

Merrimack College

Merrimack ScholarWorks

Community Engagement Student Work

Education Student Work

Spring 2022

Bees and Feminism

Bruno Barbuto

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.merrimack.edu/soe_student_ce



Part of the Civic and Community Engagement Commons

Bees and Feminism

Bruno Barbuto

Winston School of Education and Social Policy, Merrimack College

2022

MERRIMACK COLLEGE

CAPSTONE PAPER SIGNATURE PAGE

CAPSTONE SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CAPSTONE TITLE: Bees and Feminism

AUTHOR: Bruno Barbuto

THE CAPSTONE PAPER HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
PROGRAM IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Audrey Falk, Ed.D.
DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

Audrey Falk
SIGNATURE

April 30, 2022
DATE

Melissa Nemon, Ph.D.
INSTRUCTOR, CAPSTONE
COURSE

Melissa Nemon
SIGNATURE

April 30, 2022
DATE

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all participants and caretakers who ensured the success of this Capstone paper. My love goes out to feminism, you, and the bees! Blessed be and save the bees.

Abstract

The topics of bees and feminism engage community members in thinking of how and what ecology and community look like. The project workshop will cater to the ways in which people think and speak about their very own thoughts. As well, this workshop seeks to focus on bees and feminism as a means to engage the community in cogenerated dialogue about bee-preservation and women's issues. The desired outcomes produced from this topic delivers insight about community, sustainability, and the terms of participation for engagement purposes. This workshop is the reason bees and feminism are being talked about as a singular unit, conceptually.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract.....	4
Literature Review	7
Project Plan	17
Situation Statement	18
Define Your Goals	18
Target Audience.....	18
Incentives for Engagement	18
Crafting a Clear Message.....	18
Identify Outreach Methods	19
Responsibilities Chart	19
Tools/Measure to Assess Progress.....	19
Implementation Timeline.....	19
Logical Framework.....	20
Implementation Notes.....	20
Methodology	20
Participants.....	20
Materials	20
Procedure	21

Results 22

Discussion..... 25

 Limitations of the Project..... 26

 Implications for Future Projects..... 26

References 28

Appendix A: Agenda..... 31

Appendix B: Workshop Presentation 32

Appendix C: Post-Event Survey 38

Bees and Feminism

Around the world, bees pollinate plant life. Insect pollinator conservation means saving impacting the chain of food which we heavily depend on to survive as a community. Feminist solidarity agrees in standing up for feminism, and it also can take into consideration how one might agree or disagree with what the societal connections are between feminism and preservation of bees. A community workshop where people volunteer their time to learn about gender equality, could also help people to better understand insect pollinator conservation. Symbolic interactionism is a tradition of meaningful interaction between individuals and the repeated signs which society upholds (Carter & Fueller, 2016). The connection between bees and feminism lies in, “perceptions of societal-level devaluation discrimination” (Link, Wells, & Yang, 2015, p. 118). Looking at how community members can engage in service that is critically reflective is the purpose of my project. The project addresses insect pollinator conservation as well as gender issues and social inequality among sexes. This project matters because of the context in which bees and feminism are linked. Ancient religions used to center around an earthly Mother Goddess that was revered by the bees as social actors for community good (Daly, 2019).

Literature Review

According to Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, nature “is a feminist issue because an understanding of nature and environmental problems often helps one understand how and why women's oppression is linked with the unjustified domination or exploitation of nature” (Warren, 2015, p. 2). This supports feminism’s fourth wave ideology and how bee preservation can interlock with environmental feminism or ecofeminism. The early modern canon of western philosophy emphasizes hunter-gatherer tactics in agrarian lifestyle. There is a need for a

collective and self-reflective process when it comes to modern conservation. Take into account how simple conservation acknowledges no change in quantity, but a change in how something may or may not appear. It is worthwhile to acknowledge the importance of bee conservation, so long as it quantifies the changing appearance of Earth for good. One would need to see the linkage of sustainable development and ecofeminism in order to ponder how one links to the other flexibly. No depletion of the economy or natural resources is considered sustainable development. Therefore, co-generated dialogue can further understand feminist theory and present positive implications for policy and practice for women's organizing.

Feminism and Ecofeminism

In the United States of America, creating equality of rights for women has greatly impacted the political-belief system. Feminism requires a sense of solidarity. It basically takes into account how, "solidarity might help formulate best practices around supporting agency in teaching for future interventions" (Kumar et al., 2019, p. 16). The action being taken is to improve the situation of gender-based equality through a collective, self-reflective practice. If we ask people to consider gender stereotypes as they affect sustainability, then we are engendering community members to consider a binary that has further implications in our society. And more importantly, using social issues surrounding the feminist movement is why feminist solidarity could be an appropriate lens for a project also addressing insect pollinator conservation.

In recognition of late 1900s social movements surrounding sexuality and sex orientation, Gwen Kirk (1997) hints at an idea that may serve a rather deep purpose: "Despite opposition, each movement made significant progress and then ran into limitations and contradictions. The challenge for organizers and activists is to recognize such limitations, to face them, and to respond in a way that is transformative rather than regressive, rethinking strategies and demands,

building on their experiences, gains, and losses” (p. 16). This comes from before the turn of the century, emphasizing early awareness of limitations and how to counteract any and all impediments. Being mindful of other social movements through our history can give ethos to the ecofeminist perspective.

