I offer a personal and prehistoric exploration of the concept of immanence, the principle of a divine force living, remaining, and operating within living creatures, inherent in the human, including the female; a unifying force that connects humans to each other, to nature, and to the earth. I examine the concept in three contexts. First, I share my own awakening to the earthly divine and my re-connection with the life-giving energies of the prehistoric Goddess, with my fellow human beings, and with the earth. Second, I describe the emergence of gender studies in the field of archaeology. Third, I examine a variety of theories that purport to explain the prehistoric shift away from cultures founded on egalitarian, immanent ways of living to the patriarchal, transcendent paradigms that currently dominate Western civilization.

In my examination of immanence, I highlight the damage done by hierarchical social structures and philosophical systems which separate humanity from the earth and from each other. However, the primary purpose of this examination is to illuminate the joy and the inherent good in rediscovering more egalitarian social structures and in reconnecting with one’s own self, with humanity, and with the earth. The chapters are connected by an underlying theme of transformation from a state of separation and transcendence to one of connection and immanence.

In chapter 1 I describe my personal, feminist transformation and re-engagement with the world during my journey through graduate school. I share my discovery of the
prehistoric, life-nurturing spirituality of the great Goddess, my inquiry into the nature of
gender studies in archaeology, and my connection with the Women Studies community at
OSU. In the first half of Chapter 2 I detail the emergence of gender studies in archaeology
and draw on various archaeological and feminist sources to describe challenges to many of
the assumptions about sexuality, gender roles, reproductive priorities, and social structures
of ancient cultures which are contained in traditional (androcentric) archaeology. In the
second half of the chapter I present theories, gleaned from a review of archaeological and
feminist literature, of the documented worldwide prehistoric shift away from egalitarian,
life-giving, earth-centered social and spiritual frameworks toward hierarchical,
life-threatening, male-centered social and religious frameworks.

I conclude with observations about the political nature of my personal
transformation and give examples of the trend toward reviving immanent social and
spiritual practices in modern Western society. Rather than a definitive argument about the
cause or causes of humanity's loss of an immanent world view, my thesis is offered as a
sharing of my experiences, feelings, observations, and intuitions. It is subjective and
emotional as well as academic and rational. It is intended to stimulate thought and
discussion, and to offer hope to others who are rediscovering the joy of engagement on
this earthly plane.
A Feminist Celebrates the Rediscovery of Immanence

by

Janet L. Lockhart

A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

Presented September 17, 1998
Commencement June 1999
Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies thesis of Janet L. Lockhart presented on September 17, 1998

APPROVED

Redacted for Privacy

Major Professor, representing Scientific and Technical Communication

Redacted for Privacy

Committee Member, representing Archaeology

Redacted for Privacy

Committee Member, representing Women Studies

Redacted for Privacy

Chair of Department of Scientific and Technical Communication

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of Graduate School

I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Redacted for Privacy

Janet L. Lockhart, Author
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge with gratitude the great blessings I received from the following people before and during the preparation of this manuscript:

My graduate committee: Lisa Ede, who is the synthesis of compassion and intellect. Barb Roth, whose class first fired my imagination. Susan Shaw, who said aloud everything I always thought about the condition of women, and more. Fred Obermiller, who shared his theory about bull leaping in Crete.

The gentle people, staff and students, at the OSU Writing Center, where my heart started beating again.

The strong, brave, intelligent, beautiful, and loving women in my life: My mother, Sandra Hoover, who has always thought I can do anything; Laureal Williams, my best friend in any life; all the women in the Women Studies community; my thesis group; and the new friends I met on campus who showed me I was on the right track: Joanne, Heather, Ryan, Sue, Moira, and all the rest. Greatly Blessed Be.

Finally, I celebrate the spirit of my late aunt, Dr. Claudette Hoover, who encouraged me in the development of my idea. She passed away before the completion of this thesis, but left me the priceless gift of her library, which I treasure.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1: Why I Need A Language of The Goddess: A Feminist Celebrates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Concept of Immanence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Step Off the Edge</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My First Step Toward Re-engagement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Second Step</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Little Push</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Great Leap</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifying My Gut Feeling</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2: Theories of The Shift From Egalitarianism to Patriarchy:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Gender Studies Perspective on Cultures Founded on Immanence</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifying Their Gut Feeling: Gender Studies in Archaeology</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Traditional Archaeological Model of Social Organization</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shift as Ontogeny (Normal Development)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shift as Catastrophe</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shift As Economic Change</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shift As Cultural Transformation (Chaos Theory)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION: The Goddess Is Returning: Manifestations of Immanence</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES CITED</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEDICATION

To the feminist spirit of my late aunt Claudette, "The Venerable One."

"...but then there was a star danc'd,
    and under that was I born."
    Beatrice, *Much Ado About Nothing*
A FEMINIST CELEBRATES THE REDISCOVERY OF IMMANENCE

INTRODUCTION

_Feminism is the radical notion that women are people._

-bumper sticker

I was born with a love of words. My hobbies and my profession have all had to do with symbolism, meanings, and patterns. I’ve been a writer, a tutor, a teacher, and a communication disorders specialist. I am both a devout child of the academy and a linear thinker; my investment in the symbolism and language of the West has been profound. As I grew up, I reveled in the simple delight of deciphering the interesting patterns of meaning in Latin root words, of discovering the referents behind heraldic objects and animals on coats of arms, of tracing lines of descent connecting the myths of Shakespeare’s _Romeo and Juliet_, Robbins and Bernstein’s _West Side Story_, and Michael Jackson’s music video “Beat It.” But gradually, I began to progress beyond fascination with the structures of classical Western language and myth and to delve into the content, the messages behind the myths. My heart broke as I discovered that the very symbols—words, myths, and metaphors—I loved so much were ultimately hostile to humanity in general, and to women in particular. I began to dig for the roots of the myths beneath the symbols I had loved so well.

What I found disillusioned me. The stories were based on conflict; the solutions were variations on a dismaying theme of domination and conquest. _Dreaming the Dark_ provides a list of the traditional Western myths that shape our culture: Apocalypse (or Revolution), The Good Guys Against the Bad Guys, The Great Man Receives the Truth and Gives It to a Chosen Few, and Making It/The Fall (Starhawk 1997: 19-22). In these
myths, reproduced in literature and the popular media, in sports, in economic, environmental, and government policies, in social structures, and in religion--in short, in every facet of modern society--are reflected the common, recurring themes of adversity, conflict, competition, and struggle. The agents in all these variations on a theme are men (or, rarely, a woman acting as a man, as Shakespeare’s Lady MacBeth, who must be “unsexed” to perform her horrific task, or Sigourney Weaver’s Ripley in the Alien series of movies). As I discovered this disappointing truth in my own favorite mythologies I began to understand, for example, why as a child I had always wanted to be Merlin the Magician instead of Queen Guinevere, Luke Skywalker instead of Princess Leia--the women simply never got to do anything.

It was worse than that. When women did appear they were all as similar as the hourglass-shaped females in the Disney movies. The details differed, but their roles always reflected a narrow range of attitudes and behaviors which seemed to me boring, overused, or distasteful. The Good Woman (wife, mother, virgin) was obedient, docile, nurturing to the point of nausea, and passive as hell. She never cared about anything for herself, only for her loved ones, and became fierce only when they were endangered. She accepted any hardship in defense of her family, whether they appreciated her sacrifices or not. Similarly, the Bad Girl stereotype (witch, bitch, whore, nag, etc.), while often more interesting, usually left me feeling deflated and dissatisfied. When a Bad Girl succeeded (temporarily) in her aims she was usually deprived of love and respect, often only to be brought down in a climactic battle with the Good Woman, who then subsided back into docility. When the Bad Girl failed in her aims she was denigrated and reviled. Female strength, whether intellectual, economic, or sexual, seemed to be equated with evil. Men fulfilled so many roles; rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief--why couldn’t women? Everywhere I looked it was the same thing: women who remained within the confines of these culturally-prescribed roles were forced to accept whatever fate befell them. Women who stepped outside of their narrowly defined roles were punished, often brutally. In my
own life I had vacillated between being the Good Woman—health care provider, nurturer, tender of other women’s children—and the Bad Girl—nonconformist, rebel, mouthy trouble-maker, heretic. I never felt completely comfortable in either role and often felt literally divided in two: the world approved of the Good Woman, but her mealy-mouthed talk left a bad taste in my mouth; the world frowned on the Bad Girl, but her voice kept bubbling up inside me.

Although I didn’t know it, when I came back to school I was yearning to discover a new set of myths and a new language; a female hera neither virgin nor whore, a vocabulary devoid of penetrative, punitive images, a grammar not polarized by agent-action-object. I found the beginnings of such a system in postmodern feminism (see, for example, Tong 1989: 217-238), with Cixous and her *écriture féminine* that tried to overcome the bipolar opposition contained in Western male-centered *literatur* (“phallogocentrism”). And, of course, for some years there had been the shining example from popular culture of Shirley Valentine, the gutsy English housewife who found “a change of life” in the Greek islands. (*Vive* the line “Boat is boat. . .”) But it was in my discovery of the symbolism and mythology of the prehistoric world (which was, by most evidence, universal, although I am only well acquainted with certain cultures of the Old World)—egalitarian, holistic, and based on an ideology of cooperation and engagement totally alien to Western polar oppositional thought—that I finally found what I was looking for. Here was not conquest and domination, but cooperation and partnership. Not separation and conflict, but integration and engagement. Not violence and death, but celebration and life. Here was something worth studying.

It was my personal discovery, my awakening to a new (ancient) symbolism, that I chose to celebrate by writing this thesis.

The chapters are intentionally written in multiple voices. The first chapter is the story of my journey through graduate school, with all the changes it wrought in me (and which, in my new view of the reciprocal relation between language and experience, I
choose to believe I also wrought in school). In this chapter the Bad Girl finally gets her chance to sound off. Using the voice which a friend once nicknamed “my little heretic” (but heresy can spring from love of truth), I deliver the story of my discovery of immanence, a message from the heart. As another who illuminated my way put it, that story “holds the traces of both ends of the emotion: yearning and fulfillment, freedom plus a knowledge of confinement, victory with a memory for what it was like before the triumph” (Olson 1997). In the first chapter, the Bad Girl realizes she is not alone.

The second chapter is an accounting of changes that have taken place in the discipline of archaeology. Here the Good Woman steps up to the mike, for she loves the academy, to describe in a traditional academic voice the emergence of gender studies within the profession. In a sense, even here the heretical Bad Girl pipes up occasionally, because even though the Good Woman follows the rules of the academy she is describing a series of challenges, presented largely by other Bad Girls, that forced the discipline to re-examine its assumptions about itself and about the prehistoric peoples it studies. The chapter then describes theories, generated by women in gender studies and by others reacting to them, that explain the great cultural shift from what is now acknowledged to have been a universal system of egalitarianism (a social system based on immanence) to patriarchy (a system based on separation and estrangement), somewhere around the fourth millennium BCE (Before Common Era). If the first chapter is personal, the second is political.

The conclusion is a synthesis of Good Woman and Bad Girl, in which I use the personal voice again to describe a pattern connecting the events, experiences, and changes in my own life, in the lives of other women, in the field of archaeology, and in postmodern Western culture as a whole: a pattern I call the return of the Goddess.

In my quest to discover the pattern underlying the disparate voices in the chapters of this thesis, I was helped by a fellow student who pointed out that the chapters are united by a theme of transformation. In the same way that I underwent a transformation
from an armored, task-oriented automaton to an engaged, participating human being; in that same way the discipline of archaeology has had to undergo a transformation from a detached, androcentric focus on artifacts, or forms, to a focus, impelled by gender studies and by the New Age movement, on the larger picture, the meaning behind the forms. Unfortunately, sometime around the fourth millennium BCE, human cultures also underwent a transformation, a negative one: away from their original egalitarian, life-centered forms to a variety of patriarchal, destructive ones. And finally, I perceive, along with many others, that another cultural transformation--this time, we hope, back to an orientation toward the forces of life and creation--is on the horizon.

I am aware that this work of my heart and my head is produced within and for the academy. Its intended audience and its destination are academic. Nevertheless, its content can not be purely academic in the traditional sense, since it incorporates my subjective impressions, my dreams, my hopes for humanity, and my passionate, private beliefs about the nature of the universe. Its form is therefore not strictly academic; I am aided in its development by the fairly recent acceptance of the personal essay as a legitimate academic form of expression--an acceptance, incidentally, which I take as evidence of the coming cultural transformation mentioned above. I believe that the freedom to let “subjectivity” back into our work will bring our work back into harmony with ourselves, and thus ourselves with the world.

In this thesis I try to express a dynamic, multi-dimensional experience in a linear, two-dimensional medium. In many places I try, as a quirky old professor once put it, “to quantify a gut feeling.” In this document I probably haven’t completely captured my discovery of this holistic ideology in my own life, in archaeology gender studies, and in the Women Studies community. (This is part of the problem: I wish to “capture” nothing; I want to share an experience that enveloped, and was enveloped by, me. English, especially the written form, limits expression of the fullness of my experience. I share the frustration of many postmodern feminists who try to convey thoughts that the medium
can't support.) To the best of my ability, I have tried not only to explicate the facts that I uncovered about the nature of prehistoric, pre-patriarchal societies but also to convey the non-linguistic infusion of joy I felt in studying them.

In the language of the academy and of the patriarchy, I want to convey my impressions, my experiences, and my convictions about a time in humanity's past when the organizing principle of society was not of conflict, but of integration—-with each other, with nature, and with all the natural energies of life on this planet. And, sadly, I want to describe theories about the destruction of that way of life—-indicating, where I can, places where pockets of resistance (or, better, celebration) survive.
CHAPTER 1
WHY I NEED A LANGUAGE OF THE GODDESS:
A FEMINIST CELEBRATES THE CONCEPT OF IMMANENCE

*When we see how much of our life is an escape from intimacy—from ourselves, from others, from the earth—we are on our way back.*
-anonymous

I Step Off the Edge

When I returned to graduate school at OSU two years ago, I had never heard of Women Studies. Even if I had, I probably would not have chosen to study it. After eleven years in an increasingly stressful job in health care, I was burned out. Weary of the endless stream of patients in need of my care, thwarted in my desire to serve by the monolithic, soulless insurance industry, and embittered by a long-term association with a boss who demanded two hundred percent performance with never a word of encouragement—I was sick to the soul, dead inside. Dimly I knew that if I went on much longer I would begin to resent the patients I had not yet stopped loving. I couldn’t do that to them or to myself. The final straw was the flooding of my home in “the big one” of February, 1996. After taking only three days off work to see to cleanup and repairs, rescheduling every patient but one into the remaining two days, I was appalled when my boss coolly informed me that I couldn’t count the missed time as sick leave, since in fact I had not been sick; it would have to come out of my vacation. I snapped. I began to look for something new; something that would release me from the endless drain that service provision had placed on my depleted reserves of energy. Taking a deep breath, I stepped off the deep end and quit my job.
When I enrolled at OSU, I intended to complete my degree in Scientific and Technical Communication with a minor in computer science or geoscience and to engage with the human element as little as possible. I envisioned myself busily writing away in some cubicle, producing page after page of sterile, tidy, perfect text, or competently taking notes and measurements on some research project, surrounded by admiring fellow scientists, and converting their esoteric prose into consumer-friendly technical reports. It would all be very clean: never again would I have someone else’s feces under my fingernails, never would I wipe another nose, never receive another phone call saying Mrs. Miller had died during the night. No more fifty-mile home health visits, no more tantruming children in my waiting room, no more telling family members their mother would have to be fed through a tube. No more gifts from grateful patients, either. No more home-made, deep-dish apple pies. No more Christmas cards with stickers and wobbly messages of love to the speech teacher. No more hugs from little blondies who had finally learned to pronounce /s/. I remember crying for one evening, tears of regret but not of remorse, and then shutting it off like a switch. I was too relieved to be sorry.

My First Step Toward Re-engagement

The first chink in my new suit of armor came when I had to decide on a technical minor. To my dismay, because of the number of prerequisites for 500-level courses, very few areas were open to me. Computer science was definitely out; with my limited background I would have had to take two years of lower-division courses to be able to take anything at the graduate level. Geoscience was almost as bad. I found I would have been able to waive or test out of the required number of public health courses—but I shied away from that area as too reminiscent of what I had just left. I wanted a change. After a
great deal of research and struggling with possible scenarios, I found I was left with two possibilities: business or physical anthropology/archaeology.

I seriously considered taking the business minor option. There were plenty of courses without prerequisites for me to choose from, one of my fellow STC majors was doing a business minor, and it would have jibed perfectly with the technical writing major in many ways. It was certainly the sensible option.

It was sensible, but it didn't feel right. I realized I'd been sensible for the last thirteen years; after disappointing my businessman father with my change of major as an undergraduate (from computer science, which I now remembered I hated; to psychology, which I remembered he hated but I loved), I graduated with a Master's in Speech-Language Pathology and went to work for a private practice. After the initial shock of realizing his daughter had become a "knee-jerk, bleeding heart liberal," my father was able to overcome the detriment of my profession in health care and focus on the benefit of my placement in a private practice. At least it was a profitable business.

To hell with business. I had another memory: before I had made my first-ever adult stand and chosen to major in psychology, I had been ridiculed out of another undergraduate major which appealed to me: anthropology. I signed up for Barb Roth's Anthropology 532: The Archaeology of Domestication and Urbanization.

I remember that class as a turning point in my life. Vaguely, I had always been distressed and somewhat repelled by "The History of Western Civilization," with its endless succession of battles and rulers and "the rise and fall of X," all of which seemed to me tiresome variations on a theme. Now, suddenly, in the study of prehistory, I found another theme altogether. The first humans were foragers, with egalitarian social structures, and their existence stretched from forty thousand years ago up to the mere five thousand of cities and written "history." In other words, human society had been egalitarian for many times longer than it had been hierarchical. What a revelation! Here, at the very beginning, the literal dawn of humanity (I refused to say Mankind), there were
no tyrants, no warriors, no fortified cities, no human sacrifices. Indeed, the hunting-gathering tribes of Paleolithic Europe and the Near East might even have been described as... peaceful. They seemed to cooperate. They worked together, foraging for food, building shelters, engaging in trade with other extended family groups. Their surviving artifacts, such as tools, burials of human remains, and works of art, spoke little of violence and much of respect for each other and the natural systems of which they were a part. I discovered Andre Leroi-Gourhan’s description of the stages of “The Evolution of Prehistoric Art” (1968) and Alexander Marshack’s provocative “Images of the Ice Age” (1995), with its heretical suggestions that the forerunners of written symbolism had emerged much earlier than traditionally accepted. I loved it; I devoured every page of the required texts for the class and began to plumb the resources of the OSU library and the more limited Salem Public Library for any tidbit about the Old Stone Age, the Paleolithic.

