

**Barbara Kingsolver: Evaluating Her Contribution to the Eco-Feminist Novel****Prof. Sabah Atallah Khalifa Ali, Ph.D.****(College of Education- Ibn Rushd/ University of Baghdad)****Email/ [sabah.atallah@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq](mailto:sabah.atallah@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq)****Instructor, Zaid Ibrahim Ismael, Ph.D.****(Al-Mansour University College)****Email/ [zaid.ibrahim@muc.edu.iq](mailto:zaid.ibrahim@muc.edu.iq)****This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).****Abstract**

Climate change, together with terrorism, economic depressions, and mass-destructive weaponry, is a source of international phobia for many people. The advancement in technology increases the competition among world powers and economic systems to develop their industrial enterprises. The smoke that emits from the factories, the pollution caused by the industrial projects, the excessive use of green gas result in the increase of global warming and have catastrophic effects on the ecosphere of the planet. Besides, man's wrong practices even in agricultural matters are exhausting the natural resources of the lands, and they badly affect the ecological diversity and the wellbeing of the humans and non-humans alike. Contemporary feminist writers treat this international crisis as a priority and start to devote their writings to address ecological issues. These eco-feminists believe that their suffering from patriarchal oppression is not different from man's exploitation of nature. Through their ecological activism, they endeavor to protect the environment and the planet from the selfish practices of the industrial companies. Barbra Kingsolver is one of the early pioneers of this emerging fictional subgenre. As previous studies of her works focus on individual novels, this study is an evaluation of her contribution to eco-feminist fiction in three major works: *Animals Dream*, *Prodigal Summer*, and *Flight Behavior*.

**Keywords:** ecofeminism, Kingsolver, environment, industrialization, patriarchal

## باربارة كنيغسولفر: تقويم لاسهامها في الرواية البيئية النسوية .

### المستخلص

يعد التغيير المناخي والارهاب وحقب الكساد الاقتصادي وسباق التسلح النووي مصدر خوف لكثير من الناس في يومنا الحاضر. وقد أسهم التقدم التكنولوجي في زيادة التنافس بين القوى العظمى والانظمة الاقتصادية ، التي سعت الى تطوير مشاريعها الصناعية. فقد أدى الدخان المنبعث من المصانع ، والتلوث الذي تسببت به المشاريع الصناعية والاستخدام المفرط لغاز التدفئة الى زيادة ظاهرة الاحتباس الحراري التي لها نتائج كارثية على الغلاف الجوي للأرض. وأثرت الممارسات الزراعية الخاطئة سلبا في التنوع البيئي ، وعلى سلامة الانسان والحيوان وادت كذلك الى استنفاد المصادر الطبيعية للتربة. وهذا ما دفع الكاتبات النسويات المعاصرات الى الأخذ بنظر الاعتبار هذه الازمة العالمية ، فقد بدأن بتكريس نتاجهن الادبي لتناول قضايا البيئة وترى الكاتبات أن معاناتهم في المجتمعات الذكورية لا تختلف كثيرا عن الاستغلال السلبي للطبيعة من الرجال. ولذلك أصبحت حماية البيئة من الممارسات النفعية للشركات الصناعية الاولية والشغل الشاغل لهؤلاء الكاتبات. تعد باربارة كنيغسولفر إحدى رائدات هذا النوع القصصي الجديد. وبينما ركزت الدراسات السابقة على تعامل الكاتبة مع قضايا البيئة في روايات منفردة، تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تقويم اسهام الكاتبة للرواية البيئية النسوية في ثلاثة اعمال رئيسة وهي حلم الحيوانات و الصيف الباذخ و نمط الطيران.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحركة النسوية البيئية ، كنيغسولفر، البيئة، الحركة الصناعية ، بطريركي

### 1. Introduction

In contemporary literary theory, Ecofeminism is used to explore the relationship between man and nature. Coined and popularized as a key term during the third wave of feminism (1980-), Ecofeminism brings together ecology and feminism through its focus on man's abuse of both mother nature and women in order to control and exploit them (Warren, 1997). The feminist activists, who advocate this concept, view nature as a female and protest the destruction man has brought upon the ecosystem, not only through industrialization and capitalism, but also via the harmful military experiments and wars (Gruen, 1993). They believe that man has polluted the planet and depleted it from its resources, without any regard to the harm

they do to the environment. While man is considered the destroyer and abuser, women are constructive and protective, things they experience and master as mothers and housekeepers (Shiva, 2014). In their campaign to preserve the 'Mother Earth', they blame man for pollution, deforestation, and desertification. These women, as Pamela Odih (2014) elaborates, think of finding solutions to the problems that face the world which culminate in a climate change and catastrophic natural disasters.