“The media, for the most part, perpetuate double standards and sexist stereotypes: women are sex toys for men; women’s lives count less than those of men; women who assert their independence and power are in some way defective” (Warren, 1997, p. 118). When considering antisexist implications and the feminist ties with the greater society, racism may be a worthwhile choice of observation. For example, “engaging with intersectionality can help to sensitize ourselves and others to the ways in which different forms of disadvantage can act as a method of silencing the most vulnerable and oppressed” (Kings, 2017, p. 83). Ethics are a way for people to commonly conduct correct research as well as remain on the same page in a political sphere. The same way a researcher is responsible for protecting participants from harm, community members could consider environmentalism. The purpose of this perspective serves to expand the cause of environmentalism, while including marginalized and oppressed groups of people.

Ecofeminism regards male influences in society as well as biological concerns for the environment and natural habitat of the Earth. We can see ecofeminism through sustainability as a means for practicing wild bee preservation and even clean water accessibility. Another interesting resource discussing ecofeminism details that, “establishing domestic and international non-governmental organizations, many women have recognized themselves and acknowledge to the world that they not only have the right to participate in environmental dilemmas, but they have different relationship with environment including different needs, responsibilities, and knowledge about natural resources” (Bakshi, 2017, p. 4). It is interesting that the relation(s)

between femininity and nature come up as a dilemma. Do we live in a world that does not value nor acknowledge the rapport between women and the natural cycles of Earth? Sexism can affect people regardless of gender, but women and girls are specifically subject to discrimination. Environmental sexism means climate change is man-made, but generating solutions means feminism. In conclusion, community engagement intersects ecofeminism with bee conservation as a means of addressing the need for social change as process oriented as opposed to being based foundationally in the outputs or outcomes.

By virtue of strategic essentialism, people of all genders can participate in activism for social awareness about environmentalism and sustainability. Moreover, post-colonial political tactics share values with how ecofeminist pollinator conservation might mobilize as some sort of tertiary social change movement. For example, “ecofeminist community-engaged learning helps new college students use strategic essentialism as a tool to examine their own assumptions and to intentionally forge activist alliances with community partners” (Rizzo, 2018, p. 297). The assertion clearly states that learning should help college students to examine their own assumptions and forge alliances with community activists. It is interesting to consider how age may or may influence this assertion as people as old as 60 years old attend first year experience with incoming first year students who have recently completed their high school diploma around 18 years of age. Community engagement involves an organizational or social structure, at hand. Sherilyn MacGregor easily notes in her research that, “ecofeminists have sought to unearth the foundations of gender bias in Western philosophical traditions: privileging reason over emotion, objectivity over context-dependency, and justice over care” (2004, p. 59). Over 15 years ago, this assertion was made and not much has changed since. It is clear that some social change has occurred to progress the rights of women and girls. However, antisexist interlocking with

feminism tends to bridge gaps between queer and BIPOC sexism/genderism since the basic oppression of nature comes from anthropogenic disturbances, such as the means of deforestation and potentially global warming. The extent to which evaluating the whole community involved in receiving the consequences of climate change, sexism and patriarchy mark situational ethics. Thus, positing that decision-making be in context and juxtaposition to any given circumstances.

The purpose of community engagement is conceivably grassroots, although not entirely. It certainly emphasizes localization. The importance of local politics for community engagement is prevalent in urban districts where close proximity is inevitable. On a global scale, could people also benefit even if rurally susceptible to social or geographic isolation. Sustainable development would require, “we need to imagine a new kind of a state, one that is a ‘civic state’, which is democratized to the very grassroots” (Pandey, 2010, p. 18).

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism might be a theory for engagement. Feminism provides a dimension for female leadership in and outside the field of education. Intersectionality shapes a meaningful way for black women to be seen in the public sphere through careful consideration of interlocking race and gender. Sustainability takes local politics and micro community practice to counsel small groups of people on precautionary measures to take, which also serve mutually beneficial to the practitioner and the environment. Symbolism and the interactions they speak about can vary, especially across cultures and geopolitical contexts (Gouliamos & Theocharous, 2008). For example, the symbol of a circle might mean stop if it is red, but it would imply go if it was green? The tie could consider how stereotypes about demeaning one gender over another to make strategic essentialism the role of nature in our lives. Take for example how post-colonial

theory vacillates upon the aesthetic impact of social colonialism. This brings up the question of sustainability as a solution to impediments facing community organizing and development.

Women symbolize community good and so do bees, therefore symbolic interactionism might employ these connections between preservation and feminism more so than without.

Bees as Symbols and Actors for Community Good

According to Hall and Martins (2020), “laypersons gain more knowledge about insect pollinators, positive perceptions of insects increase, fears are overcome, and interest grows” (p. 111). This moment takes into account the stigma of inaccurate depictions of certain insects. Bees do more harm than good is an example of how stigma can influence how we view issues of food insecurity. Hall and Martins detail in their research that people are open to understanding how bees impact the food chain, but this may do little to destigmatize bees beyond this stereotype. They may have stingers, but to what extent do people’s fear of being stung overpower any willingness to civically engage in the preservation of bees.

Consider how the English language of our present-day labels and demeans women bees. The term *queen bee syndrome* labels women as those who have, “achieved their professional goals in organizations dominated by men by distancing themselves from other women and at the same time expressing behaviors that lead to their gender stereotyping” (Sobczak, 2018, p. 54). This brings stigma to bees and the female gender in our society. By perceiving the woman as needing to prove herself, and the bee as too busy or preoccupied to be relevant. Youth engagement means showing the next generation of leaders what leadership looks like. The stigma of the queen bee syndrome can potentially impede youth engagement of young girls in and outside of the workplace.