My first paper for Anth 532 described the famous Paleolithic cave murals and art mobilier, which included the fabulous, powerful Venus figurines. I was fascinated with the dynamism of the animals painted and etched onto the walls and ceilings of caves deep beneath the surface of the Earth, where no casual observer would see them; obviously they were meant for some purpose, and I thought I knew what it was. Some strong affinity for those early celebrants of nature called me to envision the last rays of the sun seeping a short way past the open mouth of a subterranean passage, the flicker of torchlight on the walls and ceiling of a chamber where I could smell the damp air, feel the rough stone under my fingers and see the welling of the pigment through the fibers of the brush I was using to trace the outline of an animal’s flank on a swell of the chamber wall.

Nothing could make me accept the notion of the vital, thundering creatures depicted in the chambers of Lascaux, Chauvet and the other caves as the inferior victims of a superior, violent horde of hunters, reveling in their power to slaughter and wreak havoc. The painters, women and men, who created those visions were a part of the
scenes they created, not masters over them. They rejoiced in the natural energy that surrounded and permeated their world; they were in harmony with it.

The more I immersed myself in images of that long-ago world, free from the restrictions of linear, dissociative Western culture, the more I could conceive of the world of the Paleolithic as a natural cycling of energy through birth, life, death, and regeneration. My instincts told me that the inhabitants of that world were keenly aware of that cycle. If you check out the book *Dawn of Art: The Chauvet Cave* (1996), turn to page 62, and put your fingers over the figure of Christian Hillaire, one of the discoverers of the cave, you will see what I mean. In front of him, on the mural labeled by the discoverers simply “The Panel of the Horses,” a large central niche in the stone takes the form of a vulva. To the right, a stream of horses and other animals rushes headlong into the vulva. To the left, a similar stream of living creatures comes pouring out again. Although the animals are described in minute detail, the overt resemblance of the rock formation to female genitalia and the inpouring and outflowing as a metaphor for life energy are not mentioned. The overleaf caption to the photo on page 60 merely notes that “A certain composition... seems to have been sought in the layout.”

This was the beginning of a series of revelations that ultimately led me to combine archaeology (a valuable source, if we let it be, of knowledge about women and women’s roles) with Women Studies. The puzzling omission of what was, to me at least, a blatantly obvious association was duplicated everywhere. How in the world could a person not know a vulva when he saw one? Likewise, I became more and more puzzled with the conspicuous absence of references to women and their accomplishments. The so-called neutral or “generic” use of male pronouns such as “Man” and “Mankind” and especially the singular “he” to refer to all of humanity struck me as not only illogical since men (referring to adult males) comprise far less than half the population, but also damaging since the terms imply that men were the only prehistoric human beings with agency.
The invisible vulva wasn't the only androcentric interpretation of woman-centered archaeological finds, either. The Venus figurines are a perfect example. According to my new hera, archaeologist Marija Gimbutas, these ubiquitous female engravings and sculptures in the round are misnamed, because “a Venus is a beauty, and these sculptures that date from 25,000 to 27,000 years before Christ are not really beauties, in our sense” (Gimbutas 1992). Many of the Venuses are depictions of women who certainly don't meet the modern criteria of beauty; they can aptly be described as “ample.” The carvings represent women with very large breasts, buttocks, and thighs; often their pubic triangles are marked with incised lines (Gimbutas 1989: 4 et passim). Often their facial features are indistinct or missing.

The popular interpretation of the Venus figurines is that they represent simply “fertility,” or a generic motherhood. However, with many others, I find the reduction of the female to her birth-giving capacity to be a narrow and limiting male ego-centered misconception (pun intended). Patricia Rice, for example, explains that “Venuses represent the entire age spectrum of adult females, and therefore it is womanhood in general, not fertility exclusively, which is being symbolically recognized or honored” (1981: 403). The bringing forth of life from her body is perhaps the only one of her myriad functions that the male cannot co-opt or ignore, but the variety and ubiquity of the archaeological manifestations of the female belie that single-factor view. Viewing these figurines through a non-androcentric lens lets us see much more.

Finds of female figurines were spread through time and across space, from western France to Russia. The figurines of the first (Paleolithic) phase date primarily from 25,000 to 23,000 BCE, but their descendants appear across an even wider area, through the Neolithic era and into the Bronze Age. The figurines are produced out of various materials with varying levels of skill and care. They are found in graves, or in association with houses, homebases, or domestic debris (Ehrenberg 1989: 66-67). The position or attitude of the figures and the characteristics that are emphasized vary widely. For
example, some figures such as the well-known Venus of Willendorf emphasize their breasts, suggesting an interpretation of nourishment or abundance, others such as the Venus of Laussel (a rock carving) rest their hands on their bellies, perhaps indicating pregnancy or fecundity, and still others lay or stand stiffly with arms rigidly crossed, suggesting a posture of death (Gimbutas 1989: 186 et passim). As Gimbutas suggests, only if we accept death as the precursor to regeneration, and the tomb as a womb, can all the so-called Venuses be seen as “motherly” (1992).

The exact significance of the Paleolithic female figurines, is of course, not known. Considerable debate now surrounds the feminist hypothesis that these voluptuous women, in their various incarnations, represented a primordial Mother Goddess. Ehrenberg, for example, is very careful to distinguish between conclusions drawn in feminist writings and evidence presented in scholarly archaeological literature (1989: 178). She also points out that by no means all of the figurines that have been unearthed from this period represented females: a number obviously resembled males, and a very large number were of indeterminate sex (1989: 69). She urges caution, therefore, in the interpretation of the symbolic significance of the figurines (1989: 76), which differ in composition, artistry, and provenance, and her caution is probably warranted. Interesting to me, though, she closes by stating in no uncertain terms, that “the dominance of female representations over male, even where the forms are not uniquely female, must be significant” (1989: 76, emphasis added).

I am sure they are significant. My copy of the Venus of Willendorf is half again the height of the original (17cm compared to 11cm). If she were an exact replica, she would fit perfectly in the palm of my hand. Even as she is, she is heavy and comforting and absorbs the heat of my body. She invites me to meditate, to connect with the spirits of my female ancestors a thousand times removed, with past incarnations of my own psyche, or with the vast deep ocean of humanity’s collective unconscious. She would have been easy to carry around from site to site, either by hand or in a pouch of some
kind, where I could access her energy whenever I needed it. Her arms draped comfortably
over her breasts suggest an attitude not just of nourishment or protection of others, but of
a relaxed sense of pleasure with herself and the sensuousness of her own body. In this
lipophobic world (my word for this society’s horror of fat, especially on the female), in a
body that certainly does not fit the norm of “beauty,” such an attitude is balm to me. Fat
as luxury, as success at creating and maintaining life, as beauty.

Once I had become intuitively aware of these issues of female invisibility and
cardboard characterization, it seemed natural to expect a social science that dealt with
cultures of the ancient past--which I was increasingly coming to believe was organized in a
qualitatively different fashion than the modern world, a fashion that respected and
celebrated women rather than denigrated them--to pay significant attention to some of
those cultures’ most important, vital priorities; namely, women, nature, and the earth. I
began to look for evidence of this attention.

My Second Step

I did not immediately find references to women and their contributions to Old
World cultures in the traditional archaeological literature. Serendipitously (although now
I disbelieve the accidental connotation of that word--perhaps I should say “fatefully”), I
came across an audiotape intriguingly titled The Age of The Great Goddess. I bought it
for the cover illustration, a photograph of a Paleolithic figurine that reminded me of the
Venus of Willendorf. (I later learned that She is called the Venus of Lespugue, from
southern France, dated to 23,000 BCE.) (Streep 1994: 26). The content of the
audiotape, an interview with the late, great, controversial archaeologist emeritus of UCLA
Marija Gimbutas, remains as the second important event in my growing awareness of a
widespread, long-enduring prehistoric way of life that stands in joyful contrast to the
bleakness of the Western hierarchical, competitive system of social organization. She called the peaceful, female-centered, agrarian societies whose artifacts she uncovered in southeastern Europe and Greece “the civilization of the Great Goddess,” which she claimed stretched from the Mediterranean to the Dnieper, from the Black Sea to Italy, and flourished between approximately 7000 and 3000 BCE. She dubbed their Neolithic civilization “Old Europe” (1974: 17-18), the term coined specifically to distinguish between a system of social structure which she called “matristic” and the current system, which is patriarchal.

In precise archaeological terms, Gimbutas described the distinguishing features of the Paleolithic and the Neolithic eras. She provided information about the emergence of modern humanity on the face of the earth; she described the advent of agriculture and the shift to a settled way of life. She gave dates and information about technological progress in tool manufacture and the making of pottery. She described architectural developments and burial practices among the peoples of this region of the Old World: but she went far beyond that. Using a technique she called “archaeomythology,” she combined that scientific information with her extensive study of oral traditions of Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, their pre-Christian folklore and mythology, the artwork and symbolism of the peoples of prehistoric Europe, and her own intuition to create a more well-rounded picture of that society. This technique, which unites the rational and the intuitive, drew criticism because it relied on interpretation and interpolation, and her conclusions at times radically departed from the traditional archaeological view of the world that prevailed in the 1970s and 1980s. Gimbutas persevered, however, insisting that not only was it appropriate to formulate theories in this manner; it was essential in order to overcome the prejudices of the prevailing view and find a way of conceptualizing the past that was not based on modern cultural assumptions. She deplored scientists who focused only on what she called “material culture,” not integrating information from multiple disciplines, concluding that the picture they built up
in this way was not only incomplete but distorted. In her view, the change of social system from matractic to patriarchal in Old Europe in the fourth millennium BCE could never have been a natural development from one system into the other, but must have resulted from a clash between two ideologies, because after that period the two cultures were hybridized. (See Chapter Two for more on her views about this clash.)

I was hooked. I had expected the Neolithic, with its increases in social and economic complexity, to signal the end of egalitarianism, but it didn't. Here was evidence for my privately-held belief that the shift from the “seasonal round” to settled village life was not the beginning of the end for egalitarian society. Complexity, in short, did not equal hierarchy. The evidence of an experienced scientist backed me up. Gimbutas conjectured that the mythological concept which Western civilization calls “The Garden of Eden” is a distant collective memory of this peaceful, cooperative existence, which many scholars are now asserting was the original form of social structure in China, the Near East, Europe, Africa, and the New World (Barstow 1983; Dahlberg 1981; DeMeo 1991; Ehrenberg 1989; Eisler 1985; Gimbutas 1974, 1982, 1989, 1992; Stone 1976; Streep 1994). As Kell Kearns, the narrator of the tape, phrased it, “She has at last added a scientific basis to what many mythologists and poets have long intuited” (Gimbutas 1992).

Around that same time, (again, I doubt by chance) I discovered Riane Eisler’s popular The Chalice and The Blade (1987), an exploration of humanity’s peaceful Neolithic past, and Merlin Stone’s fabulous When God Was a Woman (1976). Here were more revelations. Eisler, a “futurist” and systems theorist—not an archaeologist—made an elegant attempt to explain the underlying patterns of social structure in humanity’s past. Further, she extrapolated those patterns to future events and made the audacious suggestion that, knowing the patterns, humanity could change them. We could decide to abandon patriarchy, the system of male-dominant hierarchy, oppression, and authoritarianism she calls the “dominator” model of society, and return to our original
system of egalitarianism, the model of cooperation, nonviolence, and mutual tolerance and respect she calls “partnership.” (1987: xvii et passim).

From a different angle, Stone also touched upon my beloved societies of the past. Her research into the mythology and religious symbolism, written and unwritten, of ancient societies all over the world revealed a universal, primordial reverence for the female and her powers of life nurturance, creation, procreation, destruction, and regeneration (1976: xii et passim). In all these ancient sources, in various manifestations, divinity was portrayed as female, as The Goddess.

After that, I became systematic in my efforts to track down writings by women with similar philosophical leanings. I searched the library files for everything written by Eisler; I found articles in The Humanist, World Futures, and more. The extensive bibliography in The Chalice and The Blade led to more writings by Marija Gimbutas and by James Mellaart, excavator of the Neolithic Anatolian proto-cities of Hacilar and Catal Huyuk, with their characteristic woman-centered burials, female figurines, and murals of birth-giving, life-taking, and life-regenerating females. In the midst of the confusion surrounding the OSU Valley Library’s construction, I found, lost, and found again the wonderful but obscure HQ section, with most of the library’s books--written mostly by women--on women’s history and women’s issues. I discovered Elise Boulding’s The Underside of History (1992), Marianne Williamson’s A Woman’s Worth (1994), writings on prehistoric and medieval women by Anne Llewellyn Barstow, Mary Daly’s delightful Wickedary (1987), Jacquetta Hawkes’ breathtaking The Dawn of the Gods (1968), and various provocative writings on religion by Charlene Spretnak. Another revelation: their writings covered women and their issues not only in prehistory, but in classical antiquity, the Dark Ages, and modern times. Teetering between joy at the discovery and outrage at the obscurity of these precious works, I began to compile a list of books and articles I would read in my spare time. I knew I would have a seven-week break between the end
of summer and the beginning of fall term, the longest vacation I had ever had, and I planned to make the most of it.

In the meantime I participated in the 1997 archaeological field school, which fortunately for me was held at a site in the Willamette Valley. I could attend the dig during the day and stay at my own home in the evenings. This experience was a great adventure for an indoorsy person like myself--although I'd always approved of nature in theory, I'd never appreciated it much in practice--and I enjoyed the people, the learning, and the work immensely. As it turned out, the dig experience changed me greatly not only because of my exposure to the wild elements of wind and water and poison oak, but because I was presented with another life-altering idea.

A Little Push

The first weekend of the summer term I was updating my reading list, adding new entries I had just discovered. After some internal debate, I had xeroxed a huge number of articles, and had checked out about a half-dozen of the items on my list, including the coveted *The Language of The Goddess* (1989) by Marija Gimbutas, knowing I could soon read them at my leisure. (One of the wonderful perks of being a graduate student is the incomparable luxury of being able to keep library books for six months. I had never dreamed of such a thing). Looking over my shoulder, my roommate said to me casually, “Why aren’t you studying that stuff in school?”

The world stood still. What did she mean? I had always just assumed that my avid, secretive interest in the subject of women and their roles in the ancient past was nothing more than a quirk, an idiosyncratic hobby that no one else would be interested in or understand. Even the fact that I was finding such an enormous body of work on the subject--only about half of which was actually available at the OSU and Salem libraries, a
teeth-grinding frustration—even that fact did not lead me to imagine that an organized program of study might actually exist at a university. My head spun at the notion.

That week I spoke to Barb Roth, the faculty supervisor of the dig, and to the other archaeology graduate students. I found out two fascinating tidbits of information. The first was that there actually was a field of special interest within archaeology called “gender studies.” One of the crew chiefs took me to her office and loaded my arms with Joan Gero and Margaret Conkey’s Engendering Archaeology (1991) and Cheryl Claassen’s Exploring Gender Through Archaeology (1992). Barb recommended Margaret Ehrenberg’s Women in Prehistory (1989), and I immersed myself in the chapters on the importance of women and foraging, the significance of the Venus figurines, and the effects on women of the development of agriculture.

The second fact that rocked my world was my discovery of a whole department on campus called “Women Studies.” Incredible! I began to toy with the notion of adding an elective or two to my carefully-constructed program, originally designed to let me get my degree and return to the “working world” in shortest order.

Another struggle between my “sensible” midwestern work ethic and my burgeoning feminist consciousness ensued. I waged an internal war over the foolishness of changing my mind so many times, and at spending the extra money when I “should” be getting done with my degree and finding a job. But...I liked going to school. I loved studying this “stuff”! Never mind efficiency; I was having the time of my life. Why not extend my stay here—which I knew in my heart I was enjoying more than anything I’d done in a dozen years? Throwing caution to the winds, I did exactly as my heart prompted me: I added a Women Studies minor and changed my degree to MAIS.
My Great Leap

In Women Studies, I was inundated. Revelation poured upon revelation. I found Women Studies classes qualitatively different from the traditional academic expert-instructor-lecturing-to-receptive-students format (at which I usually excelled); we students were welcome and expected to contribute our own experiences to the group discussion. Even more amazing to me with my “lone voice” (Bad Girl) consciousness, the group itself became more cohesive than a simple class. I became part of a Women Studies community. Something about this rich association with kindred spirits appealed to me at the deepest level of my being.

Here were women like myself. Many of them had been through experiences much more traumatic than mine. Many were wounded by Western civilization in general and by men in particular. Here were so many stories like my own, although the details varied widely: the lesbian whose stepfather had tried to “beat it out of her,” the young woman who was kicked out of high school when she became pregnant, the wife/mother/student who was still expected to have dinner on the table every evening when her husband got home from work, the woman coerced into veiling her face, hair, and body to prevent arousing passion in strange men. Women like me who thought they were alone, freakish and alien, unable to assimilate into the roles prescribed for them by their circumstances, had come by circuitous paths to a similar destination. In Women Studies we came to understand that we were not alone, not different, but in a very important way quite similar: we were cogs in a gigantic machine called patriarchy.

Patriarchy, or more accurately patriarchies, are particular manifestations of a social structure based on hierarchy, in which the dividing or ranking principle is the possession or lack of physical maleness. Variations on the theme of patriarchy are manifest in secular Western culture, in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—in fact, in various forms and to
various extents this type of social organization is present in every modern culture. In one way or another, it had affected all of us.

The term was new to me, but its effects were familiar. I slowly began to recognize the one primary force underlying patriarchal systems of social organization which is responsible for most of the social ills afflicting the human race for the last five thousand years: that force is the principle of separation, of transcendence. (In Dreaming the Dark, the writer, spiritual leader, and political activist Starhawk calls this concept “estrangement”) (1997: 23). This principle divides and isolates; it sets individuals at odds with one another, groups of peoples against each other, and humanity as a whole against nature. Under the principle of transcendence, the single unified web of life on this planet is fragmented into billions of disconnected, suffering pieces.

In contrast, my experience in Women Studies began to teach me about the force that holds the universe together. The discussions in Women Studies reflected the variety of the students’ experiences (mostly women, with a few brave men), and there was much comparing and contrasting of the various forms of suffering endured by each. We raged and cried and laughed and amazed each other with our strength and courage. Yet, in spite of this common thread of suffering, there was little of what is known in popular circles as “man bashing.” On the contrary; the underlying pattern to our newly-found community was a sense of acceptance, of unity, and of celebration. We were united by more than the negatives in our pasts; we were also united by common (I dare think universal) positives.

There was talk among us, for one thing; more than the usual chitchat before and after class. I felt sometimes—and others expressed the same feeling—that I couldn’t wait to get to class, and I didn’t want to leave when it was over. We talked about personal issues (which are political), large and small: Sarah and her husband finally adopted a

---

1I realize this theme is the potential subject of a separate dissertation; however, for the purposes of this thesis I mention it simply to throw into relief its reverse concept, immanence.
long-awaited baby girl. Machiko’s husband left her alone in the U.S. because he missed his home in Japan too much. Angela was denied credit to buy a car because she was “a girl.” Suzanne finally got up the nerve to wear a T-shirt openly proclaiming her sexual orientation across campus.