The term is not only limited to the patriarchal society and its domination and oppression of women, but it also extends to include all the marginalized and exploited people due to their race, class, or gender, whose suffering parallel that of animals and the environment in general (Taylor, 1997). According to Heather Eaton (2003), even children are not excepted from this category. Thus, the concept aims at confronting oppression and social injustice of any kind and simultaneously disseminating ecological awareness among the public concerning the damage man is doing to nature.

This novelistic tradition calls for opposing all kinds of violence, whether domestic, social, or political, that affects both women and nature (Eisler, 1990). The practitioners of this theory even sought to establish a connection between pollution and women's pregnancy as many women are giving birth to disabled babies (Warren, 1997). They even denounce the governmental experiments in advanced, destructive weapons. According to the Eco-feminist writer, all forms of life are interconnected and nature is a living and a spiritual being (Starhawk, 1990).

Linda Wagner-Martin and David King Dunaway (2004) opine that Kingsolver's life and her love of nature mirror on her writings. Kingsolver grew up in rural Kentucky and later earned an academic degree in biology. Her experiments and her attempt to live a self-sufficient life with her

family, by growing natural food for themselves on their own farm in rural Virginia, also reflect her preoccupation with ecological issues, which she documented in both her fiction and memoir. Still, she always asserts her critics and interviewers that she is not writing autobiographical accounts of her own life (Kerr, 1988).

Besides dealing with human rights issues, Kingsolver mainly focuses on environmental concerns and devotes her fiction to the ecological harm industrialism and capitalism are doing to nature. Her female characters endeavor to understand how to deal with mother nature and the consequences of man's abuse of the environment. Kingsolver emphasizes the significance of man's relation to nature and warns against the mismanagement of the ecosystem, hoping to disseminate ecological awareness among the readers (Ballard, 2003).

## **2. *Animal Dreams*: Following Native American Traditions**

In *Animal Dreams* (1990), Kingsolver chronicles the life of young Codi Noline, a woman from the fictional town of Grace, Arizona, who observes how the industrialization of rural areas ravages the environment and pollutes the whole place. While the men are careless about what is happening, the women form a league, known as the Stitch and Bitch, to protect nature.

Kingsolver's women in this novel are presented as militant females, ready to sacrifice and risk their lives in order to preserve the environment and to educate the people about the danger of abusing nature. For instance, when Hallie, Codi's sister, travels to Nicaragua aiming to develop the agriculture there, she does not take into consideration the fact that she is risking her life in this war-torn country. Prior to her execution by a Paramilitary group in Nicaragua, Hallie writes to Codi about the way women

die because of the political struggle. Hallie is kidnapped, abused, and shot dead by the rebels. Her pathetic death, which haunts Codi's memories, stands for the way the patriarchal and political systems, represented by the conflicting camps in the novel, maltreat women and the environment.

Codi provides a detailed description of the beautiful natural scenes before the arrival of the industrial companies to Grace:

The view from here was orchards: pecan, plum, apple... The trees filled the whole valley floor to the sides of the canyon. Confetti-colored houses perched on the slopes at its edges with their backs to the canyon wall. (AD, 1990)<sup>1</sup>

Kingsolver, through Codi, then laments the loss of this heavenly beautiful scene with a "shamelessly unpolluted sky" (AD, 1990), orchards and wild peacocks, which is distorted by the mining company: "On the cliff overlooking the valley, the smelter's one brick smokestack pointed obscenely to heaven" (AD, 1990). Pamela Odih (2014) states that the destruction of nature by the capitalist system for materialist reasons is another form of patriarchy used in justifying man's policies to exploit and control nature. The men's passive reaction to the mining projects, conducted by the Black Mountain Mining Company in the nearby mountains which highly pollute the river and threaten the town of Grace, represents Kingsolver's implicit criticism of the patriarchal order and its carelessness towards the suffering of both women and nature.