Age is a completely separate sector of social issues. There could be age implications for young girls engaging in both feminism and preservation of bees. It would be interesting to see how general community members regardless of age or identity would react or participate in a community workshop addressing the stigma of gender and bees. What would be controversial is how people are motivated to take further action based on exposure to theory and practice for sustainability and development. To put it bluntly, “gradual advancement of members of underrepresented groups will not necessarily lead to increased equality for these groups as long as the environment these individuals advance in leads them to distance themselves from their group” (Sterk et al., 2018, p. 10).

Thinking about having direct contact with bees or participating in garden activities can give insight into the link between bee preservation and community solidarity, when evaluating how things can be hidden in plain sight when we aren’t taught to appreciate the cycles of nature. For example, not being stung by a bee can decrease fear or stigma. Does this create social change for the preservation of bees? It would be effective to imagine how teaching those who experience this lack of stigma to apply their knowledge by sharing it with others who may experience fear or stigma towards bees. Thus, transferring knowledge into wisdom for the bettering of the community itself. A problem society also faces is how, “results show that wild bee publications in social contexts are still mostly confined within the fields of ecology or anthropology” (Matias et al., 2016, p. 465). The goal of social cohesion is to allow participants to take the experience of fear and/or stigma and translate it into a meaningful act of social justice.

The bees are an important part of community engagement (like women’s studies), but because of stigmas we can be restricted from understanding the topic at hand. From an urban perspective, learning about bees and agroecosystems may be more interesting than a rural

approach to uncovering the more uncharted resources naturally available to the community. Supporting information for urban communities may, “suggest that in crops where tillage is necessary, reduced tillage can provide similar levels of native soil nesting bee conservation compared to no tillage” (Appenfeller et al., 2020, p. 11). A rural perspective may be similar but will vary intentionally and consider resource availability.

Taking into consideration urban and rural communities, insect pollination doesn't always engage members and stakeholders alike. Rather philanthropic practice and charity do take place in standing for these social issues. For example, “cities also have concentrations of philanthropic donors, funding resources, and development specialists who can mobilize resources for conservation projects” (Hall et al., 2017, p. 29). Urban conservation tends to civic involvement in lieu of the density of donors and resources in comparison to more rural landscapes. Rural areas can civically involve themselves by allocating resources and creating awareness for the need for donors and fundraising surrounding preservation of bees, sustainability, etc.

Rural versus urban perspectives and approaches will certainly make a difference. Even in suburban communities teaching about managed bee populations versus wild bee populations may elucidate a more critical thinking about the human dimensions of insect pollinator conservation. For example, “public land managers should consider site-specific attributes such as the species of managed bee and whether it is native to the region, the proposed densities of managed bees, relative resource availability (i.e. landscape diversity), whether managed bee colonies have been evaluated for pathogens and parasites, and whether there are declining wild bee species of conservation concern in the region before allowing managed bees on public lands” (Mallinger et al., 2017, p. 27). This can use bees and our feminist principles to achieve a deeper understanding of our community and the ways in which it engages with others.

Contributions by bees to the agricultural sector of the United States economy entail the pollination of almonds, squash, and the not-so-often-known-about cucurbits. Although extraneous, this information funds the need to think more sociologically about the role of gender as well as bees in a community workshop. How do communities gather to discuss issues shared between insect pollination and gender? For example, “green spaces able to execute informed design principles and management schemes may effectively thwart pollinator biodiversity losses” (Ayer & Rehan, 2021, p. 12). This takes into account how urban and rural approaches may have a common ground: what is a safe space for bees and to have this discussion about engagement and or engendering feminist organizing into our community’s process.

Existing Community Initiatives to Preserve Bees

Modern efforts to conserve the bees are aimed at preservation as a means for active change and sustainable efforts. Failure to address the interlocking social issues to the symbolism of bees misses the opportunity to also tackle feminist and ecofeminist principle, also. How the previous section ties into this one takes into account that most, “honeybees are able to learn to match a sign to a numerosity, or a numerosity to a sign, and subsequently transfer this knowledge to novel numerosity stimuli changed in colour properties, shape and configuration” (Howard et al., 2021, p. 1). Female gender studies can promote similar ideas, when suggested to feminist and ecofeminist practitioners. Exemplary would be when female beekeepers collaborate on teamwork together or since men can be feminists too, thinking more about how male beekeepers can be part of this conversation too. Beekeepers and apiarists alike can also enact upon feminist solidarity to create social change. It is interesting to consider community ecology as a theory for imagining the bonds and bridges that lay between bees and feminism. In community, green

spaces would make ideal supplementation considering that there are many natural environments that already facilitate green spaces and the types of education typically found within them.

Webster University houses a program called Shutterbee, which asks community members and volunteers alike to upload photographs of bees in a certain vicinity. This initiative combines pollinator conservation and community engagement including community participants in the project's overall process in order to better determine what conservation status looks like overall. Civic involvement that boosts the understanding of feminist organizing seems to be thematic learning when we think about how Shutterbee conducts their business efforts and commerce. The efforts put forth explicitly counteract the subordination of our society to the patriarchy which provides and renders most services. The tactics employed here reflect an awareness of how this is helping bees as well as those who do not traditionally have access to this type of community-based engagement. This example is perfect for seeing the bridges between bees and a feminist solidarity: principle of mutual support.