Our talk was more than a casual activity, separate from our coursework; it became the catalyst for action. I brought in a sexist cartoon from the school newspaper, and we channeled our outrage into an informal letter-writing campaign. When one of our community was sexually harassed by her on-campus boss, others in the group guided her through the university grievance system. Shared information and support led many of us to participate in a Take Back the Night safety march, a rally against gay-bashing, a forum for women who had been date raped, and negotiations with the administration protesting cuts to the Difference, Power, and Discrimination program. We encouraged each other to teach the men in our lives to communicate with us more effectively. Every day someone posted a message of need or of triumph on the “Wmngrads” listserv (a still-thriving miracle child of this cyberphobe’s genius), brought a newspaper or Internet posting to class, or shared a flier announcing a women-centered activity on campus or in the community.

It is impossible to explain, in this two-dimensional medium, the all-encompassing, four-dimensional quality of my Women Studies experience. It was theory come alive. Everything I intuited about and yearned for the lost ways of the past came to life before my eyes. Before, I had read and envisioned scenes of people living in cooperation and mutual support, but I saw them as a play enfolding in front of my eyes: small, bright and clear, but at a distance. In Women Studies, I was in the play—not on a stage, but on a solid, real, four-dimensional sphere of light and color, sound, sensation, and sentiment. I was immersed in The Goddess.

On the surface, the things we did might have looked trivial: we talked, we shared food, we posted emails, we gave each other kleenex, information, and advice. We listened
to each other. We honored the validity of each woman’s experience. And—profoundly simple and important—we sat in a circle. For me, that circle became a symbol of inclusion, a sign that I was a legitimate member of the group, just as I was. It was a symbol of ultimate safety. In that circle, I regained much of my lost confidence; I re-engaged with my fellow human beings, and I finally shed my heavy, deadening emotional armor.

Our mundane acts became infused with an aliveness, a purpose, and a meaning—I dare to call it spirit—that made much of what we did sacred. This, then, was ritual: the earthly, the daily, the insignificant, done with great love. For me, the sacred isn’t elevated above the earthly; it is integrated into it. It is that earthly sacred—the immanent—that I found in my involvement with the Women Studies community, and which I recognized in the worlds of the past. Our ancestors, women, men, and children, were cognizant of a force permanently pervading the universe, an energy living, remaining, and operating within themselves. As Kell Kearns describes their experience of the earthly divine, it was present “in every moment, at every depth of our being” (Gimbutas 1992).

I found that many of my class mates, although unschooled in archaeology, knew Stone and Eisler’s works. They also taught me about their own woman-centered spiritualities, from African, North and South American, Pacific Island and other cultures. All echoed the same underlying theme. Thus many in the Women Studies community expressed an unwavering belief in the former existence of a woman-centered, life-affirming, holistic life path which many simply called The Goddess. As a classmate of mine put it, “You start studying all this stuff [Women Studies], and then you find the Goddess, and you feel like you’ve come home.”

People ask me if I “believe” in the Goddess; but belief implies something for which I have no direct evidence. I “believe” in the Goddess in the same way I “believe” that my heart beats: because I experience Her. I feel my connection to Her. That’s what the Goddess is: our connection to that which is alive in ourselves, in the earth, and in each other.
I understand that this connection with the joyful source of life, this engagement with the energies of the universe--this *immanence*--is what appeals to me about the ancient cultures I've studied. When I was first drawn to the hunter-gatherers of the Paleolithic, when I became fascinated with Neolithic Old Europe and Anatolia, when I fell in love with the Minoans of Bronze Age Crete, I felt in my blood they all had something in common. I intuited a connection, a similarity, but I didn't know what it was. A large part of my involvement with gender studies and with the Women Studies program was an attempt to discover the nature of that similarity, and my thesis became my attempt to articulate what I have come to understand about it. This attempt reminds me of a question posed by (of all people) an undergraduate calculus teacher years ago. In working our way through a sticky equation in which we sensed but could not yet mathematically prove the solution, he asked, "Now, how do we quantify this gut feeling?" For the sake of the academy, which I will always love; for myself; and for the coming generations of women to whom I want to reach out, I have tried to quantify my deep, encompassing, passionate gut feeling that the world of the past was vastly different, and better, than what we have been taught. The world of the past lived in The Goddess.2

---

2 This is not to say that the prehistoric world was a literal paradise. Certainly there were natural disasters, and people died from disease, accident, and complications of childbirth. Mortality was high among infants and women of childbearing age. However, an ideology of immanence embodies an underlying philosophy of belonging, comfort, optimism, and confidence in oneself and the group. Without a concept of divine retribution, disasters could have been less traumatic and more a natural part of life. A belief in the regenerative nature of life would make death seem less like "the end of the line" and more like a rung on the spiral ladder of becoming.
Quantifying My Gut Feeling

When I first began to articulate my interest in the particular cultures of the Old World which attracted me, I struggled with how to explicate that concept, which I call immanence or The Goddess, to people unfamiliar with the ancient world. I found myself describing my favorite activities or practices of each of the cultures I had studied (such as the Minoan bull leaping game, which in my mind is more accurately bull dancing), or using value-laden descriptors such as “dynamic,” “graceful,” and “celebratory.” I kept coming across other writings that described prehistoric cultures—including the cave painters and figurine sculptors of Paleolithic Europe, the Neolithic agrarian peoples of central and eastern Europe, the proto-city dwellers of Neolithic Turkey, and the fabled Bronze Age Minoans—in exactly the same terms. Artists, archaeologists, feminist scholars, historians, art scholars, social scientists, spiritual leaders, and even a few conventional physical scientists praised these worlds of the past as “graceful, life-affirming, and devoid of violence” (Gimbutas 1992).

However, none of the words, none of the activities by themselves encompassed the fullness of what I wanted to convey. I started to despair of being able to express it objectively, scientifically—which, given my conventional view of a “thesis,” was what I thought I needed to do. Fortunately, in an article entitled “The Origins and Diffusion of Patrism in Saharasia, c. 4000 BCE,” I came across some criteria that helped me quantify my gut feeling. The author, James DeMeo, cites evidence for the early, universal existence of what he calls “matriist” (similar to Gimbutas’ “matristic”) cultures, defined generally as those “which support and protect maternal-infant and male-female bonds”.

3 I note that this classification implies normative heterosexuality, if “male-female bonds” are assumed to be sexual/romantic. DeMeo’s scheme does not acknowledge the feminist paradigm of the “woman-identified-woman” (Radicalesbians 1973: 240-245). Nevertheless, it is valuable for its emphasis on bonds between human beings.
(1991: 247; see Chapter Two for more on his theory). He cites the presence of the following prehistoric artifacts in areas of Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Near, Middle, and parts of the Far East: respectful, careful burials; equal distribution of wealth in burials; sexually realistic female statues; and rock and pottery art emphasizing women, children, music, the dance, animals, and the hunt. He also cites as evidence for matrism the absence of certain artifacts and motifs, found almost universally in later patriarchal (in his term, "patrist") cultures: weapons, destruction layers in settlements, fortifications, architecture devoted to "big-man" chieftains, infant cranial deformation, suttee or ritual murder of women in the graves of older men, foundation sacrifices of children, mass graves of murdered people, caste stratification, slavery, social hierarchy, polygamy, and artwork emphasizing warriors, weapons, horses, battles, and the like (1991: 261). Using this paradigm I saw that many of the ancient cultures of which I was enamored fell under DeMeo's heading of "matrist." The common themes discernible in their artifacts, and in particular their artwork, helped solidify my notions of Crete and the others as exemplars of the true meaning of "civilization"--life-centered, egalitarian, and peaceful. His criteria, then, helped characterize cultures which in my mind were founded upon immanence, centered on The Goddess.

The Hunter-Gatherers of Paleolithic Europe. The group of peoples that first captured my fancy, the hunting and gathering tribes of Paleolithic Europe, fit DeMeo's criteria quite well. Although by definition these peoples did not possess the art of making pottery (the development of that art being one of the defining traits of the Neolithic), they in fact originated the arts of creating two of the most important of DeMeo's criteria: sexually realistic female statues and rock art emphasizing women, animals, and the hunt. The well-known Venus figurines which have been found in locations across Europe, dating from around 27,000 BCE forward, have already been discussed. In addition, the famous painted caves and rock shelters of Western Europe, primarily France and Spain, portray figures of animals and people which convey a dynamism, a sense of motion, and a
preoccupation with nature and the cycles of life. The reindeer, bison, horses and other animals are shown running, heads tossing, manes, tails, and hooves flying. The vitality and sense of energy in both forms of representation are unmistakable. In fact, the Paleolithic Europeans are best known for these two types of artifacts which convey the earliest messages about humanity’s emerging artistic sensibilities and symbolic capacity. By DeMeo’s criteria, and mine, they fit the definition of a society founded on the principle of immanence.

**Neolithic Farmers and Proto-City Dwellers.** The Old European horticultural society of which Marija Gimbutas wrote, and the Neolithic proto-cities of Catal Huyuk and Hacilar in modern-day Turkey excavated by James Mellaart, also exhibit traits which lead me to categorize them as “matrist,” or founded upon immanence. Both societies, flourishing in the time when agriculture had begun to spread outward from the Middle East, are known to have produced female figurines, which have been found in burials and in house-temples. The artifacts of both societies (pottery, statuettes, and wall murals) show women in positions of importance, engaging in religious or magical rituals, dancing, playing musical instruments, creating pottery, and baking bread. Natural processes such as pregnancy and childbirth were depicted overtly and realistically, as in the sculpture found in Catal Huyuk of a seated woman giving birth (Gimbutas 1989: 107) and the Old European figurine in the round of a woman nursing an infant (Streep 1994: 61). In both societies, women are depicted in association with animals and other aspects of the natural world; in Old European sculptures, for instance, entities are represented which appear to be hybrids between women and birds or between women and fish (Gimbutas 1974: 107-108). The famous wall murals in the shrine or temple rooms of Catal Huyuk are especially evocative; one depicting a spread-eagled woman giving birth, apparently to a bull, while actual skulls and horns of the creature were embedded in the walls around her.4

4The ubiquity of the bull motif in the artifacts of Catal Huyuk has been remarked upon but
In other murals, animals skulls are embedded in the walls and the plaster is sculpted over them in the form of human breasts (Gadon 1989: 26-34).

In addition to the naturalistic portrayal of women and animals which DeMeo cites as one evidence of matrism, many of the burials of Old Europe, Anatolia and Crete also conform to his criteria in that they were communal, with the bones of many individuals in a family or clan residing together after the rite of excarnation (defleshing or secondary burial) (Davaras 1976: 34-37). Although differences in grave goods do occur between those in individual or small group graves, we see for example that women are equipped with signs of their spiritual office, as the priestesses of Catal Huyuk, and the men with objects of trade or tools, as the craftsmen of Old Europe (Lamberg-Karlovsky and Sabloff 1995: 89; Gimbutas 1992). (According to Marija Gimbutas, the true differentiation of wealth among individuals in Europe did not occur until the heyday of the Indo-Europeans in the 4th and 3rd millennia BCE.) These two cultures of the Old World Neolithic (and, as I have stated earlier, others which I have noticed in passing but not studied in depth) also fit the criteria for societies founded on the principle of immanence.

The Minoans of Bronze Age Crete. The Minoan civilization of Crete had its roots in the Neolithic of Anatolia and perhaps Europe and the Levant, but retained its matristic character longer than those mainland cultures. The Palace Period, considered the height of Minoan civilization, lasted for a few short centuries between approximately 1900 and 1400 BCE. The Minoans' archaeological legacy is exceptionally rich, encompassing not completely explained. The skull and the horns are generally agreed to express some power of nature, but which specific power is uncertain. Marija Gimbutas has made the controversial assertion that the bucranium (bull's skull and horns) is a symbolic representation of the human female uterus and Fallopian tubes, which could have been observed during the rite of excarnation practiced in Old Europe and in Anatolia. I note that the bull and other motifs of energy such as the snake are present not only in the Neolithic societies just mentioned, but in the Paleolithic cave murals and in Bronze Age Minoan sculptural and mural art. My own epiphany of the bull's importance comes from a dream of thundering hooves and reverberating earth and a woman's voice saying with joyful reverence, "The bull is life."
the palaces and other structures, pottery, murals, figurines, jewelry, seal stones, and other personal items. All their artifacts show evidence of the celebration of life energy. The farmers on the “Harvester” vase sing as they stride along the road home; the bull leapers of the fresco at Knossos jump, tumble, and catch each other; the Snake Goddess figurine extends her arms in benediction, snakes twining around her body, neck and limbs. In depictions on pottery and wall murals, women were portrayed as or more often than men; scenes of work, play, domesticity, and the natural world occurred while scenes of violence occurred rarely or not at all. Gender differences were certainly noted; Minoan dress as depicted on murals and frescoes emphasized secondary sex characteristics and women and men were differentiated by their skin color. However, evidence does not show that these differences were used as a basis for a hierarchical ranking. The participation of females and males in the dangerous, important bull-leaping ritual perhaps provides corroborating evidence for an egalitarian relationship between the sexes.

Other artifacts left impressions on me, too. Even the architecture was egalitarian. The standard of living varied relatively little between Minoan palaces, country “estates” and rural villages (Mellersh1967: 33-35). The size and equipment of apartments in Catal Huyuk and Hacilar were uniform. Monumental statues and architecture were absent. The villages of Old Europe, all but the most recent levels of Catal Huyuk and Hacilar, and the villages and palaces of Minoan Crete were unfortified and unguarded. They were situated

5Scholars still dispute the interpretation of certain artifacts as evidence of violence. For example, the final outcome of the Minoan bull leaping ritual is contested. Some assert a similarity with historic Spanish bull fighting, in which the animal is ritually slaughtered as the climax of the show. Evidence to support this claim is slim: The sarcophagus at Hagia Triada (see, for example, Marinatos 1960: 67) depicts the bloodletting of a trussed-up, conscious bull in a ritual context. However, the death of the bull is not explicit, nor is an overt connection drawn with the bull leaping ritual depicted on the fresco at Knossos. If anything, the athletes’ relationship with the running bull seems cooperative, synchronized. Interestingly, no large caches of bull skeletons or horns are reported. The depictions of bull symbolism throughout the Minoan period convey a reverence for the power and the dynamism of the bulls’ energy, not a sense of its destruction or control by human beings.
in valleys, next to rivers or springs, or on forested hillsides overlooking the valleys; they were not at the top of inaccessible mountains or cliffs, and they were open, not walled and gated. In other words, these peoples were not concerned with defense. Warfare was not an overriding concern.

Time and again I came back to the same conclusion, based strongly on instinct and intuition, but increasingly supported by archaeology and other sources, that the world of these cultures was peaceful and egalitarian: sexually, politically, economically. Further, I found little separation between humanity and the natural world. Far from living in a state of barbarism, of ignorance and abject fear of the pitiless forces of nature, I sensed these people’s awareness, delight, and celebratory participation in the processes of the natural world. The earth had not yet become an object and humanity had not yet been pitted against it and divided amongst itself. Joseph Campbell’s foreword to Gimbutas’ _The Language of the Goddess_ summed it up for me: “The message here is of an actual age of harmony and peace, in accord with the creative energies of nature” (1989: xiv).

In my explorations, I found many other scholars that expressed an attraction and an admiration for pre-patriarchal cultures; as I did, they used the archaeological evidence to confirm an inner conviction of a qualitative difference between those cultures and patriarchal ones. I struggled with the notion that modern science deplores this integration of fact with feeling; and yet, to me, part of the strength of the cultures I was studying was their absolute integration of all spheres of human activity with the energy of the planet. Therefore, we can’t understand them by breaking them into their component pieces.

One of the chief criticisms leveled against Marija Gimbutas and her fellow archaeologist James Mellaart—and perhaps understandably, one of the prime reasons for their popularity among proponents of various New Age practices—is the overtly acknowledged fact that they used non-linear, non-rational, intuitive methods to supplement scientific information about the civilizations they were studying, and to develop a more holistic view of them. Gimbutas disagreed with many archaeologists who
declared that we could never know the meanings of prehistoric art and religion. Far from apologizing for integrating her knowledge of mythology, historical ethnography, and linguistics into the search for these meanings, she said it was for this very reason that “it is necessary to widen the scope of descriptive archaeology into interdisciplinary research” (1989: xv)--which has now become a buzz phrase in many fields. Mellaart concurred: in the absence of written records about the Goddess-worshipping culture of Catal Huyuk, he insisted that not only can we speculate about the nature of the religious symbolism, but that we must, because, as he expressed in a conversation with Anne Barstow, “if ever an early society tried to communicate through its art, it was this society through these lively, natural, lifelike figures” (1978:12).

So I allowed myself to understand the symbolism expressed through portable and mural art, the social structures, the spiritual practices of pre-patriarchal cultures as extensions of this immanent world view. In modern science that view, now recognized as a viable alternative to the mechanistic world view of scientific materialism, is called the Gaia Hypothesis (Lovelock and Margulis: 1996): the concept of the Earth and all the creatures that live on it, including humans, as cells in a gigantic living organism. I doubt if the priestesses of Old Europe or the bull dancers of Crete would have expressed their ideology in those terms; however, I believe that they engaged consciously and deliberately in the life energies of this elegant, complicated organism called Earth.

Sadly, my thrill at learning that humanity had once existed in a state of harmony and balance with the earth and with each other--not briefly, but for thousands of prehistoric years--was blunted by the knowledge that no extant society on the face of the Earth can truly be said to embrace that ideology now. How did we humans shift from living as cells in a dynamic, evolving organism to existing as cogs in a soulless machine? Humanity’s loss of this experience of the immanent, the holiness in every day, seems to me the greatest tragedy ever to befall us. The burning question for me then became: Why did this happen? Was the shift from a matristic to a patriarchal way of life an inevitable one?
What tragic event occurred; what horrible force exerted itself to wrench us away from our natural home on the Spiral Dance of life (Starhawk 1989)?

The writer and self-named witch Starhawk, a spiritual leader in the modern Goddess resurgence, described this critical juncture in humanity's history:

The Goddess, who is the soul of the earth, of sky, of the living being in whose body we are cells, once was awake in us and all knew and honored her in women and men, in nature, in the turning cycle of the seasons and the shifting cycles of our lives, in the works of mind and hand we created, in the plants and animals, in moon, sun, and ocean, in tree and stone and the intricate dance all living beings do together. We lived in balance on the earth. Women were free, and men too, for we had not yet learned how to oppress each other. And because we lived in harmony with the earth, we understood the earth’s ways and her mysteries.

