

# Rethinking Theology and Nature

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With many spiritual feminists, ecofeminists, ecologists, antinuclear activists, and others, I share the conviction that the crisis that threatens the destruction of the earth is not only social, political, economic, and technological, but is at root spiritual. We have lost the sense that this earth is our true home, and we fail to recognize our profound connection with all beings in the web of life. Instead many people uncritically accept the view that "man" is superior to "nature" and has the right to "use" the natural world in any way "he" sees fit. Though often clothed in the garb of modern science, such views have their root in theological conceptions that separate both God and humanity from nature and from finitude, change, and death.<sup>1</sup> The preservation of the earth requires a profound shift in consciousness: a recovery of more ancient and traditional views that revere the connection of all beings in the web of life and a rethinking of the relation of humanity and divinity to nature. I will explore some of the dimensions of this shift in consciousness by contrasting the work of Protestant theologian Gordon Kaufman with a variety of feminist voices that challenge the Western theological notion that human creation in the image of God sets us apart from the rest of nature.

Gordon Kaufman, whose views are typical of much recent Protestant theology and biblical criticism, articulates a widely held version of the Western theological separation of humanity and nature when he states:

The great religious struggle between Israel and Canaan was over the relative metaphysical importance of natural power and process on the one hand and personal moral will on the other. When Yahweh won that struggle it meant that the object of ultimate loyalty and devotion for humans in the West would be conceived increasingly in terms of models rooted in our moral and personal experience, not in our sense of dependence upon and unity with the orders and processes of nature.

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According to Kaufman, Western theological tradition considers nature to be without purpose or value: "Nature appears to be a nonteleological, nonaxiological order within which emerges purposive valuing activity." He states further that

the conceptions of God and humanity, as they have developed in Western religious traditions, work hand in hand toward distinguishing humankind from (the rest of) nature. Nature is *not* [my italics] conceived primarily as our proper home and the very source and sustenance of our being.<sup>2</sup>

He argues that in Western theology the concept of a personal moral will separates both humanity and God from nature. He also maintains that human agency and morality cannot be explained without positing a God who stands outside the natural world as their source.

Feminist philosopher, poet, and mystic Susan Griffin challenges the Western tradition's assertion that humanity is separate from nature and that our value lies in this alleged separation. She concludes her book *Woman and Nature* with a passage that reverses the imagery of Plato's vision in the cave. Plato equates the physical world and the body with darkness that can only be lit by the transcendent light of reason, while Griffin writes:

I know I am made from this earth, as my mother's hands were made from this earth, as her dreams were made from this earth and this paper, these hands, this tongue speaking, all that I know speaks to me through this earth and I long to tell you, you who are earth too, and listen *as we speak to each other of what we know: the light is in us.*<sup>3</sup>

Here she challenges the Western view that we are to understand ourselves as set apart from nature by our reason and moral will. But her work is imbued with what some might call a stunning moral consciousness and will. She writes of the intrinsic value of other beings:

... for the blackbird, which flies now over our heads, whose song reminds us of a flute, who migrates with the stars, who lives among reeds and rushes, threading a nest like a hammock, who lives in flocks, chattering in the grasses, this creature is free of our hands, we cannot control her.<sup>4</sup>

Griffin and Kaufman express two very different understandings of the human relation to nature: one asserts our ontological separation by virtue of personal moral will; the other names a felt connection. The voices, too, are different. One separates itself from whatever passions and emotions may have led to its assertions, affirming that only thus can we think clearly; the other tells us with its every word that "we have cause to feel deeply."<sup>5</sup> Those of us who have been trained in the language and thought forms of patriarchy but who have not entirely forgotten our connections to the powers of other beings, understand both voices. Should we follow the voice of male philosophy and theology and assert that the woman whose words have named something

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we know deeply within ourselves is after all not a philosopher, but, at best, a poet? Should we accept his assertion that she cannot adequately account for our differences from nature, for the (moral) projects we propose as persons? Or can we respond to her call to enter into dialogue and "listen as we speak to each other of what we know."<sup>6</sup>