In bees, sex is determined by egg fertilization. Sexual chromosomes do not determine much, but rather just serve biological existence. Parthenogenesis means that some plants and invertebrates reproduce from an unfertilized ovum. There are such differences between insects and us human beings. However, they are colonial species living in multigenerational families. This is not to say that everything between us is different, because we know some humans who live with their family and cooperate with one another to serve the matriarch (Wilson & Holldobler, 2005).

Current Project

This project proposes to hold a workshop that educates on the importance of bees but also purposefully connects the symbolism of bees to the foundational premises of feminism. Further,

by using an interactive workshop that allows participants to meaningfully and actively engage in the material, the connections between feminism and the environment will be seen as clear, pragmatic and necessary. The goal of this workshop is to normalize using ecological and environmental issues within the framework of feminism and gender equality.

Finally, bees and feminist solidarity are not inherently normalized ideas that typically go hand in hand together. However, “farmers need to be paid for experimenting with and implementing insect pollinator conservation until practices become(s) normalized” (Hall & Martins, 2020, p. 111). Most feminists tend to be women, fighting for their own rights. What would it look like if we had men fighting for the rights of their female counterparts? The idea here is that solidarity might be better than battling it out between the sexes. Gender identity is individual and personal. A sense of community could come from acknowledging gender identity and the politics that surround it. Connecting back to the bees, we must consider the matriarchy they live in and the eusociality which ultimately influences the gender roles of bees in acute contrast to human stereotypes.

Project Plan

The bees are an endangered species experiencing severe habitat destruction. The world we human beings inhabit utilizes a system of control and government where male-gender domination mangles the mentality of any other gender identity or sexual orientation. The bees live in colonies or hives, based on eusociality, a high-level organization and labor division based on reproductive capabilities. If a queen bee can reproduce for a whole hive, then what deliverables is one man responsible for producing within an ecological community framework?

Situation Statement

This project of the issue surrounding bees, feminism and community ecology seeks to build community awareness and educate on the status quo of bees, feminism and how it all impacts the quality of life of people throughout our community.

Define Your Goals

This project aims to recognize gender roles and analyze gender as a social construct for both the bees and human beings. The goal of the project is to educate about the bees' need for participation in our ecosystem as well as how humans need connection in order to survive, too.

Target Audience

This project aims to include community stakeholders, organizations, farms and partnerships in education for social justice. Participants will be 18 and older and willing to learn.

Incentives for Engagement

To protect the future from further bee-habitat destruction, people must work together in the present moment. The bees are literally dying, right now. Feminism means sociopolitical fairness, but is equality present if all when women who experience the pay-gap don't have a say in the income inequalities of the global economy? Sustainability means working with what we have got policy-wise, so long as we want to create further improvements for the future. In the workshop, participants will reflect on how community engagement reciprocally determines much of the thematic learning that is engaged by bees and feminism: ecological communities.

Crafting a Clear Message

The bees live in a matriarchy, and human beings simply do not have the respect for it that bees earn providing our global economy with the surface transportation of pollen. While considering we are all born from a mother, it is hard to quite deny how the female gender is

responsible for bringing life into this Earthly plane. If ecofeminist pollinator conservation is a panacea for anything, then it can take us deeper into unpacking who and how we are as a species of human beings that are living in a world where the bees are an endangered form of surface transportation: pollination as it contributes to the ecosystem, food chain, etc.

Identify Outreach Methods

Flyers to promote the project as it approaches will contain information about learning topics and goals for the workshop. Organizations will receive phone call and email invitations.

Responsibilities Chart

NAME	ORGANIZATION OR AFFILIATION	RESPONSIBILITIES	CONTACT INFORMATION
Bruno Barbuto	Merrimack College	Project Lead – facilitate learning topics and assess goals.	barbutob@merrimack.edu
Daniella Christina Latteo	Amazing Express	Feminist organizer – evaluate methods and track attendance data.	dlatteo@yahoo.com

Tools/Measure to Assess Progress

Two key activities will occur during the workshop and feedback will be captured. Participants will be asked to complete a Google Form survey to assess the learning topics applicability and understanding, while incorporating personal/social demographics.

Implementation Timeline

January 2022	Project planning
February 2022	Select volunteers Send out invitations to event
March 2022	3/14: Project event
April 2022	4/6: Full capstone draft due 4/27: Submit final capstone paper for publication

Logical Framework

Increase awareness	So that...	So that...	So that...
So that environmental protection can be not just the only means of sustainability...	Traditionally marginalized groups have a safe space to engage in this type of work, too...	There is less prevalence of sexism, heterosexism, and transgender oppression...	Human beings see how gender roles impact bees and sustainability...

Implementation Notes

Ecological communities (theory) can also determine how community members have or have not been impacted by this workshop. This is not a prerequisite for any research processes.

Methodology

A 90-minute workshop that covers bees and feminism in a themed workshop will be held on March 14, 2022. Several forms of data will be collected during and after the workshop in order to analyze a determination which is whether or not the goals of the project were met, likewise if attendees are inspired to engage or implement any of the then discussed topics into their community work.

Participants

The participants for this workshop will be invited via email correspondences, word of mouth speech and some posters and flyers that articulate the project’s purpose. Participants will be invited based on being of age (at least 18) to hold mature political dialogue. The community organizations targeted were all partners of Garden to Garnish in Hanson, MA. Community engagement graduate fellows from Merrimack College received open invite to attend.