But a time came—no one knows how or why—when in some places people turned away from the Goddess. Men ruled over women, and over other men. They waged endless wars. The people splintered into rich and poor, free and slave, powerful and powerless. They rewrote the myths and the old stories; they took the old magic and twisted it to give them power over others.

Many of the people, especially the women, resisted...” (1987: 310).

“No one knows how or why...” As I explored this crucial subject further, I began to realize that many people thought they did know how and why so many societies had taken a sharp turn away from immanence and integration, toward estrangement and self-destruction. At first I was disappointed to discover that there was not one simple, obvious, universal answer. Scholars did not even always agree that an ideological change had occurred, much less what the cause of such a change was. Although they used different terms than I did to describe humanity’s pre-patriarchal state of balance and harmony, the archaeological sub-discipline of gender studies began to shed some light on the subject, inasmuch as one of its premises was that traditional archaeological theory had been limited in its scope by the phallocentrism of its early practitioners. In fact, to
understand the difficulties in tracking down the cause or causes of this great ideological shift, I first needed to understand the conceptual framework which had shaped early archaeological thought, and the obstacles which scholars of gender issues had to overcome in order to develop a less biased perception of societies of the past.

Sources in disciplines outside of archaeology also helped illuminate this great change. I discovered theories related to the change by writers as disparate as biophysicists, systems theorists, and socialist feminists. Discarding the explanations that to me were truly crackpot--such as alien invasion and comets falling from the sky to convert wayward egalitarians to heaven-ordained patriarchy--I became fascinated with the complex interplay of factors that had shaped humanity's past. Surely the answer to the question "What happened?" was a complicated web of forces rather than a single discrete event. However, disparate and sometimes contradictory as the theories were proving to be, most of them contained some element that rang intuitively true.

As I read on, I realized that not finding a single, universal answer was probably good; in that social structures are very complex and this holistic way of life had lasted for so very long, it would be devastating to know that it could fall at a single stroke. Therefore, the knowledge that changes occurred over a period of several hundred to several thousand years, in various ways in various places and times, became a comfort. It indicated that a way of life, an ideology that I believe in with all my soul, was not so easily destroyed. It endured.
Quantifying Their Gut Feeling: Gender Studies in Archaeology

In the middle of this century, the discipline of archaeology underwent a transformation. Advocated by influential scholars like Lewis Binford in the 1960s, the "New [processual] Archaeology" eschewed the serious study of mythology as part of the discipline, and focused on strictly "scientific" methodology. Ecological and materialist concerns were now the basis of archaeological exploration. The move to legitimate archaeology by allying it with "pure science" was on (Lamberg-Karlovsky and Sabloff 1995: 34-35).

The post-processual movement, advocated by Ian Hodder (see, for example, 1984: 51-68) among others, was a reaction to this rather concrete view of past societies. Post-processual archaeologists stressed the importance of ideology, social relations, and cultural traditions to the complete understanding of prehistoric societies. Although this movement represented an improvement for scholars searching for a more holistic view of the past, unfortunately--and ironically--the inclusion of "social relations" and "cultural traditions" in archaeological study apparently didn't include the relations and traditions of women (Claassen 1992: 2). All the old assumptions about men as central and women as peripheral were still applied.

Partly as a result of the women's movement of the 1960s, awareness of gender issues began to diffuse into the discipline of archaeology. In the 1970s papers written by women scholars on subjects related to prehistoric "women's activities" began to appear; mostly they were regarded as curiosities, items of interest to women, perhaps, but of no wider significance to the discipline as a whole. Ehrenberg reports that although these
subjects were becoming “academically respectable,” female scholars still “lost tenure at their universities because their books had not been judged, by their male colleagues, to be on subjects as worthy of study as other traditional male-orientated fields” (1989: 9). Like postmodern feminist writings, which try to express gynocentric issues in an androcentric language, these articles broke ground but were not successful in broadening the focus of the discipline itself to encompass a holistic gender perspective or to consider a fundamental re-examination of prehistoric social structures.

Complaints against archaeological methodology’s usefulness for gender studies included: 1) the complete erasure or ignoring of particular populations, sites, and practices (such as colonialism) which might illuminate issues of gender and gender oppression, 2) marginalization or stereotyping of populations (such as American Indians) or groups within populations (such as women) based on Eurocentrism, racism, and sexism, 3) the effect of political or national loyalties and alignments on identification of “important” subjects of study, 4) the effect of intradisciplinary politics or hierarchies on identification of subjects, and 5) the reflection, not the elimination, of social biases in science (Wylie 1994: 3-7). As Gero and Conkey express it, the difficulty was less the availability of experimental models and data on the subject, and more that “we are all still writing—or trying to write—with a voice that is not yet familiar to us, a voice(s) that we don’t yet have” (1991: 8).

That voice is “extremely important for patterning our thought” (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 43): the relation between language and cognition, or between expression and perception, is reciprocal, not linear. Our thinking is shaped by our language just as much as the reverse. Many scholars now acknowledge that English and other Western languages are singularly poor at expressing the concepts of societies that value cooperation, equality, and engagement with the natural world. The privileging of binary opposition and dichotomy in these languages “emphasize difference, suggest timeless polarities, and thus obscure the interdependence, mutability, and complexity of the social
Gender studies proponents therefore must create new conceptual frameworks to express the social values of prehistoric societies where immanence and involvement, not domination and separation, were the underlying ideologies. Perhaps inevitably, as within groups that depart from the mainstream of any issue, gender studies in archaeology has been characterized by "tensions and pluralities" (Gero and Conkey 1991: 3-30). For example, since awareness of the issue began in the 1960s, and continuing into the 1990s, the ability to discern useful information about gender attribution, roles, and even the existence of gender as "a fundamental organizing principle in all cultures" (Claassen 1992: 4) from archaeological evidence has been the subject of considerable controversy (Claassen 1992; Gero and Conkey 1991; Ehrenberg 1989). In her introduction to Exploring Gender Through Archaeology (1992), for example, Claassen explicitly declares that, although certain conclusions about the female and male sexes can perhaps be drawn from the archaeological record, drawing conclusions about "the social function of gender" is impossible. As it stands, "we archaeologists currently have no way to recognize gender independent of sex and sex roles" (1992: 3).

This is a legitimate concern. Because archaeologists do not understand "how gender is encoded in the material culture of different societies" (ibid.), they may have difficulty determining answers to questions such as these, posed by feminist scholar Jane Flax: "What is gender? How is it related to anatomical sexual differences? What causes gender relations to change over time? Are there only two genders? Could/would gender relations wither away in egalitarian societies?" (1987: 627). Since gender is an expression of a social construct, we cannot expect it to fossilize. Therefore, to interpret archaeological evidence of female activities as evidence of a socially-constructed feminine (or some other) complex of behaviors should be viewed with extreme caution.

However, women have been oppressed for millennia by this very patriarchal strategy: equating sex with gender and socially-sanctioned gender roles. Part of any resistance to that oppression is a re-examination of the physical and cultural evidence for
social systems which did not equate an individual’s possession of male genitalia, for example, with power and dominance and possession of female genitalia with weakness and submission. Flax sums up the discussion: “Unless we see gender as a social relation, rather than as an opposition of inherently different beings, we will not be able to identify the varieties and limitations of different women’s (or men’s) powers and oppressions within particular societies” (1987: 641).

Ehrenberg takes a more neutral stand on the feasibility of interpreting information about gender from the archaeological record, simply noting that since the 1960s many archaeologists have been “attempting to put forward theories about some aspects of the social, political and possibly the religious life of the society, while remaining skeptical about the possibility of using archaeology to draw inferences about certain other aspects” (1989: 13). She does go on, however, to note the importance of the application of ethnographic methods to archaeology (“ethnoarchaeology”), such as Janet Spector’s Male/Female Task Differentiation approach, which attempts to use ethnographic background about women’s and men’s activities to develop models about gender roles in prehistory (1989: 19).

In direct opposition to Claassen’s view, Gero and Conkey declare that gender studies in archaeology can help rectify “an appalling absence of concepts that tap women’s experience, a limited and limiting view of women as an unchanging essence, and a deeply permeated narrowness to the concept of the human being” (1991: 3). In their view, Claassen’s insistence on a new methodology that will enable distinction between sex and gender is beside the point. In fact, emphasis on methodology that reveals the presence of women in studies of “early man” can obscure the fact that men are still assumed to have been the primary agents in prehistory. Why, they ask, must we prove the agency of women and not of men? The goal of gender studies in archaeology, then, is not a methodological innovation “that will suddenly render women (and even men) ‘archaeologically visible’” (1991: 11). The goal is comprehension of a larger conceptual
issue; that is, "trying to understand how gender ‘works’ in all of its dimensions: as gender ideology, gender roles, gender relations, as well as a significant source of cultural meanings related to the construction of social lives" (1991: 14).

Gero and Conkey's orientation is therefore a recognition that it is not only the androcentric vocabulary of the discipline that needs revision, but the discipline's traditional narrow focus on men and their activities and its underlying assumptions that mimic Western societal norms. The pigeonholing of "women's issues" is a product of the androcentric view they are trying to change. To rewrite the language to reflect a more complete picture of the past, the either-or paradigm of men's vs. women's issues has to be reconsidered. A holistic gender perspective—which includes, but is not limited to, "women's issues"—will yield a more accurate, balanced view of prehistoric societies. Flax stresses the wider importance of creating a gender-sensitive paradigm: "The single most important advance in feminist theory is that the existence of gender relations has been problematized. Gender can no longer be treated as a simple, natural fact" (1987: 627).

Today gender studies in archaeology include issues of gender equity within the profession, the study of gender relations in the past, and new feminist critiques of science in general (Claassen 1992: 2). Numerous feminist scholars, within and outside the discipline of archaeology, have thrown light upon the traditional androcentric world view that shaped the field. In the last 30 years they have begun to identify, and to challenge, the assumptions inherent in that view. Some of these challenges are identified below.

The Traditional Archaeological Model of Social Organization

Traditional archaeological theories of social structure in antiquity were androcentric. Nineteenth century archaeologists, the founders of the field, were typically European, white, upper-class men. Their theories of the origins and early social structure
of humanity reflected the values and assumptions of their time, which continue to have influence in our own time. The view of the educated, city-dwelling European male as the apex of evolution prevailed. For example, in 1887 L. H. Morgan identified the stages of "Man's" evolution in social and economic complexity as savagery (hunting and gathering), barbarism (agriculture and pastoralism), and civilization (commodity production and exchange) (qtd. in Reed 1975: xiv). Although these terms today are employed descriptively rather than judgmentally, their negative tenor can still be discerned.

With this underlying bias in mind, early archaeologists' focus on male-centered activities and neglect of female concerns can therefore be partly understood. Ehrenberg pointed out, for example, that hunting, a sport in the 19th century, might naturally be seen by these anthropologists as an interesting and vital activity among the groups they were studying. It might therefore command their attention more than activities such as textile production, food preparation, and child care, which in their world view were of secondary importance (1989: 20).

Early bias about social structure, especially gender roles, on the part of anthropologists can be exemplified by such models as the "Man the Hunter" theory. This model of food procurement by early human populations stresses the importance of male acquisition of meat protein to the survival and evolution of hominids such as *Homo habilis*, *Homo erectus*, Neanderthals, and *Homo sapiens*. Hunting of large game was seen not only as the major source of sustenance, but as the primary factor contributing to a host of social and cultural developments, including intelligence, language, tools, and bipedalism (Boaz and Almquist 1997: 413), which have been used to define "humanity." According to this theory, humanity began to evolve when, because of climate changes, hominids began to hunt the large herds of herbivores on the savanna. In order to hunt efficiently, males had to stand upright, develop weapons, create language, and refine cooperative strategy and critical thinking. The combination of increased intelligence and the use of weapons, moreover, was credited for the development of male aggressiveness, murder,
and warfare. According to Robert Ardry in *The Hunting Hypothesis*, this aggression was of utmost importance; apes evolved into hominids *because of* their hunting activities. "Man is man, and not a chimpanzee, because for millions upon millions of evolving years we killed for a living" (1976: 10).

In a similar vein, C. Owen Lovejoy's Upright Provider model identifies the development of bipedalism as the first and most crucial of the defining characteristics of humanity. According to this model, walking upright would free males' hands to carry tools, weapons, and kills of prey, expand their field of vision over the tall savanna grasses, and increase the territory they could cover while hunting for food. These developments increased the ability of males to provide for females, increasing the survival chances of their mates and offspring. In "The Origin of Man" (1981: 341-348), Lovejoy claims that this theory also explains the origins of the nuclear family with male as head over a female and his dependent children. According to the Upright Provider theory, as vulnerable sole caregivers to their infants, females were essentially immobile, tied to a narrow home range. The males, with greater freedom of movement, were constantly away from the home base, procuring food for their particular partner(s) and offspring. Worried about female fidelity in their absence, and hence the paternity of their offspring, they imposed the institution of monogamous marriage on the females in exchange for provisions and protection.

Gender studies in archaeology have been useful in helping social scientists overcome what we know are modern cultural biases in our way of perceiving prehistoric social organization. Some of the assumptions challenged by a gender-oriented approach include the following:

**Western sexual mores** were universal and eternal, including:

- heterosexuality was compulsory/normative
- monogamy was compulsory/normative
- sex was reproductive only, not pleasurable
- males had "right of sexual access" to females
Western reproductive priorities applied in prehistoric societies, including:

- all females bred (that is, femaleness was equivalent to motherhood)
- all females bred throughout their reproductive years
- increasing population was urgent/decreasing birth space was desirable
- the male role in reproduction was known by early hominids
- paternity was important since males only wanted to protect and provide for "their own" offspring
- the nuclear family was compulsory/normative

Western notions of gender applied in prehistoric societies, including:

- biology was destiny (that is, the social category "feminine" was the same as the biological category "female")
- "female" and "male" were always perceived as opposite/mutually exclusive
- society was always stratified by gender roles including division of labor
- females were solely responsible not only for childbirth but also for child rearing
- females were sedentary and dependent on males for provisioning
- females were vulnerable and dependent on males for protection
- females' primary roles included securing a male "provider" by being physically and psychologically pleasing to him (including monogamy)

Western social structure and behavioral norms were universal and eternal, including:

- competition, hierarchy, and control were behavioral norms rather than cooperation, partnership, and respect
- female-male relationships were transactions based on the female need for protection and provisions and the male need for sexual access and control of female sexuality/paternity of his children through monogamy
- hunting was the sole province of men and the primary source of sustenance
- females' contribution of plant foods to the group's sustenance was insignificant

Nelson and Jurmain have noted, "As might be expected, such a male-centered scenario did not go unchallenged" (1991: 446). In the last three decades, gender studies in
archaeology have increasingly revealed that many traditional theories are based on androcentric Western, post-Industrial Revolution concepts of gender relations, the family and the workplace. Challenges have come from other quarters, also. For example, feminist scholars are questioning the assumptions behind the Man the Hunter theory and its concomitant applications to science, politics, medicine, and other areas of human endeavor. Essentially, it has been shown that these theories have tunnel vision; they were based on assumptions about the universality of patriarchy which have not been supported by later evidence. Further, androcentrism not only affords a distorted viewpoint of cultures of the past, it obviates the possibility of ever attaining a clear picture:

[Androcentrism] assumes that men are the most important actors and the substance of their lives the most important topic to know about. As long as the realities of women, nonelite men, and children are treated as secondary to the “main story”—as the “background” that is never important enough to warrant being spotlighted—we in fact are unaware of what the background actually is and what relationship it actually has to the main story. What we are unaware of we cannot understand or analyze (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 25).

To help reinterpret the androcentric model of early hominid development, scholars have drawn on comparisons with extant human groups, used oral and written accounts of cultures from pre- or early European contact times, and made inferences from studies of closely related primate species. These comparisons have yielded many pieces of information that challenge the above assumptions. Although it is dangerous to compare scenarios of early hominid social structure with either extant primates or with modern hunter-gatherer groups—since early hominids’ brain structure differed from both, their way of life could not have been precisely the same as either—alternate models of humanity’s social origins can illuminate some of the assumptions implicit in the traditional archaeological model.
First, comparisons with nonhuman primates and other mammals do not support the Man the Hunter theory in that Western sexual mores do not apply. For example, those nonhuman primates which exhibit sexual dimorphism (as early and modern hominids do), don't tend to exhibit monogamy. Various female primates such as chimps and baboons copulate with a number of males, tending to prefer less, rather than more, aggressive individuals as sex partners. Neither are their sexual behaviors exclusively heterosexual; chimps (humanity's closest genetic relative) exhibit a range of same-sex contact including male-male mounting, rump rubbing, and female-female genital rubbing. Nonhuman primate sex also serves purposes other than procreation, as bonobos engage in such purely pleasurable sexual acts as kissing, oral sex, and masturbation (Eisler 1995: 40-43).

Scholars are also challenging the unspoken assumption that human female sexual expression is and has always been limited to heterosexuality. Not all females are heterosexual; not all engage in sexual activity. As feminist writer Adrienne Rich points out:

In the tradition of the social sciences it asserts that primary love between the sexes is 'normal'; that women need men as social and economic protectors, for adult sexuality, and for psychological completion; that the heterosexually constituted family is the basic social unit; that women who do not attach their primary intensity to men must be, in functional terms, condemned to an even more devastating outsiderhood than their outsiderhood as women (1996: 140).

In fact, the notion of heterosexuality itself as a biological construct is now being challenged. Katz describes the invention of the term in the 1860s, related to the rise of middle-class standards of sexual "purity," the increasing influence of psychoanalysis, and the growing tendency in social science and medicine to catalog and classify human behaviors. He cautions against the interpretation of past societies using Western notions of "heterosexuality" as normative and "homosexuality" as deviant. Many other societies,
he says, had not only no such terms but no such conceptions of sexual orientation. The ancient Greeks, for example, categorized a man's sexual love, whether of a woman or of a boy, as either earthly (base), or heavenly (noble), based on the perception of beauty, intelligence, and goodness in the object of the sexual feeling. (Perhaps ironically for later exponents of Greek virtues, these qualities were expected to appear more often in the male, the superior sex, implying that male-male sexual bondings were perhaps considered "normative.") Seventeenth century colonial New England's mores distinguished between sex which fulfilled the "reproductive imperative," and was consequently legally and religiously mandatory, or which was "sodomitical," or non-reproductive, and therefore sinful (sometimes punishable by death). Sexual feeling in early nineteenth century America was distinguished based on its underlying cause; it was either a passionate, spiritual eroticism based on "true love," or a "false love," that is, lust not sanctified by some kind of spiritual joining. Since only pre-marital coitus was forbidden by nineteenth century Victorian mores, sexual contact based on "true love" could occur between two women, two men, or between a woman and a man (1995: 33-47). Interestingly enough, all these examples from Western civilizations (cultures based on the Greek and the Roman) characterize sexual feelings dichotomously--some are forbidden, others permissible or mandatory. Based on the decrease in polar oppositional thought noted in non-Western or prehistoric cultures, the question arises whether sexual contact in such cultures would have been divided into categories of compulsory vs. forbidden at all.