Susan Griffin has named the passionate conviction that "we are nature"—something I have always known deeply within myself, but which I have found lacking from both the form and content of much of theology and philosophy. As a mystic, she also calls us to rethink the separation of the divine from nature. But before adopting her vision as a foundation for feminist theology, it is important to consider several typical misinterpretations of her work. One misreading of Griffin asserts that she has simply reversed the dualisms we have inherited, naming men and rationality as essentially evil, and women, nature, and irrationality as essentially good. But Griffin explicitly counters this view when she begins her book with a prologue that states:

He says that woman speaks with nature. That she hears voices from under the earth. That wind blows in her ears and trees whisper to her. But for him this dialogue is over. He says he is not part of this world, that he was set on this world as a stranger. He sets himself apart from woman and nature.

Close reading of this text indicates that it is man's choice that sets him apart from woman and nature, not his essence. Griffin underscores this point when she writes:

(And when we hear in the Navajo chant of the mountain that a grown man sits and smokes with bears and follows directions given to him by squirrels, we are surprised. We had thought only little girls spoke with animals.)<sup>7</sup>

Because philosophy has been defined as a discipline in which reason is separated from passion and emotion, some have asserted that when Griffin affirms deep feeling as a source of knowledge, she accepts Western culture's designation of women as intuitive and irrational. But Griffin's poetic reflections on the human relation to nature have deeply philosophical implications and demonstrate mastery of the language and thought forms of Western so-called rational thought. If Griffin had intended to state that women and nature are irrational and inarticulate, then she would not have compared her consciousness of herself as a writer to the flight of a redwing blackbird:

*yet the blackbird does not fly in us but somewhere else free of our mind, and now even free of our sight, flying in the path of her own will, she wrote, the ink from her pen flowing on this paper, her words, she thought, having nothing to do with this bird, except, she thought, as she breathes in the air this bird flies through.*

and:

all that I know, I know in this earth, the body of the bird, this pen, this paper, these hands, this tongue speaking, all that I know speaks to me through this earth.<sup>8</sup>

Griffin is playing here with the expectations embedded in our language and way of thinking. We are used to thinking of the mystical experience with the bird—a bodily, preverbal experience—in relation to the earth that we think of as inarticulate. But we are not used to thinking of the book we read in relation to the paper it is written on, the hand that wrote it in a particular place on a particular day, and both the hand and the pen and the paper as earth. We are used to hearing that women and girls speak with nature, but we are not used to hearing that those same girls and women put pen to paper, consciously shaping their experience into naming, into words.

Griffin is not proposing that women remain within a mystical, perhaps even mantic, but ultimately inarticulate and inarticulate relation with nature. She calls us rather to rethink the notions of rationality and articulation we have inherited as we rename the relation with nature that we experience. Griffin is clearly aware that this will require a deconstruction and reconstruction of language when she writes: "And we are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature."<sup>9</sup> Here Griffin is consciously using words that are not adequate to her conceptions, deforming and stretching language.

Because the disjunction of divinity, humanity, and nature is deeply embedded in the words "God," "humanity," and "nature," articulating new conceptions is difficult. The three terms in the triad—"God, man, and nature"—must be rethought together. Simply to say that the divine is nature, for example, will not do, because concepts of nature have already been defined as excluding teleology and the kind of power commonly associated with divinity. Nor, on the other hand, will simply saying that nature is teleological do, since teleology has been defined as residing in the divine and human moral will that stands over against nature. Similarly, it cannot be asserted that humanity is nature, since to most people that would imply that humans are irrational, immoral, and inarticulate. What is required is a revolution in thought, a deconstruction and reconstruction of theology and language.

In his recent work *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, Gordon Kaufman takes some steps towards this reconstruction, departing from the notion of the radical separation between divinity, humanity, and nature that he had earlier characterized as constitutive of Western theology. In recognition of the very real possibility that human beings may destroy ourselves and much of the life on the planet, Kaufman writes:

We humans must understand ourselves in the first place, therefore, as one strand in the very ancient and complex web of life, a strand, moreover, which

would not exist apart from this *context* [my italics] which has brought it forth and continues to sustain it at every point.

