important to understand and note because it further helps to explain why people such as Dr. Colborn have developed organizations, such as TEDX, in order to further a political agenda by pressuring politicians to pass legislation to protect citizens from toxic chemicals. Senator John Kerry

introduced the bill on July 13, 2011 (S. 1361, 2011). The bill was read twice, and then it was referred to committee where the bill died. The bill may be reintroduced in the future, but it would likely only happen if changes were made so it can pass out of committee, if there is new committee chairperson, or if there is there is a substantially new committee.

The committee in question, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, is comprised of twenty-two members, with six of those members being female (U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, 2016). Additionally, it is necessary to mark that the current head of the committee is a male senator, Lamar Alexander a Republican from Tennessee (U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, 2016). Therefore, it is important to consider that since the committee chairperson singlehandedly decides whether a bill lives or dies, and the chairperson happens to identify as a male, his gender may have had a significant impact on the bill not making it out of committee.

### **Rhetorical Shock-Value**

Finally, Dr. Colborn makes a bold and shocking statement when she references Dr. Donald in saying that the thirty-eight weeks spent in the womb are more influential to a person's health than what happens for the first thirty-eight years of a person's life (TerraVision Media, 2009). The shock-value encourages an audience to stop and consider the implications of endocrine disruptors on its posterity. Females are most likely to be impacted by this statement because as the bearers of children, they are the ones who tend to most directly experience the social and cultural pressures of feeling responsible for the health and welfare of these children. However, this is not to say that men will remain unaffected by this statement. Males share responsibility in the conception of children, and, therefore, they may feel impacted by endocrine disruptors that may affect their child. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that males will feel directly

connected to this claim, because this image by itself does not explain the male's role: being able to pass on genes, which may have been damaged by endocrine disruptors.

Unquestionably, this statement could have an emotional impact on an audience whether female, male, Black, White, lower-working class, upper-middle class, uneducated, or educated. The statement asks the audience to consider that what happens while a fetus is in utero will have lifelong impact on that person's health. Personally, I know that it had an emotional impact on me as a parent. Even after the birth of my son, I still question everything I did during my pregnancy, and how my decisions will impact my son for the rest of his life. However, I have also learned that I have to live life to the fullest for both my family and for myself, and I cannot do that if I continuously dwell on what I may have done differently before, during, and after my pregnancy.

### **CONCLUSION**

In summary, Dr. Theo Colborn's video lecture, *The Male Predicament*, strives to inform the audience about the dangers of endocrine disruptors (TerraVision Media, 2009). Her statement reinforces androcentrism she places the male body at the center of her message by informing males that they are just as impacted by endocrine disruptors as females. However, given the medium Dr. Colborn uses to deliver her message, I believe that she falls short in furthering her goal of environmental protection. Although endocrine disruptors can affect anyone regardless of identity, she delivers her message through a medium, which requires access to the Internet and an understanding of biology, and both require education, time, and money. She seeks to implement her message through furthering her political agenda, which also requires access to education, in particular, the understanding of the political process and money. She again falls short in targeting an audience who would be most vocal about implementing that change, those most affected by endocrine disruptors. Therefore, by changing the medium she uses to voice her

message, and utilizing accessible language, would increase the potential effectiveness of her message because the shock-value and emotional appeal are already present.

Through the use of ecofeminism, this analysis has demonstrated that although endocrine disruption is an environmental concern affecting both females and males, in U.S. American society it is viewed as a hazard, primarily affecting females. Even though females bear both female and male offspring, in the eyes of the U.S. government, endocrine disruption does not raise enough concern to establish legislation that will regulate and protect the future of our children. The alarming fact is that evidence demonstrates that endocrine disruptors effect multiple generations.

Additionally, today many people do not take the perspective as being one with the environment, but instead view themselves as separate from the environment (Anstey, 2006). Today endocrine disruptors are not only a U.S. American issue, but a global issue (TerraVision Media, 2009). In today's society, much of the world economy is controlled by predominantly White, educated, male, upper-middle class people. However, the impact of the global economy has resulted in endocrine disruption being a global issue that affects everyone, both female and male, and raises concerns about reproductive health and the health of future generations (Anstey, 2006). The regulations and legislation that are imposed today, will literally determine the health and future of humankind. Each day that society goes without regulations on endocrine disruptors is another day where our environment, ourselves, and our future generations will be impacted by toxic chemicals.

