

Feminism or Death: How the Women's Movement Can Save the Planet

Françoise d'Eaubonne

Ruth Hottell, Translator

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In English for the first time, radical 1970s feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne's manifesto *Feminism or Death* is bold in suggesting the role that feminism might play in saving the environment.

An iconic text—one of the first to discuss ecofeminism and the inherent connections between women and nature—*Feminism or Death* is vehement in issuing claims against the patriarchy; it roots this as the cause of the world's problems. For example, it suggests that the “phallocracy” is to blame for capitalism, industrialism, and mass pollution, as well as overpopulation because of abortion bans and the fact that contraception is rendered inaccessible to some. All of these factors, d'Eaubonne says, put all living creatures in peril by contributing to destruction of the planet.

The book's three sections focus on the fetishization of womanhood, obstacles to the feminist movement, and the states of feminism around the world. They cover topics that are perennial to feminism, including of human rights, rape, and abortion, all with the critical inclusion of ecology.

This edition includes a foreword by Carolyn Merchant, contextualizing the work and naming its contemporary influences, as well as an extensive, scholarly introduction that discusses the evolving role of ecofeminism in politics while also acknowledging the shortcomings of the original text, such as ignoring the problems of colonization. Many passages have not aged well, with mentions of marginalized groups being simplified to “Jews and homosexuals,” or flippant remarks about sex work; the global landscape has changed in the fifty years since the book was first released. Still, the meat of the work is potent and timeless, with argument after argument issued about the need for feminism.

With its urgent discussions of climate change and human rights, *Feminism or Death* is a perennial feminist text.

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