But note that for Kaufman the "web of life" is "context." This leads me to ask whether the web of life is granted intrinsic value, or whether it is valued because it supports and sustains human life. Kaufman confirms these suspicions when he asserts that understanding our connection to the biosphere is not sufficient for understanding human nature and its potentialities.

Once an animal had evolved with a sufficiently complex nervous system to sustain linguistic and other symbolic activity, thus making possible primitive consciousness, memory, and imagination, a long and complicated *historical* development was required before anything that we would recognize as a truly human mode of existence could appear on earth. . . . Human creativity was born together with *intention* and *action* [my italics], as humans found they could themselves actualize some of these possibilities and hopes. Thus human existence gradually developed capacities not found in any other form of life.

Though acknowledging that humans are rooted in and sustained by the web of life, Kaufman asserts that intention and action, self-reflection and choice, or finite freedom and self-consciousness, remain the marks of the distinctively human. This is expressed within an evolutionary perspective in which the two processes of nature and history have been guided by a "hidden creativity," symbolized by the name "God," that has produced human beings who are essentially different from nature. Kaufman writes that

in the course of time the cosmic and divine order has brought forth a mode of being, a dimension of itself, that transcends in a significant way even the luxuriant fecundity of life, namely history—the symbolic order, the realm of spirit—within which consciousness and meaning, self-conscious subjectivity and purposiveness and freedom have reality. We humans are the only creatures we know who are the living incarnations of that distinctive mode of being.<sup>10</sup>

In view of this statement, I wonder whether it would be misreading Kaufman to say that if self-consciousness and finite freedom could be sustained apart from continuing dependence on the web of life out of which they arose, then the death of the biosphere would not itself be a significant tragedy. If this conclusion is not intended, and I suspect it may not be, then a stronger affirmation needs to be made of the intrinsic value of the web of life and those parts of human nature that are similar to the rest of the web of life. As it is, there remains in *Theology for a Nuclear Age* a profound humanocentrism in regard to the web of life and the nature of God, as well as a focus on thought and choice as that which definitively characterizes humanity and divinity. Though God for Kaufman is the hidden creativity behind both historical and biological evolution, one is left to conclude, perhaps despite Kaufman's intentions, that for the God he describes, the primary goal

in the creation of the universe is the creation of humanity. But this is precisely the notion that we must question and deconstruct.

Kaufman argues that theological positions ought to be judged by the following criterion:

The supreme test, one might say, of the ultimate viability, and thus finally of the truth . . . [of any] symbolic frame of orientation is [its] capacity to provide insight and guidance in our situation today, a situation in which humankind has come up against its own limits in a most decisive and paradoxical way: through gaining the power to obliterate itself.<sup>11</sup>

I agree, and add three other criteria: (1) a symbol system must aid us in overcoming historic injustices between women and men, between races, and between peoples; (2) it must strike a deep chord in our experience; and (3) it must help us better to understand, love, and enjoy the life that has been given to us.

Kaufman argues that the symbol of God that comes to us through Christian tradition meets his test by playing a *relativizing* and a *humanizing* function. The relativizing function is provided by the symbol of God: "God is understood as that ecological reality behind and in and working through all of life and history, and the service of God can consist thus only in universally oriented vision and work."<sup>12</sup> I agree with Kaufman that the relativizing function of God reminds us of the importance of universally oriented vision and work. But I am not happy with the asceticism and self-denial implicit in Kaufman's notion that "service of God can consist *only* [my italics] in universally oriented vision and work." I also agree with Shug, who in Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple*, said, "God love all them feelings. That's some of the best stuff God did."<sup>13</sup> And with Z Budapest who said, "All pleasures are rituals to the Goddess."<sup>14</sup>

