



9-1-2020

**Jones, Clint. 2018. Ecological Reflections on Post-Capitalist Society. Stevens Point, Wisconsin: Cornerstone Press.**

Tiffany Montoya  
*Purdue University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/thenorthmeridianreview>

---

**Recommended Citation**

Montoya, Tiffany (2020) "Jones, Clint. 2018. Ecological Reflections on Post-Capitalist Society. Stevens Point, Wisconsin: Cornerstone Press.," *The North Meridian Review*. Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 15.  
DOI: 10.7825/2769-5115.1014  
Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/thenorthmeridianreview/vol1/iss1/15>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The North Meridian Review by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@butler.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@butler.edu).

---

Jones, Clint. 2018. *Ecological Reflections on Post-Capitalist Society*. Stevens Point, Wisconsin: Cornerstone Press, 128 pp. \$9.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-0984673957

Reviewed by Tiffany Montoya

---

*Ecological Reflections on Post-Capitalist Society* is an impressive little book of political ecology that accomplishes a lot in so few pages. Clint Jones claims that the ecological crisis must be solved with a reconceptualization of our metaphysical selves in relation to the environment; we must reject the “logics of oppression” and separation of the self from the Other; and have an understanding that the ecological is necessarily political, and thus, necessarily intersectional.

This book came from a series of public lectures geared toward an academic and community audience, so it contains terms that are specific to philosophy as a discipline, but at the same time, it is stylistically relaxed. It strikes that balance of being accessible, while providing a new paradigm of political ecology. Jones recognizes that the underlying metaphysical and epistemological elements of ecological and environmental questions are “underdeveloped, poorly understood, or unrecognized” (p. 1). He takes those metaphysical and epistemological elements as his focus. The questions he raises with this book are ontological: What kind of “being” are we? And where and how does our being fit into the natural world?

Jones argues that the environmental problems we face have an ideological origin—these ideologies are Western, masculine, Judeo-Christian, anthropocentric, capitalist, and colonial. The hegemony of these ideologies grants us permission, or rather, the endowment, to treat nature as a resource and a subordinate to be used, consumed, and depleted according to our needs and desires.

This, in turn, creates a separation, an alienation, a duality, or an antagonism between humans (us), and nature (the Other). So, importantly, he claims, we cannot solve environmental (or social) problems with the same ideological frameworks that *cause* the domination, antagonism, and exploitation in the first place.

Half of this book is a revelation of how the ideologies of domination that permit the exploitation of the *natural* world are the same ideologies as those that cause *social* exploitation and subjugation. Jones also adopts insights from Eco-Feminism and Care Ethics to explain the parallels between patriarchy and the domination of nature. For example, the natural world has often been associated with the feminine, and one of the things that Eco-Feminism suggests is that “where the female or the feminine is oppressed or dominated, a parallel logic of domination emerges in our relationship to the natural world [and vice versa]. In this way, the domination experienced on the one hand reiterates and reinforces the experience of domination on the other hand” (p. 80).

Another connection between environmental exploitation and human exploitation can be seen in environmental racism. Jones gives powerful examples of massive industrial farm operations, petrochemical companies, landfills, and incinerators that are disproportionately located near black communities. These industries pollute the air, soil, and water of the surrounding area with chemicals and untreated waste. One of these areas became known as “Cancer Alley” because of its level of toxicity to surrounding residents. This environmental racism also extends across nations because the United States ships much of its waste to other less developed countries, usually in the “global South,” directly contributing to the region’s environmental and health disasters.

The strategy, then, is to look to the opposite ideological frameworks—those dominated, silenced, and delegitimized. Here, Jones takes his inspiration from the philosophies of the global South and the socially peripheral. For example, he looks to Asian philosophy for comprehension of an

“interconnectivity of Being,” and to African concepts of bio-communalism as a way of understanding “citizenship within a community of Beings.”

The last connection that Jones makes between ecology and social justice is how the particular experiences of the LGBTQ community can be allegorical to nature’s “ways of being.” He goes one by one through the identities that correspond with the acronym “LGGBTQQIA+” and explains how queerness, for example, shares the same ontological traits as nature itself: nonbinary, “being as becoming,” or fluidity. His thesis for this last chapter is that environmental destruction happens by “othering” nature much in the same way that antagonism happens when we “other” alternative lifestyles, genders, and sexualities—“Like sexuality, where existence is, or ought to properly be conceived of as a continuum, our existence in nature is not dichotomous” (p. 92).

Jones has created a work of Ecosophia—“a wisdom of eco-existence that is normative, political, logical, aesthetic, and contemplative about the natural world and our place in it” (p. 35). Jones recognizes that a large root of the global ecological problem is ideological, so our new ontological orientation must be one of “egalitarian biocentrism and a metaphysical ontology of holism” (p. 34). Our relationship to nature must be one of stewardship and citizenship, since our very *being* as humans is inseparably connected to the earth. To treat this relationship asymmetrically (as it has been) would only be self-sabotage.

*Tiffany Montoya is a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at Purdue University. She specializes in social and political philosophy, and normative ethics.*