Although females, especially pregnant females, are the most vulnerable because they are the ones who are most responsible for the health of a fetus, endocrine disruptors impact males as well. The issue of endocrine disruption affects everyone and should be a concern for all of

humankind. Preventing exposure to endocrine disruptors is the link between humanity today and future generations. Politicians and citizens alike should be concerned with protecting the health and welfare of all humans for all generations. In particular, politicians should be concerned with the health and welfare of all citizens, and enact legislation to eliminate environmental hazards not only affecting legislators, but environmental hazards that affect everyone.

Currently, there is no enacted legislation regulating endocrine disruptors. As citizens we are able to press our legislators, submit proposed bills to our legislators and interest groups, and to lobby interest groups to take action. The rhetorical challenge, which Dr. Colborn realized, is that we must raise awareness that endocrine disruption is not identity specific: it does not only affect the Black community, the lower-working class, the uneducated, or other marginalized identities, but it affects everyone across the globe. In order to protect future generations and decrease the risk to current citizens, endocrine disruption must be regulated.

## REFERENCES

- Abell, H. A. (2013). Prenatal drug use: Functionalistic vs. formalistic approaches. *The Catalyst*, 18(5), 9-10.
- Anstey, E. H. (2006). *A feminist perspective on the precautionary principle and the problem of endocrine disruptors under neoliberal globalization policies* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4947&context=etd>
- Cal. Penal Code §187 (West 1999).
- Carson, R. (2002). *Silent spring*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Chircop, A. (2008). An ecofeminist conceptual framework to explore gendered environmental health inequities in urban settings and to inform healthy public policy. *Nursing Inquiry*, 15(2), 135-147. doi: 10.1111/j.1440-1800.2008.00400.x
- Collins, P. H. (1990). The social construction of Black feminist thought. In M. Malson, E. Mudombe-Boyi, J. O'Barr, & M. Wyer (Eds.), *Black women in America* (pp. 94–120). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Commonwealth v. Lawrence*, 536 N.E.2d, 571 (1989).
- d'Eaubonne, F. (1974). *Le féminisme ou la mort*. Paris, France: Pierre Horay.
- Dickinson, E. (2012). Addressing environmental racism through storytelling: Toward an environmental justice narrative framework. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 5(1), 57-74. doi: 10.1111/j.1753-9137.2012.01119.x
- Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011, S. 1361, 112th Cong. (1<sup>st</sup> Sess. 2011).
- Genuis, S. J. (2006). The chemical erosion of human health: Adverse environmental exposure and in-utero pollution- Determinants of congenital disorders and chronic disease. *Journal*



- of Perinatal Medicine*, 34(3), 185-195. doi: 10.1515/JPM.2006.033
- Glazebrook, T. (2002). Karen Warren's ecofeminism. *Ethics and the Environment*, 7(2), 12-26.
- Goldberg, C. (1999, June 30). Insurance for Viagra spurs coverage for birth control. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/30/us/insurance-for-viagra-spurs-coverage-for-birth-control.html?pagewanted=all>
- Hart, R. P., & Daughton, S. M. (2005). *Modern rhetorical criticism*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Hay, A. M. (2009). A new earthly vision: Religious community activism in the Love Canal chemical disaster. *Environmental History*, 14(3), 502-526.
- Henry, A. (2004). *Not my mother's sister: Generational conflict and third-wave feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Lahar, S. (1991). Ecofeminist theory and grassroots politics. *Hypatia*, 6(1), 28-45.  
doi:10.2307/3810031
- Lahar S. (1996). *Ecofeminist theory and grassroots politics*. In K. Warren (Eds.), *Ecological feminist philosophies* (pp. 1-18). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14.32 (West 1995).
- Li, H. (2007). Ecofeminism as a pedagogical project: Women, nature, and education. *Educational Theory*, 57(3), 351-368.
- Lofholm, N. (2014, December 18). Revolutionary research scientist Theo Colborn dies at 87 in Paonia. *The Denver Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.denverpost.com/obituaries/ci\\_27159082/revolutionary-research-scientist-theo-colborn-dies-at-87](http://www.denverpost.com/obituaries/ci_27159082/revolutionary-research-scientist-theo-colborn-dies-at-87)
- Lorde, A. (1983). There is no hierarchy of oppressions. *Interracial Books for Children Bulletin*,

14(3-4), 9.

Mellor, M. (2002). Ecofeminist economics: Women, work and the environment. *Women & Environments International Magazine*, 7-10.

Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. §750.14 (West 1999).