Kaufman proposes that the symbol of Christ serves a humanizing function, providing orientation by showing us that "radical self-giving in the struggle with the worst evils of contemporary human life, culminating perhaps in complete self-sacrifice—crucifixion—is what is to be expected." I wonder whether this image of Christ crucified can be separated from the other more dangerous image of Christ exalted to the right hand of the Father. Kaufman courageously criticizes and rejects that image because it has "laid foundations for later Christian imperialism, . . . crusades against infidels and inquisitorial tortures and executions of heretics, and . . . ultimately give[s] its blessing to Western imperialism."<sup>15</sup> I am not convinced that one can change the way images of Christ have functioned in Christian imagination through theological, that is, intellectual, assertion. Images of Christ exalted as well as crucified remain embedded in the Christian Bible and liturgy and continue to mold and shape the Christian imagination. In addition, Kaufman's image of Christ crucified is tinged with a masochism that goes

beyond recognizing that life has a tragic dimension. Kaufman, following the Japanese writer, Shusako Endo, states that Christ "understood himself as coming into the world to be trampled on by his fellow humans."<sup>16</sup> While it is true that the just do not always prosper, to me, to say that we come into the world to be trampled upon is an overly pessimistic reading of life. I am not persuaded that such an image of Christ provides a genuinely humanizing function.

In the remainder of this essay I will articulate and discuss the outlines of an alternative theological vision that I believe meets Kaufman's criterion of providing orientation for the lives we are living under the threat of nuclear war and ecological destruction. This vision resonates with many feminist voices. In Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, Shug describes her vision of God to Celie in these words:

My first step from the old white man was trees. Then air. Then birds. Then other people. But one day when I was sitting quiet and feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being part of everything, not separate at all. I knew that if I cut a tree, my arm would bleed. And I laughed and I cried and I run all round the house. I knew just what it was. In fact, when it happen, you can't miss it. It sort of like you know what, she say, grinning and rubbing high up on my thigh. . . . I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field and don't notice it. . . . Everything want to be loved. Us sing and dance, make faces and give flower bouquets, trying to be loved. You ever notice that trees do everything to git attention we do, except walk?<sup>17</sup>

Anthropologist Paula Gunn Allen, who comes from a Keres Pueblo background, expresses a strikingly similar understanding in her book *The Sacred Hoop*:

We are the land. To the best of my understanding, that is the fundamental idea that permeates American Indian life; the land (Mother) and the people (mothers) are the same. As Luther Standing Bear has said of his Lakota people, "We are of the soil and the soil is of us." The earth is the source and being of the people and we are equally the being of the earth. The land is not really a place separate from ourselves, where we act out the drama of our isolate destinies; the witchery [disconnected power] makes us believe that false idea. The earth is not mere source of survival, distant from the creatures it nurtures and from the spirit that breathes in us, nor is it to be considered an inert resource on which we draw in order to keep our ideological self functioning. . . . Rather for the American Indians . . . the earth is being, as all creatures are also being: aware, palpable, intelligent, alive. . . . Many non-Indians believe that human beings possess the only form of intelligence in phenomenal existence (often in any form of existence). The more abstractionist and less intellectually vain Indian sees human intelligence as rising out of the very nature of being, which is of necessity intelligent in and of itself.<sup>18</sup>

For me the divine/Goddess/God/Earth/Life/It symbolizes the whole of which we are a part. This whole is the earth and sky, the ground

on which we stand, and all the animals, plants, and other beings to which we are related. We come from our mothers and fathers and are rooted in community. We come from earth and to earth we shall return. Life feeds on life. We live because others die, and we will die so that others may live. The divinity that shapes our ends is life, death, and change, understood both literally and as metaphor for our daily lives. We will never understand it all. We do not choose the conditions of our lives. Death may come at any time. Death is never early or late. With regard to life and death there is no ultimate justice, nor ultimate injustice, for there is no promise that life will be other than it is. There are no hierarchies among beings on earth. We are different from swallows who fly in spring, from the many-faceted stones on the beach, from the redwood tree in the forest. We may have more capacity to shape our lives than other beings, but you and I will never fly with the grace of a swallow, live as long as a redwood tree, nor endure the endless tossing of the sea like a stone. Each being has its own intrinsic beauty and value. There will be no end to change, to death, to suffering. But life is as comic as it is tragic. Watching the sun set, the stars come out, eating, drinking, dancing, loving, and understanding are no less real than suffering, loss, and death. Knowledge that we are but a small part of life and death and transformation is the essential religious insight. The essential religious response is to rejoice and to weep, to sing and to dance, to tell stories and create rituals in praise of an existence far more complicated, more intricate, more enduring than we are.

