

Grandes Platières," especially, lived on in memory for weeks after reading. Both stories describe young girls in a first confrontation with mortality and both capture the fear, the rejection, and the struggles for comprehension of an incomprehensible world that mark our paths toward adulthood. Most of the stories are about Canadians travelling in Europe, and they catch well the atmosphere of passage through foreign places. The journeys are of course mostly metaphors for change, for growth, for sudden revelations—as good stories often are. If these stories left anything to be desired, it was for a more empathetic engagement with the lives of the characters. Kulyk Keefer maintains a certain academic, clinical distance from her travelling ladies, perhaps most strikingly in "Isola Bella," and this detachment can occasionally insulate the reader from the real flesh and blood of her characters and leave us wishing we cared more about their fates

WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Annabel Rodda. London & New Jersey: Zed Books, 1991.

By *Brenda Cranney*

Women and the Environment is part of the Women and World Development Series developed by the Joint UN NGO Group. The Group was established in 1980 to organize the production and distribution of joint UN/NGO development education material. This series makes available the most recent information on development issues as they pertain to women.

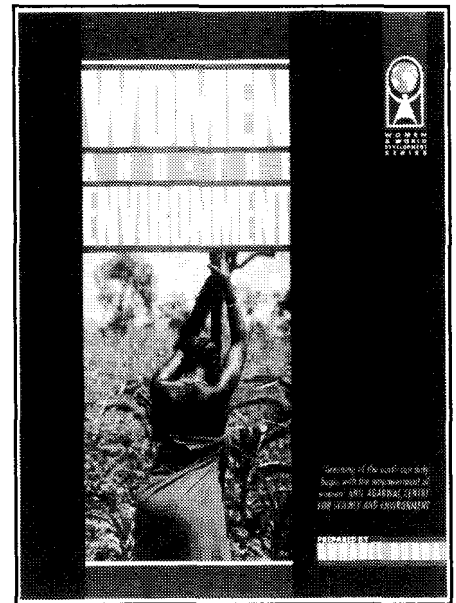
The book focuses on the relationship between women, development and the environment. In many developing countries women depend on the environment for fuel, fodder and water. The repercussion of development programmes in various areas of the developing countries has been an environmental crisis that has had a devastating impact on women from the poor peasant classes because of their close relationship to and dependence on the environment. Women's role as key agents in achieving sustainable development cannot be overlooked.

Annabel Rodda prepared the information in this book as a resource tool and also with the hope that it will enlighten, inform, and stimulate the reader to action. This is a very timely publication in light of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

The stated purpose of *Women and the Environment* is to provide information and raise awareness. Chapter 2 presents a broad overview of the environmental issues in a global context. The information is basic and intended for those who do not have an extensive background in the area. There is a detailed bibliography for those interested in following up on specific issues. Rodda presents issues such as global warming, ozone depletion, deforestation, desertification, environmental disasters and pollution. The information is easily understood by newcomers to the issues but at times diagrams that need further discussion are left unexplained.

The sections on population and environment, and political and economic considerations, are quite problematic. These issues are presented in a very superficial way with no consideration given to the power imbalances between nations, classes and ethnic groups. In the discussion on population and environment it is suggested that food production in the developing countries cannot keep up with population growth. Research has shown that there is enough food to feed the world. It is the distribution of food that is the problem, and not the production of it. Political and economic considerations are very important to environmental issues and need to be addressed in more depth.

Chapter 3 looks at the role of women as managers of consumption. Their function as food/fuel/water collectors as well as farmers and income earners is explored. This chapter details all aspects of women's lives, such as: water collectors and carriers, consumers and managers of the natural environment, farmers and farmworkers, wage labourers, workers in the formal and informal sectors, and family planners. Because of women's role as caretakers of the family it is necessary that they be part of development planning. Suggestions are made concerning women's involvement in programme policy at a local level, at the national level, and at the international level.



Chapter 4 focuses on the effect of the environmental crisis on the lives of women. Details of the increased workload of women due to the degradation of the environment is documented. As well, the impact on women's health and other social implications such as male migration and domestic relationships are examined.

In Chapter 5 the positive action taken by women is documented. Women are not seen as passive victims but as key agents of change. They have become very important to the environmental movements. Chapter 6 looks at project implementation and specific case studies that are intended to serve as models. Suggestions are presented for women's participation and planning of projects. The annexes provide a guide to education and action, lists of organizations, and key definitions.

This text provides a very thorough description of the environmental issues and how they impact on the lives of women. It shows how women can be a key factor in environmental change through their roles as educators and communicators. What is missing from the text is any kind of political analysis which is crucial to understanding the environmental crisis and its impact on women. It is not enough to include women in the planning and implementation of development projects. If power imbalances at an international and local level are not addressed, environmental devastations will continue.