Middleton, T., & DeGersdorff. (2013, September). 4 ways to lower your environmental breast cancer risks. *Women's Health Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.womenshealthmag.com/health/environmental-risk-factors-for-breast-cancer>

N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. §631:1 (West 1996).

Pezzullo, P. C. (2003). Resisting "National Breast Cancer Awareness Month": The rhetoric of counterpublics and their cultural performances. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 89(4), 345-365. doi:10:80/0033563032000160981

*Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973).

Ruether, R. R. (1975). *New woman, new Earth: Sexist ideologies and human liberation*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.

Sanchez, M. (2011). *Words from the womb: A guide through the stages of pregnancy*. Miami, FL: Xobebe, LLC.

Soper, K. (1995). Feminism and ecology: Realism and rhetoric in the discourses of nature.

*Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 20(3), 311-331.

*State v. Holcomb*, 956 S.W. 2d 286 (1997).

*State v. Horne*, 319 S.E.2d. 703 (1984).

St. John, D. P. (1987). Ecofeminism. *Ecospirit*, 3(2), 1-10.

TerraVision Media (Producer). (2009). *The male predicament*. [DVD]. Available from <http://endocrinedisruption.org/endocrine-disruption/the-male-predicament>

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (2016). Members.

Retrieved from <http://www.help.senate.gov/about/members>

Warren, K. J. (1996). *Ecological feminist philosophies*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Warren, K. J. (2000). *Ecofeminist philosophy: A western perspective on what it is and why it matters*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

West, R., & Turner, L. H. 2010. *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

White, W. S. (1971). A proposal for reform of the plea bargaining process. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 119(3), 439-465.

## VITA

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University

Heather A. Abell

habell87@siu.edu  
habell87@gmail.com

John A. Logan College  
Associate of Arts, Speech Communication, May 2008

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale  
Bachelor of Science, Speech Communication, May 2011

Southern Illinois University School of Law  
Juris Doctorate, May 2014

Special Honors and Awards:

Southern Illinois University School of Law:

Class of 2014 Pro Bono Service Award: The Class of 2014 Pro Bono Service Award is awarded to the student completing the most pro bono hours overall in the graduating law school class of 2014.

Bessie Engram Community Service Award 2014: The Bessie Engram Community Service Award 2014 is awarded to a Southern Illinois University law student (first, second or third year) who has volunteered the most time in helping local citizens of Southern Illinois during the past year.

Pro Bono Legal Participation Juvenile Justice Award 2014: The Pro Bono Legal Participation Juvenile Justice Award 2014 is awarded to recognize students who participated in pro bono and public interest work while in law school. These students received no class credit or monetary gain for the hours they worked.

Pro Bono Legal Participation Williamson County Public Defender Award 2014: The Pro Bono Legal Participation Williamson County Public Defender Award is awarded to recognize students who participated in pro bono and public interest work while in law school. These students received no class credit or monetary gain for the hours they worked.

Bessie Engram Community Service Award 2013: The Bessie Engram Community Service Award 2013 is awarded to a Southern Illinois University law student (first,

second or third year) who has volunteered the most time in helping local citizens of southern Illinois while in law school.

Pro Bono Legal Participation Juvenile Justice Award 2013: The Pro Bono Legal Participation Juvenile Justice Award 2013 is awarded to recognize students who participated in pro bono and public interest work while in law school. These students received no class credit or monetary gain for the hours they worked.

CALI Excellence for the Future Award Spring 2013: The CALI Excellence for the Future Awards program recognizes excellent achievement by law students in their studies. The award is given to the student with the highest grade in the class as determined by the instructor or registrar.

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale:

Summa cum Laude: Southern Illinois University Carbondale Institutional Honor

Southern Illinois University Dean's List, Fall 2009

Southern Illinois University Dean's List, Spring 2010

Southern Illinois University Dean's List, Fall 2010

Southern Illinois University Dean's List, Spring 2011

R. Paul Hibbs Award Recipient- Spring 2011: The R. Paul Hibbs Award is awarded to an outstanding Speech Communication major based on scholarship and participation in departmental activities.

Research Paper Title:

Warning! You May Have ED: A Rhetorical Analysis of *The Male Predicament* from an Ecofeminist Perspective

Major Professor: Suzanne M. Daughton

Publications:

Abell, H. A. (2013). Prenatal drug use: Functionalistic vs. formalistic approaches. *The Catalyst*, 18(5), 9-10.