How does this vision meet the test of the theological task as proposed by Kaufman? God/Goddess/Earth/Life/It, the whole of which we are a part, the unnameable beneath naming serves a profoundly relativizing function. The supreme relativizing is to know that we are no more valuable to the life of the universe than a field flowering in the color purple, than rivers flowing, than a crab picking its way across the sand—and no less. This vision of God/Goddess/Life/Earth/It has much to say to the ecological, social, and nuclear crises that we face. The ethic that would follow from this vision is that our task is to love and understand, to live for a time, to contribute as much as we can to the continuation of life, to the enhancement of beauty, joy, and diversity, while recognizing inevitable death, loss, and suffering. To understand and value the life we enjoy is to understand and value the lives of all other beings, human and nonhuman—and to understand that we are limited by the values inherent in other beings. We cannot live without taking the lives of other beings, but when we understand our profound connection to other beings, we begin to understand that it is a violation of the web of life to take more than we need. To poison rivers and seas and the ground on which we stand so that we can have televisions and air-conditioning, to engage in wars of conquest in order to exploit

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other people's labor and take the resources of their land, is to forget that we are all connected in the web of life. Death and killing are part of life. But to imagine something that we call "our way of life" justifies the creation of nuclear bombs with the capacity to destroy most of the life on this planet is ultimate arrogance. This ethic calls into question much of modern life that is based on the acceptance of the inevitability of war, and on the exploitation of other people, of plants, animals, and the rest of nature. But the difficulty of comprehending how to implement an ethic based upon reverence and respect for all life forms within the web of life should not lead us to dismiss it as romantic or impractical.

In addition to inspiring respect for all beings in the web of life, the vision of connection encourages greater appreciation for the diversity of human experience. If the essentially human is defined as consciousness and self-reflection, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that some humans, especially those educated within the Western intellectual tradition, are more human than others. This view has often been expressed through the naming of others—women, ethnic, cultural, and racial groups—as closer to nature, as barbarians, savages, peasants, slaves. However, *if the essentially human is to understand our connection to other people and to all other beings and to rejoice in the life that has been given to us*, then Western intellectuals are by no means self-evidently superior.

Further, this view offers a reason, rooted in vital feelings and instinct, to live. The great philosopher Simone de Beauvoir has written: "If we do not love life on our own account and through others, it is futile to seek to justify it in any way."<sup>19</sup> To seek to perpetuate and preserve life because we enjoy it, because we love it, seems to me to be more life-affirming than the somewhat ascetic notion of "service to God" and the somewhat masochistic notion of "radical self-giving" proposed by Kaufman.<sup>20</sup> To choose life because we love it, does not mean life is without risk, inevitable suffering, loss, and death. It is life that can end in death at any moment that we must love. Such love must inspire an ethic rooted in a desire to enhance the life possibilities of all beings, both human and nonhuman.

Objections could be raised against the view I have articulated. Kaufman states in *Theology for a Nuclear Age*:

We might then, attempt to think of God in terms defined largely by the natural processes of cosmic and biological evolution. This would result in a God largely mute: one who, though active and moving with creativity and vitality, was essentially devoid of the kind of intentionality and care which was characterized by the heavenly Father of tradition. Such a God could certainly evoke a piety of a profound awe and respect, and even, in its own way, of love and trust. But it is not a God who could provide much guidance with respect to the great crises we today face, crises which are largely historical in character, not biological, crises of human motivation, policy, action, and institutions. . . . If we

are to think of God as that reality which actually *humanizes* us, as well as *relativizes* us [my italics], these matters [history, language, human purpose] will have to be taken into account.<sup>21</sup>

Though there is a certain symmetry in this argument, I do not find it compelling. Let us approach the problem from the other side. Let us entertain the possibility that the divinity that shapes our ends is an impersonal process of life, death, and transformation. Let us imagine that the human spirit—history, language, human purpose—is not the goal of creation. Let us imagine that the life force does not care more about human creativity and choice than it cares about the ability of bermuda grass to spread or moss to form on the side of a tree. The human species, like other species, might in time become extinct, dying so that other lives might flourish. But then is there nothing that should stop the human species from poisoning the earth or blowing it up? Suppose there is no personal Goddess or God who would punish us for our act, or even weep over what we had done? Does it therefore follow that there is no reason for humans not to destroy a universe that has been created through aeons of life, death, and transformation? I suggest that what can stop us is not knowledge that our self-reflection and freedom are in the image of God, nor that self-sacrifice is in the image of Christ. What can stop us, I propose, is a deeply felt connection to all beings in the web of life. What can stop us is that we love this life, this earth, the joy we know in ourselves and other beings enough to find the thought of the end of the earth intolerable. We do not need to know that our moral will is in the image of a personal God in order to know that we have the capacity to create death or to love and preserve life.