In summary, the above evidence tends to challenge the assumption implicit in Western sexual mores that females' bonds with males were primary, and that female sexuality was a function of male needs. The definition of all females as heterosexual, monogamous wives is a construct of Western cultures.

Second, evidence shows that Western reproductive priorities did not necessarily apply to prehistoric cultures. In particular, the equation of "female" with "mother" is being challenged. Not all females are able to give birth, and not all females wish to do so.
However, “the dichotomy pitting men as performing productive labor (working for wages, creating ideas and products) against women working as performing reproductive labor (maintaining the household, bearing and caring for children) masks this variation among females and commonality between males and many females” (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 24).

The value of giving birth to numerous offspring is an artifact of a society in which children are needed as sources of labor, to procure food or otherwise provide for their families. In the Paleolithic, this certainly was not the case. The corollary to the Man the Hunter theory which implies that “cave people” were always on the verge of extinction and therefore had to procreate like mad in order to survive is simply a myth. Births of children in extant hunter-gatherer societies are spaced more widely than in agricultural societies--three or four years apart compared to one or two--by design (Boaz and Almquist 1997: 313, Rice 1981: 407-408). Evidence shows that when mothers nurse their babies longer, ovulation tends to be prevented, resulting in fewer pregnancies. Direct birth control methods are also used by hunter-gatherers, and include abstinence, use of herbal contraceptives and abortifacients, and sometimes, infanticide (Ehrenberg 1989: 60-61, Leacock 1987: 30). Land sustains fewer people per unit area in hunting-gathering modes of subsistence (the mode for all early hominids and for Homo sapiens up to the Neolithic era) than in agriculture, so a low birth rate would have been more desirable. Early population growth curves, showing a slow, steady rate of increase before the advent of agriculture and a sudden, sharp increase after it (Fagan 1995: 154), provide indirect evidence for use of these practices.

Third, feminist studies, including gender research in archaeology, also reveal that modern notions of appropriate masculine and feminine behaviors do not reflect the perceptions of these categories in prehistory. Unfortunately, Western constructions of gender as universal and eternal have masked the underlying truth that perceptions of gender have varied through time and across cultures. We don’t even know that all past
cultures have embraced the notion of two genders and two sexes, much less what constituted their notions of appropriate gender behavior (Claassen 1992: 3). Therefore we can’t escape the conclusion that physical factors are less important than cultural ones in the construction of gender. “Ideological beliefs may exaggerate the role of biological factors (arguing that men’s testosterone explains male homicide rates) or posit biological factors where none need be involved (arguing that because some women during part of their life bear children, all women should care for children and are unfit for political power)” (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 28).

Science has demonstrated that biology is not destiny; being born biologically female does not predetermine stereotypically “feminine” social behaviors. For example, in modern Western culture, men are considered the primary agents in controlling and manipulating the environment. However, in many extant and historically-known hunter-gatherer societies, tools are created by the individuals who actually use them; sometimes these tool-producers and users are women (Ehrenberg 1989: 55). Therefore control of environment cannot be equivalent to “maleness.”

Child care would also have been less an exclusively-female province in early human societies than in Western industrial ones, since a woman was more likely to have only one dependent infant at a time to care for, not all women would have been of child-bearing age and ability or would have chosen to become mothers, and older children and adult men would have been able to help provide care. Extant and historically-known hunter-gatherer societies such as the !Kung share responsibility for amusing and nurturing children in this fashion (Draper 1975: 90). Men of the Montagnais-Naskapi, a Native American group, were known to teach children and to tend them when they were sick (Leacock 1987: 21). Even in modern Western society, which tends to force men to suppress their instincts to nurture, to be tender, and to exhibit gentle emotions, males sometimes assist in the care of dependent children. In a society where the predominant ideology was not of hierarchy and domination but of cooperation and mutual support, might not the male element of society
have been willing to participate in those aspects of nurturance which didn't require a uterus or a breast? In short, although the biological category of "female" is a constant, the social category of "feminine" certainly is not. The equation of a woman with her function as mother could not have been as absolute as it is in current patriarchal systems, and as it was in the classical patriarchal societies which shaped ours.

Finally, evidence shows that prehistoric peoples' social structures and behavioral norms were not organized around modern Western ones. Sally (Linton) Slocum's objections to the Man the Hunter model include its implication that only males evolved; that is, while males were out doing things, females were "waiting for the males to bring home the bacon" (1975: 42). Females in extant primate groups are not the passive, dependent creatures portrayed in the Upright Provider theory. Female chimps, for example, are the primary tool-producers (Ehrenberg 1989: 46), and in many species the female, not the male, chooses her mate(s).

Similarly, gender studies scholars level objections at the importance ascribed to the supposedly all-male province of hunting, pointing out that while in most hunter-gatherer societies men are exclusively or primarily responsible for the hunting of large game, in many societies women gather shellfish, scavenge, fish, and hunt small land and sea game, all of which preceded large game hunting in hominid evolution (Ehrenberg 1989: 55).

Evidence from extant groups in the tropics shows a heavy reliance on plant foods in the diet, indicating that early tropical hominids such as *Australopithecus afarensis* probably relied more on plant foods than on meat protein. In fact, various studies have shown that large game hunting was never the exclusive means of food procurement, the gathering of plant foods has always provided the highest percentage of sustenance in gathering-hunting people's larders. The majority of modern hunting-gathering groups procure only about 35% of their total caloric intake from meat protein (Ehrenberg 1989: 53). The important increase in hominid brain size, attributed to an increase in protein in their diets, cannot be directly attributed to the advent of large game hunting, since the
development of this activity post-dated the emergence of increased cognitive function, hand-to-eye coordination, cooperative social structure, and the like. Neither can it be seen as the fundamental social activity that shaped all of humanity's social structure, before and after. Men's provision of large game to the group may simply not warrant the exclusive attention traditional theorists have focused on it.

A female gendered perspective may be especially useful in reconceptualizing early human social structure. Slocum's "Woman the Gatherer: Male Bias in Anthropology" (1975) was an early attempt to stimulate anthropologists' thinking on the assumptions inherent in the Man the Hunter model. The "Woman the Gatherer" hypothesis describes the basis of early social organization as food sharing between siblings and mothers rather than between opposite-sex mates (1975: 43). A corollary, the tool-aided extractive foraging theory, states that the important cultural shaper of tool use first arose related to female procurement of plant foods for their offspring, rather than to male hunting strategies. Modern hunter-gatherer women share the food they glean with their matrilineal family members, indicating that hominid food-sharing may not have been a primary means of procuring a mate, as the Upright Provider theory suggests, but a means of shaping social bonds between women, children, and siblings (Ehrenberg 1989: 48-49).

Like the Upright Provider theory, Pat Shipman's Upright Scavenger theory emphasizes the importance of free hands, especially for carrying tools, to early hominid evolution. In contrast to the Upright Provider theory, however, Shipman suggests that scavenging, at which both genders would have been equally adept (since only butchery, not large game hunting, was required), was an earlier and more important contributor than hunting to the ability of early humans to provide for their group. Since in extant hunter-gatherer groups such as the !Kung, contribution to the family's food supply is a strong basis for an individual's self-esteem (Draper 1975: 82), it is likely that individuals of both genders were valued members of early human groups. This model suggests a much more egalitarian social structure than the traditional “Man the Hunter” theories.
In "Women as Shapers of the Human Adaptation," Adrienne Zihlman emphasizes the cooperative nature of the sexes that must have been crucial in the provision of child care, protection of the tribe or group, production and use of tools, and procurement of food. She states that it was "the overall behavioral flexibility of both sexes. . .that may have been the primary ingredient of early hominids' success in the savanna environment" (1981: 97). In other words, interdependence and cooperation among group members were likely to have been the early human norm. Eleanor Leacock puts it even more strongly:

Humanity did not evolve from an innately aggressive forebear . . .it is clear that it could not have done so. The basis for the successful evolution of human beings was the group life that both required and made possible cooperative patterns. In turn, cooperation led to and became dependent upon the development of refined tools and utensils, and the elaboration of language (1987: 13).

In summary, examination of the patriarchal assumptions contained within traditional archaeological theory through the lens of gender studies has yielded a radically different view of humanity's ancient past, a view that suggests the critical advances of bipedalism, tool creation and use, language, and social structure--the advances we use to define our "humanity"--were made possible not by an inherent violent, competitive, hierarchical nature, but by the exact inverse. Human beings evolved because they learned to share, cooperate, and communicate; to work with, not against, their environment and each other.

An important question remains. Having made a reasonable case for prehistoric social structures that were centered on cooperation, mutual support, and equal valuing of every group member--in short, for universal egalitarianism--we are faced with the glaring fact that modern social structure is certainly not egalitarian. No extant society (with the dwindling exceptions of the !Kung and a few other "primitive" tribes) can make the claim
to be truly egalitarian. A social ideology based on hierarchy, competition, oppression, and differential valuation of individuals--variations on the theme of patriarchy--is the modern norm.

So what happened? Once we accept that such a fundamental shift in human social arrangements did occur, the next question becomes, "Why did it occur?" When, where, and how did egalitarianism disappear and patriarchy emerge? If in fact this original, natural shape of human social structure obtained throughout early hominid development, what force or forces caused such a radical change in the social arrangements of our species? Was the change natural--just a milestone to be expected in our species’ progress toward “civilization”--or did some trauma effect a sweeping change in our orientation to each other and to the planet? Conversely, did some force or forces institute a slow, imperceptible bending of our species’ life path until we eventually found ourselves on the road to hierarchy? Was the change inevitable or avoidable? Was it a good thing or a tragedy? As might be expected, this far-reaching and complex issue, so fundamental to our understanding of ourselves, has generated an array of interesting, complicated, and often contradictory theories. Interest extends far outside the field of archaeology as well. However, certain underlying patterns occur within the body of literature I reviewed. The theories about the shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy generally fall into one of the categories described below.

The Shift as Ontogeny (Normal Development)

Among those early theorists who subscribed to the idea that a fundamental shift from egalitarian to patriarchal social structures did occur at some point in recent prehistory, some held the Freudian view that the shift was simply a normal development. In this view, the evolution of the human race is compared to the development of a single
member of that race, with changes in social structures likened to the stages of an individual's growth from infancy through adolescence to adulthood. As student of social theory Evelyn Acworth put it: "It is the assumption that humanity in its mental and psychological growth follows the pattern of development that can be traced from the state of infancy to that of the adult personality" (1965: 13). A corollary of this view is that all changes are necessarily advancements. I call this theory *ontogeny*, referring to the comparison of the individual to the group (where *phylogeny*, in biology, refers to the physical evolution of an entire group or *phylum*). As we will see, ontogeny is closely related to traditional (male-centered) theories of social structure in that, although it admits egalitarian (in Acworth's term, "matriarchal") social organizations once existed, it devalues them.

So-called "intuitive historian" Oswald Spengler, author of *The Decline of the West*, described how a civilization "passes through the age phases of the individual man. It has a childhood, youth, manhood, and old age" (qtd. in Lamberg-Karlovsky and Sabloff 1995: 8). He was atypical of social scientists of his time in that he refused to adhere to a "Ptolemaic" (ethnocentric) view of culture; that is, he did not view Western civilization as central and other cultures as peripheral. A noteworthy feature of his theory is that he viewed the progress of civilizations as cyclic within about a thousand-year lifecycle (ibid.: 19-20). This cyclical view of the past was also reflected in the works of Aristotle and Plato, who, in *The Republic*, referred to the phases of social evolution as pre-state, primitive state, and civilization (ibid.: 8). Thucydides also identified the life cycle of a civilization as consisting of the gain of power, the accumulation of wealth, the increase of pride and arrogance, followed by a fall. (It may be noted that civilizations are then seen as repeating the same cycle of mistakes, and one may wonder why it never occurred to these philosophers that the pattern might be better changed.) In contrast to Spengler, the respected archaeologist V. Gordon Childe did not support a cyclical view of the growth of civilizations, describing history as "cumulative" (linear) (ibid.: 28). Nevertheless, he also
supported the notion of humanity's progress from a lower to a higher form of development, similar to the progress of an individual from child to adult.

Social theorist Johann Jakob Bachofen presented an early version of the ontogeny theory in his work *Myth, Religion, and Mother Right* (1926). He asserted that the universal prehistoric matriarchal social systems, which he called "mother right," constituted an early "stage" in human history which was "primordial" and superseded by the superior patriarchy (1926: 71-72). Patriarchy developed as a voluntary moral response to the widespread female promiscuity and worship of female deities in these decadent systems. Bachofen's theory is a very slight variation on traditional archaeological themes, with all the values of the white, European, Christian, Victorian male still intact. Other social theorists, including Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, supported Bachofen's views. The "armchair anthropologist" James Frazer, expanding on Bachofen's ideas, wrote *The Golden Bough* (1922), a twelve-volume exposition comparing the social conditions of "primitive" world cultures to the apex of civilization, early twentieth century Europe. In Frazer's Social Darwinist view, humanity's cultural ontogeny was an evolution from magic through religion to scientific materialism (Gadon 1989: 226-227). "Matriarchal" cultures (which practice magic) were the most primitive forms of organization, and the scientific materialism of Sir Francis Bacon was the route to true enlightenment.

A corollary to the ontogenic explanation for the prehistoric decrease in women's status and increase in men's is the so-called "Big Discovery" theory. This popular notion posits that at some point in men's progress toward civilization (women presumably not "progressing"), they somehow became aware of their role in procreation, and because of this new-found sense of importance, began to assert their "natural" authority in other (social) realms as well. This "discovery" is sometimes said to be associated with the domestication and breeding of animals, which activity would allow men (who are also in this theory presumed to be in charge of animal "husbandry," although it would
theoretically have conflicted with hunting time) to observe captive animals copulating and the females subsequently becoming pregnant and giving birth. This theory makes use of two assumptions and one error inherent in traditional Western models of social structure and oppositional thinking. The first assumption is that if one person or group is important—in this case, women as the progenitors of humanity—then another person or group is by exclusion unimportant. Therefore, during the time when men did not understand their importance in the perpetuation of the species, they must have been downtrodden, the all-powerful and important women lording their vital creative ability over them. The second is that traditional Western sexual mores would have applied in the Paleolithic and early Neolithic. This argument seems flawed since in hunter-gatherer societies, groups of human beings often live and sleep in closer proximity than in agricultural societies (which may make use of single-couple houses or nuclear households), and could for millennia probably have witnessed one another copulating long before they regularly witnessed animals doing so. (Unless it was the practice during the Ice Age, for example, for a couple—or an individual, or a group, for that matter—to disappear into the wilderness in order to have sex.) The conceptual leap from “people copulate” to “woman gets pregnant” to “woman gives birth” (which is no easy mental feat) is demonstrably smaller than the conceptual leap from “animals copulate” to “female animal gets pregnant” to “female animal gives birth” to “people copulate” to “woman gets pregnant,” etc.

Finally, the error in Western oppositional thinking is the assumption that if men were found to play a contributing part in procreation—the contribution of semen—then women would automatically be assumed not to play a contributing role. They would be, in effect, nothing more than “vessels.”

To presume, however, that millennia of belief in the powerful procreative role of women (which the “Big Discovery” theory does assume) would be so easily overturned ignores the graphic realities of women’s cyclical menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth.
We know, for example, that extant hunter-gatherers practice abstinence as one birth control method, a practice which implies knowledge of the possible effect of vaginal ("penetrative") intercourse. We also know that certain primates, including humans, engage in non-procreative sex acts, and I suggest that the deliberate participation in such acts can also be a form of birth control.

An artifact from the acknowledged woman-centered culture of Catal Huyuk provides archaeological evidence that the link between copulation and procreation was known by early Neolithic times: a plaque illustrates on one panel a sexual embrace between a man and a woman, and on the next panel the woman holding an infant (Barstow 1978: 14). Finally, we have evidence that even in classical Western societies women's role in conception was (inaccurately, and partially, but still specifically) acknowledged: the Greek rhetorician and philosopher Aristotle described procreation as the product of the mingling of women's menstrual blood and men's semen (Dieter 1994: 234). Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that pre-patriarchal peoples had at least a rudimentary notion of the means by which human beings propagated themselves, and that the decline in prehistoric women's status was unrelated, or only peripherally related, to some sudden revelation of the man's role in procreation.

Acworth provided a more recent version of the ontogeny theory. In *The New Matriarchy*, she described the progression in development of humanity's consciousness: In the primitive period of matriarchy (pre-history, or humanity's childhood), humanity "operated through an instinctive consciousness . . . primarily feeling and very little thinking" (1965: 14). The historical period, (patriarchy, or humanity's adolescence), saw the emergence of "the reasoning mind. . . and the thinkers of the world appeared" (ibid.). Finally, in "the new matriarchy," a combination of the desirable traits from the previous stages of matriarchy (which Acworth characterized as a feminine aspect of mind) and patriarchy (characterized as masculine), a synthesized, mature adult society will emerge.
According to Acworth, humanity has already passed through the stage of childhood and is currently struggling through its most difficult transition, from adolescence to adulthood.

Acworth reveals a Western influence in her description of humanity’s progression toward maturity. She employs classical Freudian concepts in her overt characterization of the feminine as instinctual, intuitive, passive, and dependent, the masculine as active, aggressive, reasoning, and intellectual, and the early social arrangement of "the masses" as unindividuated from the mother principle (1965: 20). By her implication, identification with the feminine is childish, identification with the masculine more mature but still juvenile, and integration of the two is truly adult.

The social theories of Bachofen and Frazer also reflect a Western, male-dominant view of male and female gender roles. Bachofen's emphasis on female sexual activity as shameful ("promiscuity") and the worship of a feminine principle as decadent was a product of the Western religious separation of spirit and flesh, with the earthly (the body, the female, the natural) seen as low and sinful. Frazer, although technically non-religious in his emphasis on "positive science" (Gadon 1989: 227), was equally critical of the earthly and the immanent. His Social Darwinism would open the door to true understanding of the universe. (Perhaps not coincidentally, these scholars tend to describe pre-patriarchal societies as matriarchies, which were the mirror opposite of patriarchy, using a Western polar oppositional definition, with men portrayed as subordinate and women pre-eminent, rather than as egalitarian. The notion that hierarchy itself, of which patriarchy is one manifestation, may have been overturned, appears not to have occurred to them.)