Materials

For this project, PowerPoint, Google Jamboard, and Google Forms survey were used to facilitate the workshop. I created presentation materials in PowerPoint. I used, for example, how

the presentation program creates slide decks with animations and illustrations to articulate the learning goals, topics, and themes. Activities were built in Google Jamboard, a digital interactive whiteboard that allows participants to virtually use post-it notes and images to share ideas underneath a common thread or prompt. The Google Forms survey is created for post-project evaluation and will be dispersed to workshop participants after the event wraps up.

Procedure

Participants will be invited to the workshop a month prior and will receive notice to bring lunch to the workshop. To create social lubrication while learning, this will be strongly advertised as a means of creating and fostering community engagement, while participating.

Opening the workshop, participants will engage in an icebreaker to invite people to disclose any social identities relevant to participating. Participants will all be asked, “who bee you?” to engage introductions and participants sense of belonging and membership before starting work.

Afterwards, a 15-minute lecture about bees as social actors for community good will air to preface some of the learning and how participating in the workshop will be helpful and critical. The PowerPoint presented concepts so that participants will then engage in a Google Jamboard that maps out places where community can be determined with certainty. For example, where is information about community narrative? What places frequently create community? Ten minutes will be allotted for discussion after participants are tasked with posting annotations on the first activity on a Google Jamboard.

The second lecture about feminism will last 20 minutes. This will cover content of theory of feminism and sustainable development goals, such as how feminism places theory into application as a means to further connect bees and ecological communities as well as species

interactions and diversity. Participants will return to the Google Jamboard for a second activity to post annotations. This activity will ask participants to prompt exactly where a sense of community naturally occurs versus narrated by a more typical status quo. This activity will last 15 minutes.

I will conduct a question-and-answer session in conclusion and participants will debrief about the learning topics and goals. Then everyone receives the link to the workshop survey.

All observation and survey data from the workshop will be collected and analyzed using Google tools. The survey data will be examined and assessed to deem whether the learning topics and goals were efficiently and effectively gained based on the survey responses. The feedback and content collected during the workshop activities will be analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis and for each activity the responses will be into key themes which were reviewed for common threads and ideas.

Results

A total of 10 people signed into the workshop, with six completing a post-event survey. Of the six who completed the survey five were female and one preferred to not disclose their gender identity. This respondent who didn't disclose gender identified themselves as both Caucasian / White and African American / Black. One female responded with only African American / Black. Four females responded with having identified as Caucasian / White. The median response to the question, "What is your current level of community engagement?" was 3.33, which survey respondents ranked on a scale ranging from low (1) and high (4) level of community engagement. Survey respondents ages ranged from 21 to 59.

Excellent, good, fair, and poor were the four types of responses collected for data about the overall rating of the workshop, with 83.3% of survey respondents indicating a good rating of the workshop, while 16.7% indicated a poor rating of the workshop.

Activity 1 Themes

Forty community assets were identified during Activity 1, two of which were religious spaces and affinity-based groupings in general. Both were identified 6 times as community assets. Schools or global, youth voluntary organizations were identified 5 times. Neighborhood spaces and recreation/sports leagues were identified 4 times. Work and family were identified 3 times. Food banks, homeless shelters, virtual and hospital community assets were identified only once.

Activity 2 Themes

Twenty community assets were identified during Activity 2, specifically the hive as a support system of sorts was identified 6 times. Animals as hunter/gatherer species was identified 4 times. Matriarchy and interdependence were both identified twice. Affinity-based groupings, natural disaster and light as a metaphor for community building were only identified once.

Post-Event Evaluation

Half of the respondents indicated that the workshop goals were clear to them, and the other half disagreed. Responses to understanding the connection between sustainability and community indicated that five people agreed, and one person strongly agreed. Understanding ecological content of bees and feminism as intersectional topics was met with two disagreeing, three agreeing, and one strongly agreeing responses.

Discussions and debriefs as tools to measure connections to sustainability and community were ranked by respondents with one disagreeing, four agreeing, and one strongly agreeing.

When asked if the actual activities were helpful in connecting sustainability and community, survey respondents again listed one disagree, four agree, and one strongly agree.

Participants were given the statement, “The activities made me think about how to engage more with my community space(s)” and respondents listed two disagreeing, two agreeing, and two strongly agreeing. The next statement was, “The activities helped me think creatively about my community” and respondents replied with half in agreement versus half who strongly agree. One survey respondent disagreed the workshop is ready for new community members, while three respondents agree that it is ready, and two who strongly agree that it is ready.

Two respondents disagreed that they would be willing to share their learning experience in the workshop with others, whereas three agreed to share what they learned, and one strongly agreed. The most valuable things survey respondents listed as experienced in the workshop were vocabulary, “wild” community, connection, theory and application, nature, micro-community, inclusion (matriarchy and interdependence), and community involvement.

Improvements to the workshop recommended by survey respondents included tech-rehearsal, introduction to Google Jamboard, make connections clearer (applicable to one’s community organization work), following-up with more feminism, break out rooms or small-group conversations, what does the facilitator bring to the table (passion for the topics – where does it come from?), less text-heavy slides with more visually-pleasing graphics and information, and more time.

Survey respondents were asked to rate how likely they were to seek out more information about the topics covered in the workshop 50% answered very likely, 12.5% answered somewhat likely and 33% answered somewhat unlikely.