But let us probe further. Is an image of Goddess/God that is based in our connection to all beings within the web of life necessarily impersonal and uncaring? Or is it our own Western consciousness that imports the notion that nature is "devoid" of "intention and care." Let us return to the words of Paula Gunn Allen:

Many non-Indians believe that human beings possess the only form of intelligence in phenomenal existence (often in any form of existence). The more abstractionist and less intellectually vain Indian sees human intelligence as arising out of the very nature of being, which is of necessity intelligent in and of itself.<sup>22</sup>

Allen's view is that all beings have a similar nature. All beings—including rocks and rain, corn and coyotes, as well as the Great Spirit—have intelligence. In *Flight of the Seventh Moon*, the American Indian shaman Agnes Whistling Elk teaches Lynn Andrews how to listen to rocks: "Rocks are very slow and have sat around from the beginning, developing powers . . . Rocks can show what you are going to become. They show you lost and forgotten things."<sup>23</sup> The Great Spirit of the

American Indians is linked to the spirits of all beings, including rocks. When asked if the tree had a consciousness, Martin Buber responded, "I have no experience of that."<sup>24</sup> Susan Griffin writes, "Behind naming, beneath words, is something else. An existence named unnamed and unnameable."<sup>25</sup> There is a human tendency to name this unnameable with personal language, to believe that It cares as we care. I imagine, but I do not know, that the universe has an intelligence, a Great Spirit, that It cares as we care. I imagine that all that is cares. Sometimes I feel I hear the universe weeping or laughing, speaking to me. But I do not know. What I do know is that whether the universe has a center of consciousness or not, the sight of a field of flowers in the color purple or the rainbow must be enough<sup>26</sup> to stop us from destroying all that is and wants to be.

## NOTES

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1. See "Finitude, Death and Reverence for Life," in my *Laughter of Aphrodite: Reflections on a Journey to the Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).
2. Gordon Kaufman, *The Theological Imagination: Constructing the Concept of God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 226, 215–16, 225. Kaufman's modern post-Kantian perspective caused him to overstate the separation between divinity, humanity, and nature in Hebrew religion, but he is correct in stating that the Hebrew conception of Yahweh as ruling nature through a covenantal relation with humanity represented a fundamental departure from earlier views of the relation of God, humanity, and nature.
3. Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 227.
4. *Ibid.*, 226.
5. *Ibid.*, xvii.
6. *Ibid.*, 227.
7. *Ibid.*, 1.
8. *Ibid.*, 226, 227.
9. *Ibid.*, 226.
10. Gordon Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 35, 35–36, 44–45, 41, 44.
11. *Ibid.*, 20, 28. See my critique of Kaufman's theological program in "Embodied Thinking: Reflections on Feminist Theological Method," in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 5 (Spring 1989).
12. Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, 37, 46.
13. Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (New York: Pocket Books, 1982), 178.
14. Frequently stated in public lectures. See *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* (Los Angeles: The Susan B. Anthony Coven #1, 1979), 9, 11.
15. Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, 59, 50.
16. *Ibid.*, 52.
17. Walker, *The Color Purple*, 178–79.
18. Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 60.

19. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), 135–36.
20. For the particular dangers of an ethic of self-sacrifice for women, see Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, ed. Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 25–42.
21. Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, 44.
22. Allen, *The Sacred Hoop*, 60.
23. Lynn V. Andrews, *Flight of the Seventh Moon: The Teaching of the Shields* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 52.
24. Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, 2d ed., trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 8.
25. Griffin, *Woman and Nature*, 190.
26. Ntozake Shange, *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf* (New York: Macmillan, 1976).