Recent gender research in archaeology has begun to challenge some of the assumptions contained in these theories, and they are no longer seriously considered within the discipline of archaeology as explanations for the shift. However, outside of archaeology the stereotypes still exist, in the popular mind and particularly in the religious Right, where they are used to justify patriarchal controls over women, vilifying women’s bodies and their sensuality, institutionalizing the practice of heterosexual monogamy.
within marriage, and reinforcing the stereotypes of women as passive, dependent nurturers, child care providers, and mothers.

Even though systems of "matriarchy" may have existed, then (meaning here, systems where women had a certain self-determination which they lack in patriarchal societies), many scholars have discounted the idea that such societies could have been complex or mature, have made any valuable contributions, or been long-lived. Therefore, even though they purport to explore alternative social structures, I characterize theories of this ilk as belonging more to the traditional archaeological school of thought than to any feminist or gender-balanced school. Ontogenic theories of the social shift from egalitarianism, or "matriarchy," to patriarchy admittedly posit early social systems for humanity whose arrangements differed from the current patriarchal ones. However, theories of the ontogenic type generally tend to maintain Western gender stereotypes, to treat valuation of the feminine as negative, and to preserve the underlying assumption that the natural organization of society is hierarchy. Therefore, for feminist purposes in general, and in particular for my purpose of explaining the shift from an egalitarian social structure and immanent world view to a patriarchal social structure and transcendent world view, ontogeny theories are not very useful.

The Shift as Catastrophe

The next group of theories to explain the change from egalitarianism to patriarchy in the Old World are those which represent the change as somehow sudden or catastrophic. Archaeologist Marija Gimbutas describes the shift in Old Europe as the result of warrior invasions from a group of tribes to the east, whose ideology was based on violent conquest, amassing of wealth, the stratification of human beings and the subjection of those in all but the very highest strata. These warlike Kurgans (also called
Aryans or Indo-Europeans), had developed an ideology of consumption and conquest based on their economy of pastoralism (1982: 30), in which each man's worth was measured by the size of the herds he could control--herds which by their size and nature destroyed the land that provided sustenance, so that to maintain the way of life necessitated the acquisition of new lands. The ideology of individual wealth spread to all aspects of life--women, children, and belongings were also amassed by each man, in competition with each other man, who used and disposed of them as he desired.

Gimbutas' assertion that the peaceful horticulturists of Old Europe were overrun by the Indo-Europeans is supported by archaeological evidence that shows what she refers to as two distinct cultural layers. "The first was matrifocal, sedentary, peaceful, art-loving, earth- and sea-bound; the second was patrifocal, mobile, warlike, ideologically sky oriented, and indifferent to art" (1982: 23). The layers resulted from a cultural "clash and melange" (ibid.) between the Old Europeans and the Indo-Europeans, who arrived in three waves: one during the centuries between 4400 and 4300, one between 3400 and 3200, and one between 3000 and 2900 BCE. Subsequent archaeological layers show a "hybrid culture," indicating the assimilation of the Old Europeans by the Kurgans. Although some of her ideas about this change in social structure are still in dispute, mostly from traditional archaeological scholarly quarters, she insists that many investigators still think "we have just to see the materialistic world and see how it changes, and the religion and mythology is not taken into consideration." Not to consider these is "the biggest mistake; a real misunderstanding" (1992). It is noteworthy that the symbolism of the divine feminine in this region did undergo a change during the centuries mentioned above; the earth-centered depictions of peace and plenty, celebrations of the fecundity of the earth and its natural cycles, were supplanted by images of weapons, warriors, sky gods, and male domination over women, nature, and each other (1989: xix-xx).

The small Anatolian settlement of Hacilar, neighbor to the west of Catal Huyuk, tells a similar story. Its occupation is divided into distinct layers (Mellaart 1961: 86-97).
A ceramic (pre-pottery) Hacilar, dating to sometime in the seventh millennium BCE, is separated from the better-known pottery- and figurine-producing ceramic Hacilar by an unexplained gap of at least two hundred years. Archaeologists do not report evidence of fire, violent confrontation, or epidemic disease, and no graves were found that might shed light on this gap. Occupation simply ended; when occupation layers were again detected, they represented the full-blown Neolithic culture. This culture, made famous for its numerous female figurines, found in houses, and purportedly representing the Goddess as mistress of animals, as a mother with child, and women in various phases of the female life cycle, lasted only 300 years, from approximately 5700 to 5400 BCE (designated Hacilar VI through IX). Here a few burials are found (mostly mothers with children), along with traces of the skull-worshipping ancestor cult of other Neolithic traditions. Hacilar VI, the most recent occupation layer, was destroyed by fire. This disaster signaled the end of the Neolithic culture at Hacilar, and afterward traces of their characteristic female-centered symbolism declined or disappeared. The next occupation phase showed a transition to the Chalcolithic (Copper Age) culture; during this period (approximately 5400 to 5000 BCE) the female figurines continued to occur but “with less artistry, less naturalism and less variety” (1961: 95). Both Hacilar II and Hacilar I were destroyed by fires set by enemy invaders. The collapse of upper stories of buildings left rich archaeological evidence consisting of broken pottery, calcined (burned) human bones, and ashes. As Mellaart put it, “The arrival of barbarians had put an end to one of the most artistic cultures the Near East has ever seen” (1961: 96).

Although destroyed in the land of its emergence, the culture of Neolithic Anatolia apparently survived elsewhere. Some theorists suggest (see, for example, Eisler 1987: 30) that immigrants from Anatolia were the original source of population in Minoan Crete (human beings apparently were not indigenous to Crete before the Neolithic). Similarities between their styles of pottery, their social structures, and their languages suggest a common ancestor, or else an offshoot colony which then developed into classical Minoan
civilization. At any rate, the feminine, life-affirming symbolism survived, although in altering forms, until much later than on the mainland; somewhere between 1400 and 1100 BCE. Again, we see a shift in symbolism and social structure, this one fairly well documented. The connection between Crete and Mycenae on the Greek mainland is well known (Fagan 1995: 452). By about 1350 BCE, the presence of militarism in the symbolism was well established, especially on pottery, where previously Minoan artwork had shown a paucity of a violent or military symbolism of any sort (Andronicos 1975).

Other evidence points to an increasing Greek (classically patriarchal) presence in the life of the island: Linear A script was replaced by Linear B around 1450 BCE at Knossos, a center acknowledged to have had extensive interactions with Greece. When Linear B was deciphered it was found to be a syllabic representation of the Greek spoken at that time; the Linear A used at the height of Minoan civilization, while not yet deciphered, has been determined not to represent Greek, or any other language known at that time (Davaras 1976: 182-186; Mellersh 1970: 128).

According to some, the shift from the peaceful, life-affirming classical Minoan to the martial, destructive and dominating Mycenean was the result of a natural disaster. D.L. Page's The Santorini Volcano and the Desolation of Minoan Crete (1970) presents his case that the Mycenean take-over during this century was enabled by the devastating effects of the eruption of the volcano on the Aegean island of Thera (now called Santorini). Comparative studies done by physical scientists on the eruption of the volcano Krakatoa in 1883 suggest that the prevailing winds would have spread Thera's volcanic ash and other fallout in a particular pattern across the south and west of a certain portion of the Mediterranean. Ocean core samples taken around the island of Crete confirmed their predictions about where the ash had fallen; across the entire eastern part of the island from north to south, and on into the ocean south of the island. The western half of the island was spared (1970: 36). Archaeological records from 1550 to 1450 BCE show that the western half of the island, which had previously been only lightly settled because of
heavy forestation, suddenly sprouted settlements, and settlement in the eastern half of the island was suddenly disrupted (1970: 8). Presumably because the ash fall rendered the soil infertile, there was a discontinuity in the habitation pattern of all the major excavation sites: the layer of rich, refined classical Minoan culture abruptly ended, and after some indeterminate time (perhaps fifty years), another habitation pattern appeared which could be termed "squatting": a less sophisticated culture, which could not be called Minoan, seems to have lived on the ruins of the one before. The period following the second great earthquake/eruption (the first occurred during the Middle Minoan, or early Palace Period, around 1700 BCE, but was immediately following by rebuilding of even more elaborate palaces) corresponds to the time when Linear B emerged at Knossos; Page's theory is that the attempt at recovery there involved engaging with the more warlike Myceneans, who later took advantage of the disaster to take over the island.

Page's theory is based primarily on physical science, but the archaeological evidence seems to support his theory. This theory accounts for the fact that tidal waves could not have done the sort of damage discovered at Hagia Triada, Knossos, and Gournia--there is no water damage, but there is extensive evidence of fire. An earthquake, which caused massive fires to break out, could have had such widespread and dramatic results. That the fires represented some sort of social unrest is unlikely; so rare is evidence of violence in Minoan culture that the discovery of an apparent human sacrifice, performed during the period of the second volcanic eruption, was the subject of much archaeological controversy and special investigation (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellaraki 1981: 205-224).

The Minoans had extensive contact with the Egyptians, Greeks, and Levantines for centuries. In that time, they adopted elements of craftsmanship from these other cultures, such as techniques in jewelry manufacture, that appealed to them. They certainly were aware of the differing customs of other Mediterranean peoples. However, for nearly five hundred years they maintained a way of life that was not only egalitarian in nature, but
complex, sophisticated, and elegant. How did the Minoans resist the influences of patriarchal cultures when others such as the Old Europeans did not?

One answer is that the Minoans maintained their egalitarian culture for one to two thousand years longer than their counterparts on the mainland by virtue of inhabiting an island. As Riane Eisler terms it, they were protected by "the mothering sea" (1987: 54). There is probably at least a grain of truth in this theory; however, two thousand years is a long time for their survival to be such a fluke. Thucydides suggested, although no strong evidence has been found to support his description, that the Minoans (led by the legendary King Minos) represented a mighty naval power in the Mediterranean, forming a merchant marine and repressing piracy (Davaras 1976: 251 & 289). Certainly they were not hiding, avoiding contact with the surrounding world. Perhaps their survival had something to do with the fact that the Minoans were consummate traders; their pottery has been found from Greece to Egypt. They obviously produced wares of value, and had established relationships with the other cultures of the Mediterranean. Perhaps there was a mutual respect and tolerance between themselves and the cultures with which they traded. Perhaps, for a while, the advantages of conquest and plunder were outweighed by the advantages of convenience of trade and quality of workmanship. Perhaps a combination of all the above led to their survival in a world converting to patriarchy.

Theories of the shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy which focus on a single or traumatic factor are useful in that they can explain particular situations very neatly. Invasions and natural disasters such as earthquake, fire, flood, or disease are relatively easier to identify in the archaeological record, and they provide a sort of line of demarcation, indicating where one society "ended" and another one "took over." Certainly a catastrophe theory explains a great deal about social change in the case of a peaceful folk, such as the Old Europeans, being overrun by the invading Kurgan horse-riders. Similarly, the contribution of volcanic eruption to the destruction of Minoan Crete is difficult to deny. However, weaknesses of this type of theory include the fact that
civilizations rarely come to a linear end; frequently there are survivors of earthquake, disease, invasion, etc., and these people influence the ones who come after. Vestiges of the former culture survive and are incorporated into the succeeding one. Single-factor theories are also insufficient in that they don't consider the complexity of the interactions between factors; even in the examples given, the change in Minoan culture was affected by their contact with the militant ideology of the Myceneans as well as the destruction caused by volcanic eruptions. It might be fair to conclude that although particular catastrophic events or factors have contributed strongly to changes in certain cultures at certain times, in general changes in social structure are affected by a variety of forces.

The Shift As Economic Change

In *The Origins of Family, Private Property, and the State* (1972), Friedrich Engels advanced a theory of the origins of class difference that centered on people's loss of control (of distribution and consumption) of the products of their labor. Socialist anthropologist Eleanor Leacock modified this theory to specify that the change in women's status, which is one of the primary indicators of egalitarian vs. patriarchal social structure, was caused by a gradual shift in prehistoric economy.

Leacock subscribed to the theory that the original and universal human social structure was egalitarian. She cited evidence from Neanderthal studies, Cro-Magnon cave art, and behavioral science that early human populations evolved, not as a result of competition and biological drives toward aggression, but through cooperation, sociality, and group life (1987: 11). Historical records of extant hunter-gatherers lend credibility to her assertion that early humans had a respect for nature and the animals that they hunted, and that aggression within and between groups was minimized by humor, verbal banter and ridicule, and physical separation of hostile individuals or groups. Violence between
humans was small-scale, unorganized or ritually structured to minimize harm. Division of labor by gender occurred in many cultures, and various forms of social and ceremonial rank were observed. However, evidence indicates that the products of both genders were seen as complementary and equally valuable (Ehrenberg 1989: 52), and cultures still maintained the "equal right of all to basic sources of livelihood" (Leacock 1987: 15).

According to Leacock, evidence shows that egalitarian social structure had survived intact the first great economic-technological shift, that from hunting and gathering to horticultural means of food production. People retained control over the distribution and consumption of the goods they produced, and group consensus for important decisions remained the norm. However, with the "urban revolution" of the 4th millennium BCE, subtle changes came that initially seemed beneficial but which ultimately led to the worldwide decline in women's status and the establishment of patriarchy. The crucial variable affecting women's status was the gradual loss of their control over the fruits of their productive labors. They began to lose their "economic autonomy" (1987: 19). The practice of sharing gradually turned into barter, barter turned into extensive trade and specialization of labor, and these led to individually held wealth and social stratification (1987: 30). As the stability of village life required "regularized" means of exchange, labor specialization for production of special or luxury (non-food) items for trade also increased. Although exchange networks were originally egalitarian, with no notion of profit, specialization changed this. The concept of wealth, unknown before this time, began to grow, and certain individuals, originally chiefs or religious leaders, began accumulating desirable goods and controlling productive land. The ability of certain other individuals, essentially middlemen, to benefit from trade activities began to break down the bonds of responsibility between those individuals and their tribes. In Leacock's words, trade "enabled economically independent entrepreneurs to detach themselves from responsibilities toward their people" (1987: 26). This was the beginning of differentiation between individuals and between groups of people, leading to social stratification.
Although differentiation between people on the basis of gender or of social function had existed previously, new distinctions between people began to appear: the differences between producers and distributors, which closely followed gender lines, gradually led to greater and greater differences in wealth and social status. The distributors became the wealthy, upper class rulers. At this time in many parts of the world we see the beginnings of conferred status based on control of goods and accumulation of wealth, as opposed to earned status based on wisdom, skill, or age.

In Leacock’s view, since women's role as procurers of food is primary or equal to men's in economies based on scavenging, gathering, and hunting, women have primary or equal control over resources. This in turn contributes to their equal control over the distribution of resources and equal participation in decision-making. Women’s social standing is therefore high (primary or equal to men’s). As the economy shifts from gathering to agriculture, a concomitant shift from communal kin groups to individual families occurs, leading to conflicts between kin ties and economic and political ties. The distinction between the esteemed public sphere, dominated by men, and the devalued private sphere, the province of women, becomes pronounced. Leacock notes that only in societies where women retain roles in marketing and trading do they retain higher status. In short, as specialization of labor increases, ranking or valuation of human beings by their specialty, and most particularly the valuation of men over women, also increases.

A supporter of the economy theory is anthropologist Pat Draper, who compared the status of women in two groups of the African !Kung tribe (1975: 77-109). Up to relatively recent times, the !Kung were completely nomadic, with a hunting-gathering economy and little contact with outsiders. In modern times some of the groups have become more sedentary, settling in fairly permanent villages around water holes and sometimes interacting with non-egalitarian tribes such as the Bantu. Draper studied the differences in social structure between the two groups, including issues of privacy, treatment and attitudes towards women, women’s control over their own produce, social
expectations about marriage and the raising of children, and differential treatment of girl
and boy children.

In the nomadic !Kung group, women retained primary control over the
procurement and distribution of food, which was equal. The women were responsible for
gathering plant foods, and also sometimes participated in hunting. Each woman had
primary control over what she had gathered. Care of the children was not solely women's
responsibility. In fact, the children did not routinely accompany their mothers on their
gathering expeditions; they remained in the temporary camp, with the adult men and
women who were not foraging on any particular day. Men were primarily responsible for
hunting, and meat was in fact considered very valuable; but because it was procured
relatively more rarely it was not as stable a part of the diet as the vegetable foods. In
addition, men did not have absolute control over its distribution, since the sharing of meat
was valued and socially obligatory. Women's contribution to the sustenance of the
community was therefore primary. Their status with respect to the men in their
community was equal.

In contrast, in the sedentary tribe living in contact with the patriarchal Bantu,
within one generation women began to lose their equal social status. Living quarters were
no longer communal, but divided into single couple or single family groups. Girls were
expected to marry older men and to obey them. Domestic violence began to appear.
Men's abilities to procure food through hunting began to be valued more highly than the
women's gathering abilities. Child care became the province of the older girls and adult
women. Finally, women no longer had control or even primary say in the distribution of
the produce that they contributed to the group's sustenance. They rapidly became
second-class citizens.

Leacock's theory is also supported by the work of Elizabeth Wayland Barber,
whose book *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years* (1994) has as its premise the idea
that women's natural involvement with the production of textiles has influenced their role
in society since the Paleolithic. Like Leacock, Barber presumes that women are the primary caregivers of children. She defines textile production as the task which meshes ideally with this function since (following criteria established for “women’s work” by Judith Brown) it 1) does not require rapt attention/is dull and repetitive, 2) is easily interruptible and easily resumed, 3) does not place children in potential danger, and 4) does not require the participant to range very far from home (1994: 29-30). She traces the development of textile production from its first known use—string skirts produced in the Paleolithic—up to modern times. The change in women’s status happened, according to Barber, with the shift of this work from mobile production done "on the fly" by women on a seasonal round to more regularized production in a stationary home (with sedentism and the beginnings of agriculture). As men were mobile, unfettered by children, they were free to work the fields, travel, develop metallurgy, and engage in commerce (1994: 99 et passim). Gradually they took over control of the distribution of agricultural and other products, and of the profits of their sale. Women, burdened with the care of children and the household, although still the primary producers, become secondary in importance, losing control over the fruits of their own labors.

In comparison to catastrophe theories, economic shift represents gradual rather than abrupt change. It happened within groups of people rather than between or from without groups. A strength of these theories is that they absolve men from the innate brutality attributed to them in some of the catastrophe theories, and women from the inherent moral weakness attributed to them in the ontogeny theories. Economic shift theories also have merit in that evidence clearly shows in societies, such as many hunter-gatherer ones, where specialization of labor occurs very little, egalitarianism is the norm. Conversely, in societies, such as many agricultural ones, where specialization of labor is common, social stratification (by gender and other attributes) also often appears. It may be tempting to generalize that social and economic complexity equals hierarchy: that egalitarianism exists in hunter-gatherer societies because of a lack of specialization,
which may be seen as primitive; and that social hierarchy must exist in agricultural
societies, which exhibit specialization of labor and which may be seen as more
complicated, sophisticated, or “civilized.” It is important, however, not to conclude that
the change from foraging and the seasonal round to cultivation and settled life
automatically leads to social stratification and patriarchal institutions because we have
eamples of societies where that did not happen. Leacock herself cites the horticultural
Danubian I peoples of the early third millennium BCE, who left archaeological evidence in
the form of dwellings and burials which indicate an egalitarian system (1987: 28). Marija
Gimbutas became known for her portrayal of the southern and central European
horticulturists called “Old Europeans,” whose way of life was also settled, peaceful, and
egalitarian until they were overrun by the invading, patriarchal Kurgans (1992). The
exemplary case, however, is Minoan Crete, whose Bronze Age agricultural society is
famous among archaeologists and feminists alike for its open, unguarded and
non-monumental architecture, its celebratory and overtly sensual portrayal of both sexes in
artwork, and its religious iconography which is conspicuously devoid of violence. In this
society at least, a complex and technologically advanced culture, with specialized
occupations that included merchants, farmers, priestesses, and athletes (but no monarch, in
spite of traditional attempts to infer one), a sexually egalitarian and peaceful way of life
existed for hundreds of years beyond the shift to trade and specialization of labor.

Leacock specifically attributes the shift to what she calls “the urban revolution”
(1987: 14) of the fourth millennium BCE, distinguishing between settled horticultural
societies, many of which continued to exhibit egalitarian social practices, and completely
agricultural societies, where specialization of labor removed some people from the process
of food production; however, she does not specifically address the exception of the
undeniably urban Minoans.

Another weakness of economy theories is that they take as a given that most or all
men were physically abler than most or all women (untrue in the modern world except in
the case of greater male upper-body strength), and accept many of the traditional archaeological assumptions about social structure; for example, that most or all child care was performed by women, whose primary roles also included reproduction and food preparation. Evidence from extant and historically-known hunter-gatherer groups has already been presented to challenge these assumptions.

Feminist scholar Jane Flax also presents a general objection to the socialist feminist explanation for gender inequality. Socialist feminists, says Flax, accord the privileging of production and the division of labor too much importance in all cultures, accepting the underlying Western assumption of its centrality to society. She asks, "Why 'widen' the concept of production instead of dislodging it or any other singularly central concept from such authoritative power?" (1987: 630-631). In other words, gender-holistic studies of the past should strive to relegate production to a more realistic place in the totality of any prehistoric culture.

Taken as a whole, the above challenges would seem at least to modify Leacock's theory. Perhaps we may infer that this technological shift from foraging to agriculture and the "urban revolution" was a 'necessary, but not sufficient' condition for the social change from egalitarianism to patriarchy.

The Shift As Cultural Transformation (Chaos Theory)

In *Ancient Civilizations*, Lamberg-Karlovsky and Sabloff describe a theory of the development of agriculture in which hunter-gatherer societies, which had been "well adapted to particular environments, remained stable and below the point of resource exhaustion until that equilibrium was disturbed" (1995: 47). This "disequilibrium," which was caused by either environmental change or demographic stress (population pressure), pushed early societies into the development of agriculture (see previous section).
Riane Eisler adapted the notion of disequilibrium to her theory of the shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy. In her “cultural transformation” model, a complex interaction of factors led to a crucial period of change she terms a "bifurcation point," in which humanity could have moved in a number of possible directions, but at a particular period in the Neolithic, extending from approximately 4000 to 2800 BCE, turned toward a patriarchal social structure (1987: 250 et passim). Eisler’s theory compares to the scientific paradigm known as “chaos theory” in that it de-emphasizes the importance of any one strand of influence, and emphasizes the interactions between factors, with certain factors having greater or lesser influence at various times. Change depends on the intersection of particular factors at critical nodes (“bifurcation points”). Eisler uses the term dominator to refer to the current system called patriarchy in this paper, and the term partnership to refer to the system called egalitarianism, or sometimes, matriarchy, in this paper. She emphasizes that dominator ideology, religion, and technologies centered on the destruction of life whereas partnership ideology, religion, and technologies centered on the creation of life.

In the millennia between approximately 5000 and 3000 BCE, nomadic bands began to expand outward from their centers in the steppe regions of what is now Russia in the north, and arid regions of the Near East to the south. These “peripheral isolates” (1987: 47), which had previously been confined to the “fringes” of the civilized world, had developed an economic, religious, and social system based on accumulation of wealth in the form of ownership of large herds of animals and of women; a transcendent, violent pantheon of thunder and sky gods; and hierarchy, conquest, and authoritarianism. As the herds became larger, the grasslands were depleted, and the bands gradually pushed outward from their centers into the more desirable horticultural and agricultural lands in central and Eastern Europe and the Near East. Their ideology of conquest and destruction led them to raid the undefended river valley settlements, looting, murdering, raping, and enslaving the inhabitants. The native inhabitants, whose ideology was based
on cooperation and creation, had little defense. They were killed, displaced, enslaved, or otherwise assimilated. During these centuries we see what Eisler, drawing from the work of archaeologist James Mellaart, calls “large-scale destruction and dislocation” (1987: 43) throughout the Old World. The agricultural proto-city of Hacilar in Anatolia, for example, was abandoned about this time (1987: 245). Others such as the Old Europeans in central and eastern Europe were assimilated and exhibited a hybrid culture for several hundred years, during which time successive waves of these nomadic invaders gradually destroyed the underlying peaceful, egalitarian culture.

Eisler emphasizes that although this first example of organized warfare/invasion is highly significant to the understanding of the cultural shift in this part of the world, the change was in fact a result of the interaction of a number of variables, which at the time were unpredictable but which gradually acted to shift the focus of our entire species to a dominator rather than a partnership ideology. Above all, the nomadic invaders imposed a belief system which afforded a decreased value to life and nurturance and an increased value to dominance and destruction. This violent ideology was manifest in technology, religion, and social structure.

The technological development of metallurgy provides an interesting example. Based on the evidence of various archaeologists such as James Mellaart in Anatolia and Marija Gimbutas in eastern and central Europe, and scholars such as Jacquetta Hawkes (1968) and Ruby Rohrlich-Leavitt (1987) in Crete, it was not the invention of copper and bronze metallurgy per se that led to widespread violence and destruction; rather, it was the uses to which the technology was ultimately put. Metallurgical processes were in use long before the production of the first bronze weapon. The earliest metal artifacts included items which reflected an ideology of creation; they consisted of personal ornaments such as jewelry, religious or ritual objects, and tools. For example, lead pendants were produced in Catal Huyuk by 6000 BCE and copper beads as early as 5800 (Lamberg-Karlovsky and Sabloff 1995: 84). It was only with the adaptation by the
warrior cultures of the science of metallurgy to weapons manufacture, combined with the use of horses as tools of war, that mass destruction became truly possible, and the ideology of domination and destruction took a great leap forward (Eisler 1987: 45-47).

Religious ideology began to focus on the transcendent, bloodthirsty gods of the sky and the heavens (Gimbutas 1982: 31). The first evidence of human and animal sacrifice dates from this period, when chieftains were buried with huge amounts of grave goods and numbers of sacrificed women, children, men, and animals. Scapulamancy and other bloodletting methods of divination appeared. Extensions of the religious ideology appeared in the social system, where the chieftain was ranked at the top of a hierarchy, closest to a deity or deities, and his followers were ranked in various arrays below him, followed by his legitimate children, slaves, and concubines. The value of women, children, and the earth was judged not as inherent in themselves but as conferred by the chief or warrior (another example of ascribed vs. earned status).

Eisler’s theory, which in some ways resembles the “punctuated equilibrium” theory of speciation, contrasts with Leacock’s more gradual model of social change. The strength of Eisler’s theory is that it encompasses many of the other theories described here; it takes into account variables of economy/production, religion/ideology, technology, catastrophe, and social structure. Its weaknesses are that it is specific to eastern and central Europe, and it does not explain the reasons for the development of the dominator ideology in the first place, nor the motivations behind the increasing, documented incursions of the nomadic bands of raiders into the lusher agricultural lands. Although I have implied (above) that one reason for the expansion out of the Russian steppe region was the destruction of the grasslands, it seems of great importance to understand, if possible, the origin of the phenomena of individual accumulation of wealth, violent conquest, and in general, the emotional withdrawal and objectification of other beings that characterize the dominator (patriarchal) system of belief.
Biophysicist James DeMeo's dissertation was an attempt to explain some of these factors. Working independently of Riane Eisler, he arrived at the same conclusions regarding the origins of patriarchy in the Old World. His work, however, focused on searching for a global or geographical factor that might be seen as primary in causing the spectrum of behavioral and social changes that led to society's fundamental shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy. He used a worldwide anthropological database, compiled between 1840 and 1960, to compare over a thousand cultures and look for underlying similarities (1991: 258). He identified the climatic change toward increased severe desertification in "Saharasia" (North Africa, the Near East, and Central Asia) as the primary contributing factor to changes in human social and psychological organization that led to the development and diffusion of what he calls "patrism" between about 4000 and 3500 BCE.

DeMeo developed a spectrum of traits to describe "matrism" and "patrism"--his terms for what in this paper have been called matriarchy, egalitarianism, or partnership cultures and patriarchy, hierarchy, or dominator cultures. He determined cultures' matrist or patrist nature by comparing a spectrum of behaviors and attitudes under the following categories: 1) infants, children, and adolescents; 2) sexuality; 3) women; 4) cultural and family structure; and 5) religious beliefs and attitudes (ibid.: 251). Those cultures labeled patrist tended to exhibit repressive attitudes toward women, children, and sexual behavior and authoritarian institutions in cultural and family structure and religion. Those labeled matrist exhibited more relaxed attitudes toward women, children, and sexual behavior and egalitarian, woman-centered institutions in cultural and family structure and religion. He concluded that the defining characteristic of matrist cultures is their tendency to focus on maternal-infant and male-female bonds (ibid.: 248). In contrast, patrist societies, “which heap trauma and pain upon their infants and children, and which subsequently repress the emotional expressiveness and sexual interests of their adolescents, invariably exhibit a spectrum of neurotic, self-destructive, and violent behaviors” (ibid.: 249).
DeMeo linked the desertification of the broad band of the Old World which he calls “Saharasia” with a carefully-defined set of behavioral changes. He identified these changes as the direct and indirect result of desiccation of the region. In his view, famine, starvation, and mass migration led to the breakdown of family and social bonds (with the maternal-infant bond enduring the longest), inhibited physical, mental, and psychic development, contributed greatly to emotional deprivation and isolation, and ultimately led to the creation of repressive, cruel child control mechanisms such as swaddling and cranial deformation, designed to immobilize children for easier transport. DeMeo contends that these tendencies toward patrist social institutions may have been irrevocable in some instances; for example, malnutrition may have been so severe that children’s development did not resume normally even after a sufficient diet had been restored. Likewise, the breakdown of emotional bonds may have been irreparable. This emotional isolation led to various extreme forms of control and violence, such as genital mutilation and wife-burning. Patrist attitudes then spread through conquest to other geographic regions, and were handed down to the next generation through cultural transmission.

DeMeo made several maps of the geographic extent of the various matrist and patrist factors, including a master map which he called the World Behavior Map (ibid.: 259). To summarize, the behaviors identified as patrist very closely coincided with the geographic region known as Saharasia, which became desiccated sometime during the fifth millennium BCE. Regions of moderate patrism were adjacent to this extremely dry area, and with some exceptions, regions of moderate to extreme matrism covered Oceania and the New World. It should be noted that DeMeo’s Behavior Map describes cultural change over time; even in the areas identified as most severely patrist, archaeological evidence indicates that the original prehistoric inhabitants conformed to matrist behavior patterns. In fact, with others, DeMeo contends that matrism “constitutes the earliest, original, and innate form of human behavior and social organization” (ibid.: 247).
DeMeo and Eisler's theories are both useful because they integrate so many important variables, economic, social, and environmental--and DeMeo's, at least, covers the entire globe. This holistic approach to social theory perhaps reflects the understanding that in egalitarian cultures religion, environmental policy, social structure, and economics were very much integrated--much more closely interrelated than we acknowledge in this Western, disconnected society. The Old European and Minoan, for example, appeared to make no distinction between the religious and the secular life. The strength of these theories is that they don't just focus on a single strand of the complex web which is human society, but on many of them. They also acknowledge that the change didn't happen suddenly, but gradually. Both of these factors help to explain why patriarchy appeared in various forms in different parts of the world, at different times. In a sense this multi-factor view subsumes the other theories because it includes, for example, economic change, as in Leacock's theory; catastrophe, as in Gimbutas' and Page's theories, and changes in societal attitudes, as in Acworth's theory. They provide a broader viewpoint than single-factor or "prime mover" theories.

A weakness of DeMeo's desertification/human bonds theory is that it postulates the shift to patriarchy as inevitable. In his view, some of the damage done to the cultural bonding of human beings by the climatic change was irreversible. Eisler's cultural transformation theory, while lacking an explanation of the specific mechanisms that contributed to the development of patriarchal ideology, does, however, suggest that the complex set of variables affecting social structure can be manipulated to achieve a desired outcome. In other words, human beings are not completely at the mercy of the elements; they can decide how to respond to them.

Very importantly, Eisler's cultural transformation theory is useful because it incorporates the idea of continuing systems change. In other words, she hypothesizes that the shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy, while constituting a profound change in the course of humanity's development, was not necessarily irrevocable. In her view, another
"bifurcation point" is on the horizon (1987: xxii et passim). She urges us to be ready so that we can influence the coming shift back in the direction from whence we came--that is, toward egalitarianism, or in her term, "gylany": a society in which social relations are based on partnership, or linking, rather than hierarchy, or ranking. This model gives us hope that the original life-nurturing, sustaining and celebrating institutions of society can be restored in a modern form.

It was this model, and others like it, that attracted me so much to the study of egalitarian cultures of the past. Such study is not only intellectually gripping, but ultimately quite practical. By mapping the patterns of the past, we can project patterns for the future. Understanding how and why the basic organizing structure of society changed can give us clues for ways to influence future change. Knowing that humanity once lived in harmony with each other and in balance with the earth can give us ideas about how to restore that balance. We can draw on ancient social structures, religious beliefs, economic practices, and the like to shape the course of our own society.
CONCLUSION
THE GODDESS IS RETURNING: MANIFESTATIONS OF IMMANENCE

After such a long look at manifestations of immanence in the past, the natural question might be to wonder whether any such manifestations survive. If Eisler and others urge us to be ready to throw our energies into influencing humanity's course at the next bifurcation point, do they have inklings that some few seeds of egalitarian social structures remain rooted in modern soils? Where can we look to find pockets of resistance to male dominance and hierarchy today? Where do human beings still live in harmony with each other and with the earth? I want to suggest that egalitarianism and immanence are alive in the world today, and even, in places, are thriving.

The details of my personal transformation are unique to me, but my experiences are representative of feminist struggle within patriarchal institutions. What I express here is a common motivation of many people involved in gender studies, women's movement, and other arenas where egalitarianism is the basis of organization; I'm simply putting this motivation into words. Since, to quote a feminist slogan, the personal is political, I want to share and to celebrate some of the manifestations of immanence that I myself know and love.

First, I see manifestations of immanence emerging in academia, in the sciences and the humanities. From many quarters scholars, especially women, are examining the assumptions inherent in scientific materialism and the philosophical innovations of the Enlightenment. Many of these assumptions embody the underlying mechanism of transcendence or estrangement, which I have already identified as antithetical to immanence and involvement. Adapting from an article by Flax, I identify the following limiting assumptions about the nature of human understanding:
The "science of reason"--philosophy--can provide an objective, reliable, and universal foundation for knowledge.

Reason itself has transcendental and universal qualities. It exists independently of the self's contingent existence (bodily, historical, and social experiences).

Science, as the exemplar of the right use of reason, is also the paradigm for all true knowledge.

Language is in some sense transparent; it is merely the medium in and through which representation occurs. Objects are not linguistically (or socially) constructed, they are merely made present to consciousness by naming and the right use of language. (Flax 1987: 624-625. See "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory" for her complete list.)

Gender studies in science are beginning to challenge many of these assumptions. Evelyn Fox Keller's *Reflections on Gender and Science* (1995) is one attempt to shed light for scientific readers on the contingent, dichotomous and hierarchical nature of modern science. Keller raises many questions about objectivity and subjectivity, and discusses the possibility of a "gender-free" science. To illustrate the consequences of applying to the natural world a scientific paradigm based on Western assumptions of individualism, dichotomy, and hierarchy, Keller gives us "The Force of the Pacemaker Concept in Theories of Aggregation in Cellular Slime Mold." In trying to determine why homogeneous masses of *Dictyostelium discoideum* cells suddenly aggregate (clump) and differentiate into specialized structures (slugs, stalks, spores, and amoebas), scientists assumed that one cell, or one group of cells, contained a unique chemical or other property responsible for triggering the differentiation. Interestingly, no matter how close their scrutiny, the investigators found no intrinsic difference that would identify one group as the postulated "initiators" or "pacemaker cells." Then, proceeding on the assumption that the cells actually were identical, Keller and Segel demonstrated that all of the cells contained the same potential for differentiation: a chemical called an acrasin which the cells produced when starved, and which then gave rise to differentiation.
The assumption that particular cells must be special and exert control over the others reflects the Western tradition of male heroes and individual conquest. It also blinded the scientists to the fact that there was no difference between the cells. Using a more holistic, less dichotomous approach allowed Keller and her partner to find the solution. This understanding of the interrelatedness of biological and other natural systems is also the basis for the Gaia Hypothesis (see Chapter 1).

The perception of biological processes is also affected by underlying stereotypes of gender. Martin showed how modern medical texts apply stereotypical views of "masculine" and "feminine" to the activity of sperm and egg cells in human reproduction. Adjectives such as "active," "strong," and "efficient" describe the sperm cells, while "passive," "dormant," and "fragile" describe eggs. This bias in terminology obscures the physiological facts: egg production is more efficient than sperm production, eggs are just as hardy and active as sperm, and in fact, an egg fertilizes itself by enveloping a sperm cell, rather than being penetrated by it (1991: 489-501). In short, gender studies in science challenge the assumptions of Western scientific knowledge as objective, infallible, and transcendent.