Participants were asked, “What is your current level of community engagement?” The median response to this survey question was a level of three out of four, where one is no level of engagement and four equates the strongest current engagement level. One survey respondent attended a workshop on these topics prior to participation, while the rest of the five survey respondents answered that this was their first time learning about the topics of ecology, bees and feminism.

Discussion

The learning topics bees and feminism were covered with the goal of sustaining a sort of ecological community. A community-based educational workshop would be a good place to start facilitating further intersections of bees and feminism, since the Google Jamboard activity produced results about how community can flourish naturally as well as narratively.

The discussions and debriefs taught me how community is looked at by some folks, specifically through a lens of the beehive as a support system. Some people might have predisposed assumptions made about what is understood and not understood. The Google Jamboard was evidence of how narrative community is prevalent, and there is no comparison for really how much a natural (ecological) community can prevail.

Participants posited that light might be a natural part of community formation. This interests me, because bees utilize sunlight for spatial awareness since they don't have eyes but do have sensory parts that interpret UV rays from the sun in order to gauge their own surroundings and forage for food.

Participants suggested support for the concept of “community hive.” This considers how the hive normally works and connects to feminism, in the sense that most workers, drones, and caretakers essentially strategize by focusing on the queen bee, the matriarchy. If male bees are

removed from a hive and the queen remains, the drones will return to the hive/nest similar to an alligator. If you remove the queen and not the drones, you might notice that the drones will follow the queen essentially to further engage the community hive in honey-making and health. For example, you cannot have two queen bees in the same hive or balance will be in flux.

Participants seemed to acknowledge that spiritual learning about bees and feminism was appropriate, I discussed how developing and discerning this teaching sample led to a little chaos but more or less careful consideration and intersectionality.

Considerations

A workshop like this could be a stepping-stone towards deeper community discussions about ecofeminism. bell hook's is an exemplary person who studies this type of anthropology, and all of her work tends to center around the theme of her posit on intersections and intersectionality. For example, the bees and feminism intersect spiritually as well as politically. Development could be addressed in future workshops, since andragogy seems to be the main mode of education in this type of community workshop versus a pedagogical approach.

Limitations of the Project

This workshop was held on Zoom, therefore limitations to remote learning apply to this project and an in-person experience would invite participants to learn and eat food together in a classroom setting. The ideal context of in-person learning was not present on the Zoom platform.

Implications for Future Projects

Social justice education in action requires the participants of the workshop to engage other community members in a sort of discussion about the topics: bees and feminism. Having done just that, lifelong learning might consider how these topics do or do not address fundamental inequalities in the global economy. This project advocated for feminism and bee-

saving. Future attempts might implement social identities in the conversation about theory, application and practicing sustainability safely in communities regarding the access to resources. Another attempt might communicate to participants the idea of a food bank as an institution for community engagement, similar to the hive as a support system for workers and caretakers alike.

References

- Appenfeller, L. R., Lloyd, S., & Szendrei, Z. (2020). Citizen science improves our understanding of the impact of soil management on wild pollinator abundance in agroecosystems. *PloS One*, 15(3), e0230007. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230007>
- Ayers, A. C., & Rehan, S. M. (2021). Supporting bees in cities: How bees are influenced by local and landscape features. *Insects*, 12(2), 128. <https://doi.org/10.3390/insects12020128>
- Bakshi, A. (2017, November 11). Achieving sustainable development through ecofeminism. *Social Science Research Network*.
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3350209
- Carter, M. J., & Fuller, C. (2016). Symbols, meaning, and action: The past, present, and future of symbolic interactionism. *Current Sociology*, 64(6), 931–961.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392116638396>
- Daly, A. (2019, July 22). *Feminist beekeeping*. Honey Bee Wild.
<https://www.honeybeewild.com/journal/feminist-beekeeping>
- Gouliamos, K., & Theocharous, A. L. (2008). Harming democracy in mediolatrty societies: Decoding the marketing of war and animosities through photo images. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 7(3-4), 338-362. DOI: 10.1080/15377850802008368
- Hall, D. M., Camilo, G. R., Tonietto, R. K., Ollerton, J., Ahrné, K., Arduser, M., Ascher, J. S., Baldock, K. C. R., Fowler, R., Frankie, G., Goulson, D., Gunnarsson, B., Hanley, M. E., Jackson, J. I., Langellotto, G., Lowenstein, D., Minor, E. S., Philpott, S. M., Potts, S. G., & Threlfall, C. G. (2017). The city as a refuge for insect pollinators. *Conservation Biology*, 31(1), 24–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.12840>

- Hall, D. M., & Martins, D. J. (2020). Human dimensions of insect pollinator conservation. *Current Opinion in Insect Science*, 38, 107–114.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cois.2020.04.001>
- Howard, S. R., Avarguès-Weber, A., Garcia, J. E., Greentree, A. D., & Dyer, A. G. (2019). Symbolic representation of numerosity by honeybees (*Apis mellifera*): Matching characters to small quantities. *Proceedings: Biological Sciences*, 286(1904), article 0238.
<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2019.0238>
- Kings, A. E. (2017). Intersectionality and the changing face of ecofeminism. *Ethics and the Environment*, 22(1), 63-87. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/ethicsenviro.22.1.04>
- Kirk, G. (1997). Ecofeminism and environmental justice: Bridges across race, gender, and class. *A Journal of Women's Studies*, 18(2), 2-20. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3346962>
- Kumar, N., Karusala, N., Ismail, A., Wong-Villacres, M., & Vishwanath, A. (2019). Engaging feminist solidarity for comparative research, design, and practice. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 3(CSCW), 1–24.
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3359269>
- Link, B. G., Wells, J., Phelan, J. C., & Yang, L. (2015). Understanding the importance of "symbolic interaction stigma": How expectations about the reactions of others adds to the burden of mental illness stigma. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 38(2), 117–124.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/prj0000142>
- MacGregor, S. (2004). From care to citizenship: Calling ecofeminism back to politics. *Ethics and the Environment*, 9(1), 56–84. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339077>