As a teacher of biology in a school, Codi instructs her students about the necessity of taking a role in the preservation of nature and learning about the danger of industrialism. She takes her students on a trip to the

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<sup>1</sup>Kingsolver, Barbra. *Animal Dreams*. Harper Perennial 1990. Similarly, all subsequent references to the text will be parenthetically cited within the text. The abbreviation AD in the parentheses refers to the initials of the title.

river and they observe the pollution the mining company is causing to the water and the whole area. She learns of the Black Mountain Mining Company's attempt to change the course of the river to detract the attention of the environmental agencies from seeing the pollution they trigger. The company overlooks the damage and the harm it might bring to the town and the orchards that completely depend on the river for irrigation.

Codi also protests the harm the industrial companies are doing to the Jemez mountains in New Mexico. They are deforming the beautiful landscape for the sake of materialism. They dig the mountains to produce pumice, light stones which are used in industrial products. She tells her students:

They wash them in a big machine with this special kind of gravel they get out of volcanic mountains. The prettiest mountains you ever saw in your life. But they're fragile, like a big pile of sugar. Levi Strauss or whoever goes in there with bulldozers and chainsaws and cuts down the trees and rips the mountainside to hell, so that all of us lucky Americans can wear jeans that look like somebody threw them in the garbage before we got them.  
(AD, 1990)

*Animal Dreams* also emphasizes the significance of the matriarchal Native American culture in preserving nature. The ugly, deformed images, caused by the industrial company, are juxtaposed with the eco-friendly way of life of the Native Americans, who inherit the legacy of love and respect of nature from their ancestors. This is apparent in the beautiful archeological images Codi's Native American friend, Loyd Peregrina, demonstrates as he journeys with her in the ancient residences of his forefathers. Codi sees how they carved images that reveal their affinity

with and respect of nature: pictures on the rocks of animals and human figures. Codi wonders how the Natives are able to preserve the land without destroying the environment, a thing that the people in Grace are unable to maintain over the years. This primitive culture that grew in this place once is inseparable from the place where it flourished: “There was something familiar about the way they fit together....They looked just like cells under a microscope” (AD, 1990). Their homes are integrated with nature, forming a harmonious, beautiful landscape:

The walls were shaped to fit the curved hole in the cliff, and the building blocks were cut from the same red rock that served as their foundation. I thought of what Loyd had told me about Pueblo architecture, whose object was to build a structure the earth could embrace. This looked more than embraced. It reminded me of cliff-swallow nests, or mud-dauber nests, or crystal gardens sprung from their own matrix: the perfect constructions of nature. (AD, 1990)

Their respect and maintenance of the land are what make the difference, Codi realizes. They differ from the residents of Grace who treat the land as they treat women with a patriarchal superiority, trying to get the best they can from it. Thus, Codi abhors their exploitation of nature and their carelessness about the negative consequences that ensue:

To people who think of themselves as God’s houseguests, American enterprise must seem arrogant beyond belief. Or stupid. A nation of amnesiacs, proceeding as if there were no other day but today. Assuming the land could also forget what had been done to it. (AD, 1990)

Despite his kind and humane handling of nature as a Native American, Loyd has an interest in cockfighting. Codi and his mother convince him to

give up this violent and inhuman sport that harms the animals. This shows the active role women have in the preservation of the environment and the protection of animals.

Codi finds it necessary to stop the mining company's plan and to put an end to the pollution it engenders. She informs the Stitch and Bitch Club, mainly consisting of Native American female activists, and they all demonstrate against the company. They hope to arouse the public opinion and attract the attention of the media to the evils the Black Company is doing to nature and to the town and the townspeople, and thus, expose their selfishness and opportunism. In their endeavor to rescue the town, these women also seek to register Grace on the National Register of Historic Places. This is the only way that can stop the company and save the environment. Through these females, both White and Native Americans, Kingsolver shows how women are sensitive and selfless about nature and the beings that live within it.

### **3. Women from Appalachia: *Prodigal Summer***

Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer* (2001), like her subsequent novel *Flight Behavior* (2012), is set in Appalachia. Kingsolver also satirizes the industrial companies and their capitalist wrong practices, like large mining, in order to profit from the economy of the Appalachian region. These practices endanger the lives of people and animals alike and lead to many catastrophic changes in the climate. Women, in *Prodigal Summer*, recognize the effects of man's selfish treatment of nature.

The men in the text are representative of the man-centered world and the patriarchal views men have towards women and nature. On the other hand, the female characters are more ecologically conscious than the men and their consciousness and sensitivity lead them to take active roles as



caretakers and preservers of the environment. They understand the harm men are causing to nature and the carelessness of the industrial companies about the consequences of their industrial practices on the human beings, animals and the planet.