In a similar vein, Margaret Alic's *Hypatia's Heritage* describes for a lay audience the contributions of women to science from antiquity through the nineteenth century. She devotes Chapters 1 and 2 to the much-neglected contributions of prehistoric females to the disciplines of medicine, astronomy, botany, and chemistry. In contrast to the Western valorization of individual achievement, Alic emphasizes the cooperative efforts of many nameless women in the development of such crucial technological and social innovations as the baby sling, pottery, the hoe and the plough, and written language. Rather than Man the Hunter or even Woman the Gatherer, Alic says, "My heroine is Woman the Discoverer" (1986: 11). I see her emphasis on the cooperation of many as a celebration of the power of engagement in prehistoric cultures.
Examples of the paradigm of immanence and engagement are apparent in the social sciences, too. As I have already discussed, women and men within the field of archaeology are uncovering biases and misperceptions about the roles of women and the construction of gender in past societies. The acceptance of certain “universals” such as monogamy, heterosexuality, and even male and female gender constructs is being turned over and examined in terms of cultural context. The anthropological procedure of ethnography, once considered a purely objective method of describing “primitive cultures”—usually performed by white, male, European social scientists—is now structured to acknowledge the role and the subjective viewpoint (the “contingent existence”) of the examiner in the outcome of the descriptive process. Experiential methods are becoming more accepted, and the concept of subjectivity is losing some of its old stigma. This new acceptance includes the understanding that language is not merely a medium and perceptions are not “independent of the self’s contingent existence”: language and perception are reciprocally dependent.

I even got a chance to make my own subjective contribution to the field (however small). During the summer dig in McDonald Dunn Research Forest, I had what might be termed a psychic experience. One afternoon, in walking past Unit 2 (a 1m x 1m pit), I saw, or felt, or intuited the presence of a particular artifact. It simply jumped out and grabbed my attention. The vision was quite vivid: I saw a long, smooth, faintly glowing white object, tilted at 45 degrees to the north-south orientation of the pit, two levels (20 cm) under the surface. I also had a very strong impression of the woman’s hand that had wielded the tool to crush white roots of some sort (probably camas), and acorns or some other kind of nut. For a moment, I almost felt as if she were talking to me. In an aside, I told one of the pit crew, a friend of mine, that he would find a complete pestle, a tool for grinding plant foods, in the second level of the southeast quadrant of the pit. (A complete pestle would be a significant find since so far we had only recovered fragments.) To give
him credit, he jollied me along; he merely said he’d keep an eye out and let me know. I didn’t mention it to anyone else and pushed the experience to the back of my mind.

Two days later, I was screening soil at my own unit when I heard a shout. Looking up, I saw my friend Steve, the one I’d confided in, triumphantly exhibiting the artifact I had told him he’d find; a long, smooth, complete, light-colored stone pestle. When he let the others know what I had said, I got teased about my new technique of “psychic archaeology.” Actually, that rather pleased me. I believe now that I had the vision because, throughout the dig, I’d been spending a lot of time and mental energy thinking about the former inhabitants of the area in which we were excavating. I looked beyond the chips of obsidian and chunks of fire-cracked rock we were uncovering, and tried to imagine the people who had handled them so long ago. For some reason, I had wanted to feel that I had permission to dig in that area, so I performed a ritual asking for the go-ahead the night before we started digging there. I think getting in touch with that human element gave me an insight that the others didn’t have. Whether that insight was based on an actual contact with the energy (the “soul”?) of the woman who had created and used the tool, an increased sensitivity to some other kind of energy, or simply to a very active imagination, I don’t know. But I do think it would benefit other scientists not to close themselves off to so-called “subjective” sources of information. Skepticism can be healthy, but it can also give one tunnel vision. Most scientists and social scientists go into research because they want to know about something. Therefore it is vital to uncover and cast away prejudice. I also suggest that a pre-dig experience in living the way the indigenous people used to live (when studying hunter-gatherers, crews might live outdoors, gather berries, make stone tools), might provide valuable insights to those who dig for understanding.

Second, I see pockets of immanence in the humanities. The blurring of genres in composition and rhetoric, wherein traditional academic objectivity is sometimes partnered with the subjectivity of the personal essay (as in my thesis), is an example of this
reconnection with the self, with the immanent. For me, if nothing else, there is an ecstatic sense of belonging, of self-determination, in use of the simple pronoun “I.” This blurring of lines, the deconstruction of pigeonholes for documents and departments and the creation of multidisciplinary studies, can be powerful in other ways, too. It creates a place for middle-ground writing, for experimentation and the synthesizing of forms that perhaps have been seen as mutually exclusive or opposite. A writer like Starhawk, for instance, who is not widely seen as an academician, can find entry and acceptance among scholarly, feminist, activist, and spiritual circles because of this blurring of genres. The very fact that her works are so well-known in many circles may indicate that they speak to people at a level far below disciplinary boundaries.

Of course, there are difficulties. Since language is not transparent, and objects are linguistically and socially constructed, we are forced to acknowledge that meaning “morphs”—it shifts with the speaker and with the listener. Universality, although rigid and oppressive, is very tidy. Diversity and plurality, while freeing, are messy. Mary Daly’s writing, for example, can still baffle even the most avid enthusiast of non-linear *écriture feminine*. I gladly count myself among the ranks of her “Witches”: “An Elemental Soothsayer, one who is in harmony with the rhythms of the Universe; Wise Woman, one who exercises transformative powers” (1987: 180). Still, in using her *Wickedary*, there are times when I yearn for an old-fashioned alphabetical index. English-speaking feminists have not yet developed a consensus about a new, non-linear organization of the language.

And my Good Woman/Bad Girl personae: where would they be without the sharp lines of dichotomy? They are another representation of the black-and-white patriarchy; in an egalitarian world, would they disappear altogether? Or... would the boundary separating the Good Woman’s pleasure in performing properly and the Bad Girl’s delight in doing as she pleased simply disappear? I think, in a society based on immanence, that is, one in which human beings are in harmony with themselves and the creative forces of the universe, the Good Woman and the Bad Girl would be one and the same.
Before I discuss manifestations of immanence outside the realm of academe, I want to say something about the difficulty of delineating places where I find it. To categorize or differentiate is, to me, a practice of patriarchy, and in my mind it artificially divides human activity based on surface features. To separate the threads of trends like women's movement, environmentalism, paganism, and the like strikes me as superficial and inappropriate. The nature of the ideology of immanence is the interconnectedness between all strands in the web of life. The underlying pattern of immanence—unity and engagement—crops up in many places. I think it's no coincidence that many of these manifestations overlap. Women's support or consciousness-raising groups, for example, often have a spiritual component. A gender researcher like Evelyn Fox Keller may also be a political activist and a popular writer. Feminist environmentalists create the discipline of ecofeminism. Starhawk the dedicated environmentalist is also a spiritual leader. The emergence of the ideology of immanence is a groundswell rising from the collective unconscious; it manifests itself in diverse ways at various times and places.

Nevertheless I will give a few examples. Women's movement is important in its emphasis on "the radical notion that women are people." The primary aim of the movement(s) is to challenge the dichotomous characterization of one group as good (or Self, superior, central, etc.) and others as bad (or Other, inferior, peripheral). Feminisms are unquestionably plural—there are black feminisms, lesbian feminisms, radical feminisms, and more—but the underlying ideology, that gives them "power within, and power with" (Starhawk 1987), is that of unity. At a fundamental level, feminists wish to be accorded their deeply intuited, rightful place in the community of human beings.

Similarly, environmentalists put an emphasis on unity and interdependence, although their focus is on the relationship of humans to the earth. Movements like sustainable agriculture and deep ecology and opposition to practices like whaling, purse-seine tuna fishing, and clear-cutting of old growth timber are centered around the notion that natural resources are not infinite, to be plundered by mankind ad infinitum, but
limited and interdependent on all the other systems of nature, including humanity. (See again the Gaia Hypothesis.) Environmentalists see human beings not as lords of creation but as strands of influence inextricably woven into the fabric of life.

And finally, pagans. Some of my favorite people! The term itself embraces an eclectic group, comparable to "Christian" in its variety and scope, but it also contains an underlying common thread, a spirituality that celebrates the connectedness of all nature, the interdependence of all the forces in the Universe. Paganism emphasizes the unity of human beings with each other, with the earth, and with the divine. Forces of darkness and light are recognized, but neither is set above the other. Birth, death, and regeneration are part of a comprehensible cycle of life. There is no dichotomy of heaven and earth, man as pure and woman as sinful, deity as transcendent and mortal as immanent (in de Beauvoir's sense of earthly, low and weak, trapped in the body) (1952). On the contrary: pagans bless each other with "Thou art Goddess" and "Thou art God," and the Goddess reminds us that "All pleasures are my rituals." Pagan spirituality is the essence of immanence.

To go back to that feminist slogan, my personal transformation has certainly been political--and spiritual, and intellectual, and practical. To me, that's what being a feminist means: I try to integrate my perspective of women as wise, sacred, earthy, joyful, worthy, into every aspect of my life. I even try to apply that perception to myself!--something I find, because of my personal and social conditioning, still very difficult to do. I try to see the sacred manifest in myriad ways all around me; I try to "live immanent."

Part of what that means is I've stopped waiting for the important things to happen to me. I've learned that when it's time to step off the edge, my inner voice tells me to step off the edge. I still try to quantify my gut feelings, but I've gotten much better at simply listening to them, too. I've learned to wrestle with that patriarchal demon who whispers that to be successful, legitimate, and worthy, I must suffer. I worry less about doing the things that appear right, and concentrate more on doing the things that feel right. I know that not only is it "okay" to incorporate my heartfelt desires, my quest for my own highest
and greatest good, into my daily life; it's vital. I won't crush my dreams any more. And I finally know, with relief, that if I ever again find myself in a situation where my loving energy is being drained away and my psyche is yearning for release, I will fly free! The Bad Girl is finding her place beside the Good Woman; I'll never be stuck again.

I've also learned, with a lot of help, and from a variety of sources, that I have the right to engage: in a personal struggle for enlightenment, in a scholarly conversation, in a community of loving individuals, in a feminist struggle to change the world. This engagement has been and is challenging, difficult, and exciting. With a lot of permission and encouragement, I've begun to see I have the right to contribute my perspective as an individual and as a feminist, and that perspective is needed and useful. From many of the strong, beautiful, intelligent--and self-effacing--women I've met at school, I've learned that my wisdom and experience can enhearten, enlighten, and encourage. I have something to say!

My personal quest contains "bifurcation points;" so does the development of a gender-balanced viewpoint in archaeology, and so does the course of human social development. I understand that I am part of a larger movement, my experiences part of an "overarching, undergirding" (Gimbutas 1992) pattern: the return of The Goddess. In my own life, I have begun to find her everywhere. I found her in Anth 532, where I discovered egalitarianism. I found her in Women Studies, where I learned the meaning of the word "patriarchy," and met dozens of loving, talented, and worthy women who had been wounded by that system. I found her in my group and solitary practices of wicca, a spirituality which continues to bring me joyful experiences in the reality of immanence.

I found her in the OSU Writing Center. After struggling with the inner demons that wanted me to stay safely suited in my emotional armor, I gave in to a stronger urge: to re-engage with people and with words. The Writing Center environment was ideal for me; there I healed from my psychic health-care wounds. I had free reign to serve with none of the deadening restrictions and requirements with which the health care industry is
rife. I remembered that I love to serve; and now I know that if someday I choose to walk that path again, the way will be open to me. I also received an unexpected bonus; at the Writing Center I found the Goddess in a new (to me) breed of men: overtly, unabashedly gentle ones who delighted in their work and their associations with each other and with me; men with no apparent desire to control or coerce, repress or impress. From a safe distance, I reveled in their presence.

Finally, I found her in my renewed commitments to activism and to vegetarianism. Realizing I wasn’t alone in my priorities for women, children, and the environment brought me new energy and the knowledge that every little effort makes a difference. Change occurs tree by tree, drop by drop. I remembered the Helen Keller quote I used to keep taped into my appointment book, years ago when I was a fresh, eager service provider: “I am only one, yet I am one. I can not do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do that something I can do.” Now I realize that not only can I “do that something,” but that people working in harmony can do many incredible somethings! These discoveries came about because of my connection to loving, intelligent, life-celebrating people, and through that my re-engagement with the world.

The knowledge of immanence pervading my life is both exciting and daunting. I know that I’m not alone--other people think, wonder, and believe as I do--and this comforts me; but I also know that the problem, the pattern of patriarchy, is enormously greater than my own life, and that can be overwhelming. But mostly it’s encouraging: I look around every day and see women (and men, too, which is part of the point) realizing that patriarchy is not the only social structure; it is not universal, eternal, or inevitable. Humanity is making strides toward balance in archaeology, in religion, in science, and in many other areas which I didn’t discuss in this thesis. Threatening as the pattern of patriarchy is to me, the feeling is not nearly so powerful as my gut feeling that there is strength in numbers! In so many ways, feminists are challenging the old order, forcing a look at the old androcentric institutions and rocking their world with the knowledge that
there are other ways of doing things that work. Gentleness, earthy sensuality, joy, and celebration are okay. The Goddess is returning.

Now I can offer concrete examples of “win-win” situations when people present me with dead-end, polar oppositional arguments such as “It’s us or them/kill or be killed,” “If it wasn’t patriarchy it must have been matriarchy,” or (worst of all), “That’s just the way it is.” Now when I see a television show that presents androcentric views about the past, I can identify the bias in the omission or interpretation of data. Recently I rented what turned out to be a 20-year old episode of a BBC series called Life On Earth (1978). As the narrator, Richard Attenborough, walked around an African savanna landscape, wielding a big stick to demonstrate how the “man” would have defended “his family” against large predators such as lions (oh, right), I could look at the pompous little fellow (who insisted that “Upright Man” and “he/him/his” were in no way to be construed as sexist terms) and think, “Wait a minute, buddy! What about ‘Upright Woman’ and ‘Woman the Gatherer’! Females were evolving, too.”

Likewise, when I heard a flat statement from a male family member that not only had the dichotomy heterosexual/homosexual always divided the human race, but that heterosexual contacts had always been the norm “by a vast majority,” I could suggest--very discreetly--some of the information put forth in the second chapter of this thesis: to wit, that ethnographic and archaeological evidence is beginning to identify some of the assumptions inherent in that line of thinking, to identify the flaws in those assumptions (especially “universality”), and to uncover examples of prehistoric cultures in which hetero- and homosexuality were not the prevailing paradigm. The results? Well... I got his attention, although it’s evident that I still have my work cut out for me.

That’s how it starts. Sometimes I think the biggest step toward any new way of thinking is the simple, profound realization that there is another way: witness the consternation in my male Anth 532 classmates at my wicked, innocent question, “When did patriarchy start?” (The Bad Girl had a good time that day.)
So where am I now? What do I still wonder about? As might be expected, my
graduate school journey provided me with many answers, but I also have infinitely more
questions—personal, political, academic, and social. I wonder what really, truly happened
to effect the shift from egalitarianism to patriarchy. Which of the theories is/are correct, at
what times and places did various factors apply? I wish I could go back to some of those
critical “bifurcation points”—the development of agriculture, the “Big Discovery,” the
urban revolution, the first instance of organized warfare, the eruption of Thera that
desolated Crete—and witness in person what really happened.

Even more, I wish I could participate as an insider in a cave-painting ceremony,
enact a birthing ritual in the shrines of Catal Huyuk, leap over the back of a bull in the
palace of Knossos, and feel the gut feelings as the ancient people who first lived those
experiences must have felt them. I wish I could hold in my hands the original Venus of
Dolni Vestonice (although I did get to see her at close range at the OMSI exhibit this
summer) soon after she was created and know without doubt what powers she embodied.
I wish I could immerse myself in a culture founded on immanence—if only briefly—without
any foreknowledge of the coming sorrow of estrangement, the great loss of separation
from the unity of life. I wish I could know with certainty that the members of my race
were going to decide to re-engage with the earth and with each other, to re-embrace the
ideology of immanence which is our natural, healthy, joyful heritage.

I wonder, then, if all of us—females and males—are going to be stuck with the
damaging effects of patriarchy, or if we will be able to make meaningful progress in
moving humanity back in a more balanced direction. Will we come to understand that a
system based on hierarchy and oppression is damaging to all its members? I wonder if
more men will start to realize that “feminism” is a misnomer and that “gender studies”
includes them as well—will we be able to overcome the extreme polarity of our Western
system of thought? I wonder what obstacles feminists will face in the creation of a new,
gender-balanced language—how will they overcome the limitations of androcentric
Will they be able to balance the disadvantages of plurality with the advantages of diversity? And how will such a lovely, cooperative, multi-voiced communication sound? I hope I am around to hear it.

Once more back to the personal. Profound as it has been to me, I wonder about the wider significance of my own transformation. How will it benefit the world? What can I do to encourage society back in the direction of immanence and engagement? I wonder, but I am not daunted. I know at least one answer. Living my life from the heart is my personal contribution to the political changes afoot on the earth. I know I will find other avenues to share my feelings and beliefs with others, to support them and encourage them to create their own stories of transformation. I know I will make a difference.

And last but not least, I wonder when I will ever have another such wonderful, frightening, emotional, ecstatic time writing something as I did writing this thesis. I know I am at another stepping-off place. Where will I go from here? What will my next transformation be?
REFERENCES CITED

Acworth, E.

Alic, M.

Andronicos, M.

Ardry, R.

Attenborough, R., host.

Bachofen, J.

Barber, E.

Barstow, A.

Barstow, A.

Boaz, N., and A. Almquist

Boulding, E.
Chauvet, J., E. Brunel Deschamps, and C. Hillaire

Claassen, C.
1992 *Exploring Gender Through Archaeology*. Prehistory Press, Madison, WI.

Dahlberg, Frances, ed.
1981 *Woman the Gatherer*. Yale University Press, New Haven, NJ.

Daly, M.

Davaras, C.

de Beauvoir, S.

DeMeo, J.

Dieter, O.

Draper, P.

Ehrenberg, M.

Eisler, R.

Eisler, R.
Eisler, R.

Engels, F.

Fagan, B.

Flax, J.

Frazer, J.

Gadon, E.

Gero, J., and M. Conkey

Gimbutas, M.

Gimbutas, M.

Gimbutas, M.

Gimbutas, M.
Hawkes, J.

Hodder, I.

Katz, J.

Keller, E.
1995  *Reflections on Gender and Science.* Yale University Press, New Haven, NJ.

Lamberg-Karlovsky, C., and J. Sabloff

Leacock, E.

Leroi-Gourhan, A.

Lovejoy, C.

Lovelock, J., and L. Margulis.

Marinatos, S.

Marshack, A.

Martin, E.

Mellaart, J.
Mellersh, H.

Mellersh, H.

Nelson, H., and R. Jurmain

Olson, J.
1997 Personal communication. June 1.

Page, D.

Peterson, V., and A. Runyan

Radicalesbians

Reed, E.

Rice, P.

Rich, A.

Rohrlich-Leavitt, R.
Sakellarakis, Y., and E. Sapouna-Sakellaraki.

Slocum (Linton), S.

Starhawk
1987 *Truth or Dare: Encounters With Power, Authority, and Mystery.* HarperSanFrancisco, San Francisco.

Starhawk

Starhawk

Stone, M.

Streep, P.

Tong, R.

Williamson, M.

Wylie, A.
1994 Pragmatism and Politics: Understanding the Emergence of Gender Research in Archaeology. David Skomp Distinguished Lecture in Anthropology, presented at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Zihlman, Adrienne