- Mallinger, R. E., Gaines-Day, H. R., & Gratton, C. (2017). Do managed bees have negative effects on wild bees?: A systematic review of the literature. *PloS One*, *12*(12), e0189268. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0189268>
- Matias, D. M. S., Leventon, J., Rau, A. L., Borgemeister, C., & von Wehrden, H. (2016). A review of ecosystem service benefits from wild bees across social contexts. *Ambio*, *46*(4), 456–467. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-016-0844-z>
- Pandey, M. (2010). Greening Garhwal through stakeholder engagement: The role of ecofeminism, community and the state in sustainable development. *Sustainable Development*, *18*, 12-19. DOI: 10.1002/sd.393
- Rizzo, T. (2018). Ecofeminist community-engaged learning in Southern Appalachia: An introduction to strategic essentialism in the first year of college. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, *49*(4), 297-308. DOI: [10.1080/00958964.2017.1383873](https://doi.org/10.1080/00958964.2017.1383873)
- Sobczak, A. (2018). The Queen Bee Syndrome. The paradox of women discrimination on the labour market. *Journal of Gender and Power*, *9*(1) 51-61. <https://doi.org/10.14746/jgp.2018.9.005>
- Sterk, N., Meeussen, L., & van Laar, C. (2018). Perpetuating inequality: Junior women do not see queen bee behavior as negative but are nonetheless negatively affected by it. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *9*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01690>
- Warren, K. J. (1997). *Ecofeminism: Women, culture, nature*. Indiana University Press.
- Warren, K. J. (2015, April 27). *Feminist environmental philosophy*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/feminism-environmental/>

Appendix A: Agenda

Bees, Community Ecology & Feminism Agenda

March 14, 2022

11:30 am to 1:00 pm EST

Virtual Zoom Workshop

Participant Introduction/Icebreaker	Who “bee” you? Participants say why they chose to come	10 minutes
Facilitator Introduction/Lecture 1	Communities, Sustainability, and Ecology of Bees	20 minutes
Activity 1	Jamboard internet assignment: Where is community forced to occur?	15 minutes
Lecture 2	Feminist Theory, Practice and Application towards Wild Bee Preservation	20 minutes
Activity 2	Jamboard: Where does community intrinsically occur in modern society?	15 minutes
Debrief	Next Steps for Social Action: Feminism, Bees, and Ecological Communities	5 minutes
Wrap-up	Concluding the topic, Q&A, Administration of the Google Form Survey, etc.	5 minutes

Appendix B: Workshop Presentation



MERRIMACK COLLEGE

**Community Ecology: Bees,
Sustainability and Feminism by
Bruno Barbuto on Monday, March
14 from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM**

Winston School of Education & Social Policy, Community
Engagement Program Graduating Cohort of Spring 2022 (M.Ed.)

Who “bee” you?



MERRIMACK COLLEGE

Why bee a bee?

- Bees are essential to farming & agriculture.
- Scientific thought often seeks to harness the natural world.
- **Agrotechnology to Industrial Beekeeping**
 - Cost expensive and over-complicated
 - Hinders access to sust. landscaping
 - Harmful to wild bees and natural hives

Colony Collapse Disorder “There are significant reasons for bee colony collapse disorder (CCD) like pesticides, disease and climate change.