*Prodigal Summer* has three main stories that run line in line with the major theme of ecology. The first story, “Predators,” focuses on Deanne Wolfe’s concern with the coyotes on Zebulon Mountain. The second episode, “Old Chestnuts,” is that of Garrett Walker and his crossbreeding endeavors and arguments with the militant eco-feminist neighbor, Nannie Rawley, who tries to prevent him from using chemicals and poisonous sprays to carry out his experiments. The third story, “Moth Love,” sheds light on the life of the recently widowed, Lusa, and her interactions with her kinfolk, the Widener family, besides her attempt to manage her inherited land on her own. These distinct stories are unified by the ecological theme and the Appalachian setting in which the events take place.

The novel starts with Deanna, a park ranger interested in wildlife, who tries to protect wild predators, the coyotes, which live on Zebulon Mountain. These animals have not been seen for a long time and when they become visible in the area, Deanna is enthused. They are targeted by the farmers who fear the danger of these animals which feed on their livestock. The Coyotes, Deanna says, serve as vital parts of the cycle within nature, and their absence or extinction will only mean that “something’s missing from the chain” (PS, 2001)<sup>2</sup>. Their health and well-being are necessary for the ecosystem in which they live.

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<sup>2</sup> Kingsolver, Barbra. *Prodigal Summer: A Novel*. Harper Perennial, 2001. Likewise, in-text citations will be used for subsequent references to the text. PS is an abbreviation of the title *Prodigal Summer*.

Kingsolver's heroines' love of nature echoes that of the Romantics' and transcendentalists' for whom everything in the natural world is in a harmony that reveals its collective beauty. Deanna has the belief that the humans should live in harmony with the other creatures and should be protective of the ecosphere they inhabit. People should not abuse their authority over the land and the natural world. As she patrols the Appalachian forests, and hears the beautiful song of an unseen bird, Deanna contemplates:

A scarlet tanager broke the silence with his song. She thought of the bird hidden in leaves somewhere, unseen by any human eye but nevertheless brilliant red. Nevertheless beautiful. (*PS*, 2001)

Deanna tells Eddie Bondo, a man with whom she has a relation, when he asks her about the reason behind her lonely life in the mountains, that her withdrawal from society is not an anti-social activity, but a love of nature and animals, which are abused by the humans: "There's people I love. But there's so many other kinds of life I love, too. And people act so hateful to every kind but their own" (*PS*, 2001).

Deanna knows through her education in the life of coyotes that these animals are not as harmful as the ranchers believe them to be. She tries to distract Eddie from the locations of the coyotes' dens, just to protect these animals from being shot. She even accuses him of being selfish and careless:

That animal was going to do something important in its time—eat a lot of things, or be eaten. There's all these connected things you're about to blow a hole in. They can't *all* be your enemy, because one of those connected things is you. (*PS*, 2001)

In spite of Deanna's love of phoebes, that nest on the porch of her residence, she does not try to protect these birds from predators. When a snake approaches her porch, "She breathed hard against the urge to scream at this monster or tear it down from the rafters and smash its head" (*PS*, 2001). She allows nature to take its own course.

As an agriculture expert, Garnett Walker believes that he can produce a hybrid chestnut by crossbreeding the American kind with another healthy Chinese kind, which resists local blights. His family once owned a large land and they made a living out of chestnut timber. But their business deteriorated when a blight afflicted the trees. His interest in restoring the extinct chestnut to the area is not the outcome of preserving nature and the ecosystem. Instead, it is motivated by economic reasons to reestablish the glory of his forefathers, who similarly exploited the lands and the trees for material ends: "He was haunted by the ghosts of these old chestnuts, by the great emptiness their extinction had left in the world, and so this was something Garnett did from time to time, like going to the cemetery to be with dead relatives: he admired chestnut wood" (*PS*, 2001). In order to protect his experiments and keep everything clean, he eradicates weeds and insects in his yard.

Garnett's use of pesticides annoys his neighbor, Nannie Rawley, who is sure that these poisons will have destructive effects on her organic fruits and on nature. Nannie believes that these creatures are active in the organic production of fruits and other crops. Thus, insecticide and herbicide are harmful practices. These undesired insects and weeds should be removed naturally, Nannie argues, via using herbivores and animals that feed on insects. The argument between Garnett and Nannie over using poisoning

sprays culminates in a letter he writes to her, which reflects man's patriarchal treatment of nature:

Are we humans to think of ourselves merely as one species among many, as you always insist in our discussions of how a person might live in 'harmony' with 'nature' while still managing to keep the Japanese beetles from entirely destroying his trees? Do you believe a human holds no more special authority in this world than ... [animals]? If so, then why is it our duty to set free the salamanders, any more than it is the salamander's place to swim up to the state prison in Marion and liberate the criminals incarcerated there? ... If one species or another of those muddly little salamanders went extinct, who would care anyway? (*PS*, 2001)

He tries to maintain his utilitarian attitude towards nature and to impose his patriarchal authority on women. For Garnett, a woman is no more than "a piece of ground that needed plowing—a small female terrain" (*PS*, 2001).

Nannie does not believe in the supremacy of the patriarchal system over women and the natural world. She defiantly tells Garnett that the lands do not belong to any human: "I walk all over your hills when I feel like it. I just assumed you did the same with mine" (*PS*, 2001). She criticizes Garnett for his patriarchal mindset:

... I do believe humankind holds a special place in the world. It's the same place held by a mockingbird, in his opinion, and a salamander in whatever he has that resembles a mind of his own. Every creature alive believes this: The center of everything is *me*. Every life has its own kind of worship, I think... (*PS*, 2001)

Nannie tries to make Garnett realize that what badly affects his land and the neighboring farms is the fact that:

In your father's day all the farms around here were doing fine. Now they have to work night shifts at the Kmart to keep up their mortgages. Why is that? They work just as hard as their parents did, and they're on the same land, so what's wrong. (PS, 2001)

The lands, Nannie means to say, are depleted from their riches and nutrients by inefficient agricultural methods.

Garnett, in spite of his experience as an agricultural teacher and adviser, fails to understand the reason behind the death of quail chicks. He inwardly realizes that the reason is the change of the natural flora of the area that allowed the quails to thrive and proliferate in the past. The wellbeing of these birds is greatly affected by the planted thick fescue fields. All Garnett can do is to regret the death of these beautiful birds, without taking an active part in protecting these species through avoiding monoculture:

Now fescue was everywhere, and probably no one but Garnett even remembered the bunchgrasses that used to grow here naturally, the bluestem and such. It must seem strange to the animals to have a new world entire sprouting all around them, replacing what they'd known. What a sadness, the baby quails lost in that jungle with nowhere to go. But you had to have hay. (PS, 2001)

Despite the fact that Lusa does not have enough experience in farm management, she tries to protect the land by avoiding monoculture. She also avoids killing predators, though she knows that these wild animals are feeding on her sheep. She understands that these species are created for a reason and would benefit the ecosystem.

*Prodigal Summer* also demonstrates how the replications of the same crop have their negative effects on the lands and the animals. This is mainly because of the use of inexperienced farming methods that exhaust the lands, through successive plantation of the same crop season after season. Lusa protests these mismanagements of the lands, saying:

Farm economics, what do I know? But half the world's starving...we're sitting on some of the richest dirt on this planet, and I'm going to grow *drugs* instead of food? I feel like a hypocrite....It's the only reliable crop around here you can earn enough from to live off a five-acre bottom, in a county that's ninety-five percent too steep to plow. I *know* why every soul in this end of three states grows tobacco. Knowing full well the bottom's going to drop out any day now. (*PS*, 2001)

These farming practices also affect the ecosystem and the creatures living within it. Lusa's new treatment of the land alters the traditional practices of the neighboring male-dominated farms of planting tobacco successively. She defies her dead husband's male relatives by telling them that she knows how to deal with her land, while they insist on the traditional crops they used to grow.

Lusa does not use modern dairy machinery, and she prefers hand milking, unlike the men in neighboring farms, like Uncle Herb, who uses milking machines. She is careful about the pain these animals might feel, if they are not well-treated. Her cows and goats have their own world and maternal emotions which are not different from these of the humans: "Sometimes she felt flooded with the mental state of her Jersey cow" (*PS*, 2001) and "she also ... felt a twinge of sadness for these mothers [goats] and for their babies who would all come to naught, at least from a maternal point of view" (*PS*, 2001).

Lusa's knowledge of the life of insects, which she learns via biological education prior to her marriage, makes her conscious of the ignorance and stupidity of the official guides provided to farmers that advocate insecticides as solutions to protect their crops. She is angered by one of these columns she reads in a newspaper:

'Be vigilant! The project will require repeated applications of a stout chemical defoliant'....It was the county Extension agent who wrote this awful column called 'Gardening in Eden,' whose main concern, week after week, was with murdering things....Grubbing out wild roses, shooting blue jays out of cherry trees, knocking phoebe nests out of the porch eaves to keep the fledglings from messing on the stairs: these were the pastimes of Zebulon County, reliable as the rituals of spring cleaning. (PS, 2001)

Marsha Taylor (2006) maintains that in *Prodigal Summer* "women and nature both triumph, and they triumph through making connections and alliances". The female characters work, each through her own experience, to educate the man-dominated world that nature should be treated carefully. They try to disseminate ecological awareness among their communities, warning them against the consequences of their selfish practices on the environment.

#### **4. A Brief Account of Another Appalachian Woman: *Flight Behavior***

*Flight Behavior* recounts the effects of climate change on the life of Kingsolver's protagonist, Dellarobia, who lives with her husband, Cub, in southern Appalachia. Dellarobia panics as she sees the effects of the man's

mishandling of the land and the environment. She observes the climate change that results from these wrong practices, especially in her town.

Dellarobia suffers from the patriarchal limitations imposed upon her by Bear Turnbow her father-in-law, the dominant patriarch of the family, and her passive husband. As a result, she tries to find an outlet and this leads her to identify with animals and to see how their difficulties mirror hers, though differently. These creatures suffer as a result of the climate change, especially the birth of their offspring. The monarch butterflies no longer migrate to their native home in Appalachia mainly because of the logging of the mountains. They have to search for another place, since they are unable to find the old nesting ground in this environment. The protagonist is also disappointed by the lambs' unsuccessful reproductions.

Dellarobia comes to understand her life and rejects the exploitive practices of her father-in-law, who treats the land as being only a means of economic profit, overlooking the consequences of this on the ecosystem. She observes how Bear borrows a loan from an agency, mortgaging her and her husband's land in the process. Now, unable to pay back the loan, he has to accept to deforest the mountainside that belongs to them. As a result, Dellarobia is depressed and she expresses her anxiety and fear that this act will have negative consequences on the butterflies and the environment. She also sees how the removal of the forests from the mountainside "caused the mudslide and floods when a hard rain came" (*FB*, 2012)<sup>3</sup>. This leads to the destructions of the homes and the displacement of families, living down the mountainside. Men's reckless and selfish behavior destroys both the humans and non-humans. Dellarobia also tries to protect her little son, Preston, from the devastating effects of deforestation on their life, since their home is located near the mountain.

In order to escape the limitations of marriage, Dellarobia devotes her life to help the sheep in their difficult births. She also starts to learn from the scientists, who approach the area to study the changes in the life and destination of butterflies, since she realizes how the men in her family have

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<sup>3</sup> Kingsolver, Barbra. *Flight Behavior: A Novel*. Harper Perennial, 2012. *FB* in the in-text citations is a reference to the abbreviated title.



participated in this catastrophe as they contribute to the deforestation of the area. Like Lusa in *Prodigal Summer*, Dellarobia has to break out of the dominant patronizing view of the male relatives. Her decision to break out of the stifling patriarchal home is a sign of her maturity. Her outrage against Bear's opportunism and carelessness drives her into resistance:

These butterflies had been hers. She found them, she'd showed them to her son, in her name they were becoming beloved and important. They seemed to matter, like nothing she'd ever possessed. Already she had made up her mind to throw her one hundred dinky pounds against the heft of her family's men, if it came to that. (*FB*, 2012)

Like Kingsolver's other eco-feminist characters, Dellarobia has a dream of a better world in which the humans and non-humans can live an eco-friendly life and escape the damaging artifacts of the capitalist system, run mainly by men.

## **5. Conclusion**

Ecofeminism denounces the way the hegemonic patriarchal world treat women and the environment. Women believe in the interrelatedness of everything in the ecosystem. The land and animals are maltreated and exploited like women, who suffer in this restrictive materialist environment. Kingsolver's women are active agents in solving problems their sisters and the natural world tolerate. They have an ecological consciousness, unlike the male characters, who represent the traditional patriarchal system. Kingsolver anxiously tackles issues related to environmental pollution, which is the outcome of industrialization. Her novels are warnings against the danger of man's abuse of the natural world through excessive mining, wrong agricultural practices and mountain removal. Her critique of man's selfish practices and his materialism is fundamental in disseminating cultural awareness among her readers, regarding the possible dangers that might result from abusing nature.

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