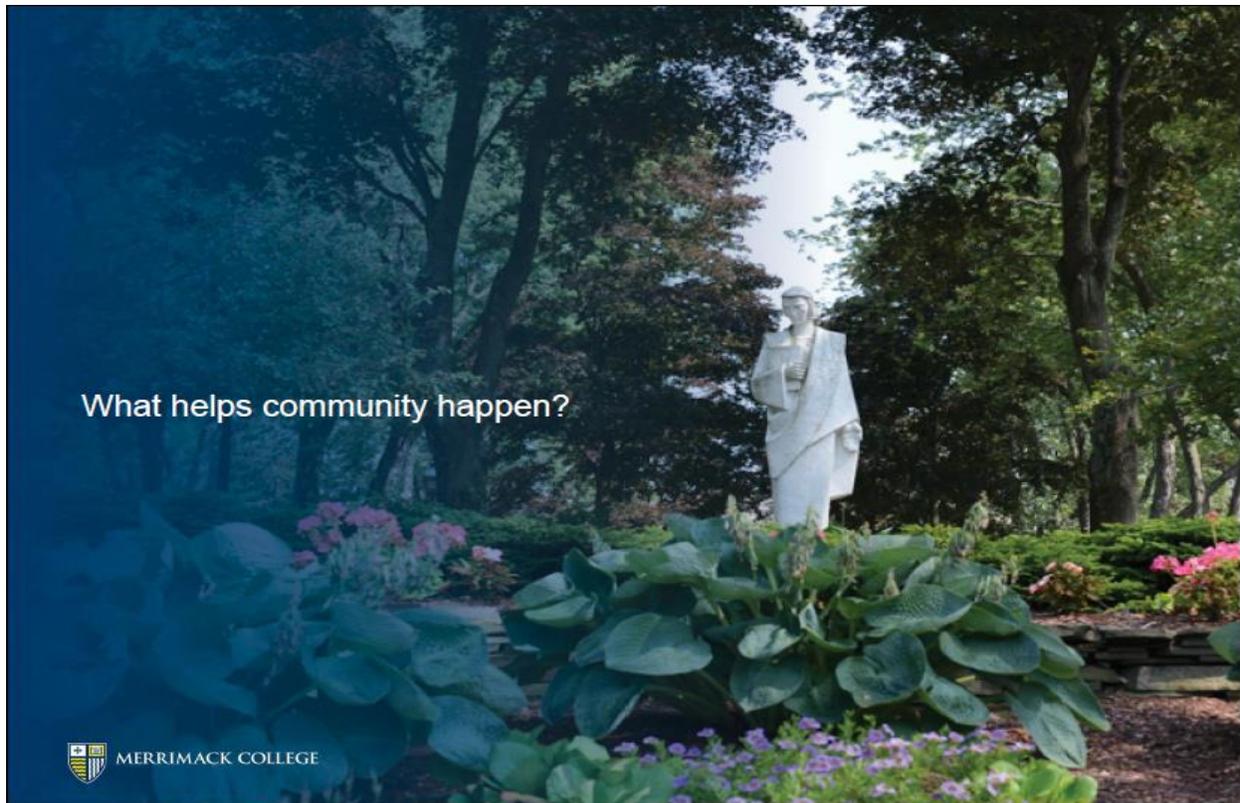
Recent studies reveal that a cell phone tower and mobile phone handset are also causing side effects to honey bees due to radiation emission”

Jamboard Engagement Activity



- 1 Go to the toolbar on the left.
- 2 Select the sticky note tool. 
- 3 Choose sticky note color.
- 4 Type note.
- 5 Tap Enter.





Feminist Organizing for Community Ecology

- Identifying assets and strengths
- Wild bee habitat cultivation for the ecosystem
- Social action as a means for feminist theory
- *“the efforts of women to explicitly challenge their subordination to men”* ([2013](#)).
- By challenging the notion of community and where it happens or occurs, we can use practices like cultivation to bring community about where it naturally occurs to promote wildlife, biodiversity, and ecological well-being.
- Social change has the potential to transform!
- Apiculture and community ecology need help...
- How does feminist theory meet people halfway?



Letting things “bee” naturally

Isomorphism - a quality or state of being... *Buzz!*

- Similarity in produce, when historical roots vary
- How does community become engaged naturally?
- Seeing the strengths within diverse communities ★★★★★

Forced Space		Natural Space	
<p>Unnatural</p> <p>Inappropriate terms of engagement</p> <p>People will feel pressure.</p> <p>Spaces will have policy that does not promote community</p> <p>Practicing conservation</p>			<p>Full Spectrum Engagement opportunities for the community</p> <p>Sustainability in practice</p> <p>Ecofeminist approach</p> <p>Social justice anthropology</p>

Important Notes Regarding Action

- If you save the bees once, there is no turning back!
 - Everyone gets to participate in social action
- Using feminist practice, theory and application works.
 - You can choose when to make the switch within our community based on social justice education.
- For example, community engagement, teaching, and learner-based innovation are all ideas that promote ecofeminism and sustainability. Introducing limitations to the agricultural community about technology and bees is approaching conservation and preservation actively. Next steps look like addressing local policies that do or do not permit beekeepers to contribute to helping out bees as surface transportation for the food chain globally. Thank you for taking this matter seriously 



MERRIMACK COLLEGE

merrimack.edu



Google Form - Survey



MERRIMACK COLLEGE

Capstone for Community Engagement

Evaluation tool

Bees, Ecology, and Feminism



Appendix C: Post-Event Survey

Capstone for Community Engagement

Evaluation tool

 barbutob@merrimack.edu



* Required

Bees, Ecology, and Feminism

Thank you for participating in this workshop. This post-event evaluation is being conducted as part of a student research capstone. The purpose of this evaluation is to gain your thoughts and opinions on the workshop. This evaluation should take no more than 5 minutes to complete.

Overall, how would you rate this workshop?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Please choose one column for each row.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The goals of the workshop were clear to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The content helped me better understand connections between sustainability and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The content helped me better understand connections between bees, ecology and feminism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The discussions and debriefs helped better understand connections between sustainability and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The activities helped better understand connections between	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

sustainability and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The activities made me think about how to engage more with my				
community space(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The activities helped me think creatively about my community				
I would recommend this workshop to other community members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will be sharing what I learned today with other community members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What were the most valuable things you learned from today's workshop?

Your answer

How could the workshop be improved?

Your answer

How likely are you to seek out more information about the topics covered in today's workshop?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely

What is your age? Please indicate a number only.

Your answer

Which categories describe you? Check all that apply.

- American Indian / Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black / African American
- Caucasian / White
- Hispanic / Latino / Latina / Latinx / Spanish Origin
- Middle Eastern / North African
- Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- Other (not listed)

What gender are you?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What is your current level of community engagement?

- 0 1 2 3 4
- Not engaged at all High amount of engagement

Have you attended workshops on this topic in the past?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe