

Exploring Ecological Consciousness: An Ecocritical Analysis of Marjorie Evasco's Poetry through Commoner's Ecological Laws

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Abstract. This study critically examined the textuality of select poems by Marjorie Evasco using ecocriticism theory based on Commoner's (1991) ecological principles: Everything Is Connected, Everything Must Go Somewhere, and Nature Knows Best. The research aimed to depict Evasco's writings' ecological messages and themes by line-by-line coding. Data were sourced from Evasco's book "Dreamweavers" and various theoretical texts. Findings revealed that Evasco's poems reflect Commoner's (1991) ecological laws, portraying them figuratively and literally. The analysis highlights themes such as nature as a teacher, nature's intrinsic value, hope in nature, conflicts with modernization, and human impacts on nature. The study recommends further analysis of Evasco's work through ecofeminism and suggests including her poems in literature classes to serve as a platform for environmental awareness. Future research should explore other works of Evasco and similar authors.

Keywords: Ecocriticism; Ecological principles; Ecopoetry; Environmental literature; Marjorie Evasco.

1.0 Introduction

Commoner (1991) warned that our production methods harm the ecosphere and that our civilization is self-destructive. Despite these crises, there is still hope. We can create a more livable world by recognizing our connection to nature and the importance of preserving it. Ecopoetry, a genre that explores the relationship between humans and nature, has the potential to inspire environmental awareness and social change. Through ecopoetry, teachers can teach creatively toward environmental literacy, and humans and nature are connected. For instance, Marjorie Evasco's poetry highlights nature's beauty and encourages a simpler, more sustainable way of living. Her work can help readers develop a deeper appreciation for the environment and understand the importance of preserving it. This study examined Marjorie Evasco's poetry through the lens of ecocriticism to promote environmental awareness. By analyzing her work, the study sought to fill gaps in the current literature on ecopoetry and demonstrate how literature can contribute to a greater understanding of our interconnectedness with nature.

2.0 Methodology

This study employed textual analysis, focusing on Commoner's (1991) ecocritical framework, three ecological laws, and figures of speech. According to Botan L. Frey and G. Kreps, textual analysis is a strategy used to depict

and translate the qualities of a visual message, aiming to describe the content, structure, and elements of the messages contained in writings. Textual analysis is used to interpret the content of the selected poems and uncover their underlying meaning and ecological themes. It aims to understand the poems' line-by-line coding, distinguish their significant themes, and provide an analysis.

The main data source for this study comprises selected poems from Marjorie Evasco's book *The Dreamweavers*. The selected poems were considered because they are relevant and are fundamental to our interconnectedness to nature and its value. The theoretical data are sourced from electronic books and published and unpublished foreign studies that support the study, providing logically and verbally persuasive, introspective, and discursive syntheses of meaning utilizing ecocriticism in the light of Commoner's (1991) three of the four ecological laws. The poems were selected from Evasco's book and analyzed using ecocriticism based on Commoner's (1991) three of the four ecological laws. Ecocriticism theory was used in this study to help interpret the poems and comprehensively point out the connection between humans and the natural world. Ethical considerations were also observed, with all theoretical sources cited appropriately to avoid plagiarism. No human or animal subjects were involved, so no specific ethical approvals were required.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Ecological Laws Presented in the Select Poems of Marjorie Evasco

The first phase of this analysis examines the Commoner's three of the four ecological laws presented in the poems (see Table 1), which are signified in the poems' different lines.

Table 1. Commoner's three of the four Ecological laws presented in Marjorie Evasco's selected poems			
Poem	Everything is Connected to Everything Else	Everything Must Go Somewhere	Nature Knows Best
Jade Mountain Peak	Lines 1-10, Line 13 Line 14 Summary: Relationship of man and nature	Lines 11-12 Summary: Simplicity of living	Lines 3-6, Lines 13-14 Summary: Nature's beautiful abilities and limits.
The Macrame-Bead Maker	Lines 11-12, Lines 13-17 Summary: Man's life is compared with the spider's life	Lines 1-8 Summary: Recycling	Lines 2-4 Summary: Utilizing nature's resources with limitations
Scaling Jade Mountain	Lines 1-17 Summary: Man's responsibility to care for nature	Lines 8-10 Summary: Everything has its usage.	Lines 1-17 Summary: Using and appreciating the gift of nature
Sampaguita Song	Lines 14-19 Summary: Reminiscing memories	Lines 20-24 Summary: Nature provided man with everything	Lines 1-3, 7-9 Summary: Effects of modern-day humans to nature.
Elegy for Exaltacion	Lines 14-17 Summary: Reconnecting with nature	Lines 18-20 Summary: Usefulness of abandoned things	Lines 4-5 Summary: The messiness of weeds is nature's real beauty.

As shown in Table 1, the selected poems of Marjorie Evasco signify the three ecological laws of Commoner (1991), namely: 1) Everything is connected to everything else, 2) Everything must go somewhere, and 3) Nature knows best.

Everything is Connected to Everything Else

Jade Mountain Peak

- 1 *I have reached Jade Mountain peak*
- 2 *But the thatched cottage is empty.*
- 3 *Under the blossoming raintrees*
- 4 *The beaten grass path tells:*
- 5 *The master's familiar footfall*
- 6 *Is seeking another secret trail.*
- 7 *Quietly by the pond, I wait*
- 8 *And listen to the wind song*
- 9 *A strangles lute whispering*
- 10 *The long day away into evening.*

- 13 *Tonight, Jade Mountain is teaching me*

In a literal interpretation, lines 1 to 10, 13, and 14 narrate the poet's experience reaching Jade Mountain Peak in Taiwan. It is considered the highest mountain peak in the country (Kao et al., 2002). It is a "must-visit" place for tourists. The poet describes the stillness of the mountain in Lines 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13 and 14. The words and phrases, "the thatched cottage is empty," "master's familiar footfall," "seeking another secret trail," "quietly," "lute whispering," and "teaching me the lesson of meaningful silence." These words also express how the poet contemplates the beauty of nature and the peace it gives to man. This is conveyed by the words, "Tonight, Jade Mountain is teaching me the lesson of meaningful silence." The poem signifies the relationship between man and nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything is connected with Everything Else." Humans are part of nature. But oftentimes, their actions have an unpleasant effect on the environment. Evasco's work is aligned with the environmental legislation such as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 which mandates about the procedures of using the important resources and embolden people of conserving the resources.

The Macrame- Bead Maker

- 11 *We are spiders at our ancient loom*
- 12 *Drawing tensile threads to be.*
- 13 *But when time again moves round*
- 14 *We come to where we first began.*
- 15 *We knot complete life's circled charm:*
- 16 *And all our beads, our pieces of string*
- 17 *Are laced in symmetry.*

These lines describe the poet's observation as the Macrame-Bead Maker makes a necklace. In figurative interpretation, the poet describes how humans relate to nature in lines 11, 12, 15, 16, and 17 in the sense that we are compared in the poem to spiders, where we make and decide for our lives. The words and phrases, "we are spiders at our ancient loom," "drawing tensile threads," "knot complete life's circled charm," "all our beads, our pieces of string," and "are laced in symmetry." These words and phrases express that men are the ones making their own identity and that they are making nature part of it. It is understanding everything that nature offers, what it consists of, and even those unpleasant parts. Until such time, men return to where they come from, which is ash; this makes man complete the life cycle. Everything that is connected to humans balances it. Everything has its role and shares the same experience of existence with humans, affecting every being. Every human experience with nature affects one's emotions and attitudes toward it. The poem signifies the relationship between man and nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything is connected with Everything Else." Evasco's work is aligned with the environmental legislation Republic Act 6969. If humans want to live in a sustainable environment, they need to maintain the balance in it by conserving the natural resources.

Scaling Jade Mountain

- 1 *Overtaken by mist*
- 2 *A moss-covered rock I take*
- 3 *And lay my head upon.*
- 4 *The half-way climb*
- 5 *Has brought me here*
- 6 *Where willows sing*
- 7 *A plaintive lullaby*
- 8 *And dewdrops taste*
- 9 *Of orange-blossom nectar*
- 10 *In a golden cup.*
- 11 *After this restful interlude*
- 12 *I will climb*
- 13 *Jade Mountain's other half.*
- 14 *Should I find you are not there,*

- 15 *I will stand the summit air*
- 16 *And breathe to you*
- 17 *A wistful song of waiting.*

In a literal interpretation, these lines narrate the poet's experience in climbing Jade Mountain. Lines 1 to 17 say that humans are connected to nature in a manner that a human spends time with nature. The poet expresses the difficulty in reaching Jade Mountain in lines 1 to 2. The words and or phrases "overtaken by mist" and moss-covered rock" clearly state the mountain's difficulty. Despite all these, the poet is determined to continue his journey. A love for nature develops one's responsibility to care for it. The words and or phrases in lines 6 and 8, "willows sing" and "dewdrops taste," show that humans learn to appreciate every part of nature, like birds singing and honey. Man feels, connects, and understands every part of nature that makes man complete. Man is a steward who helps nature maintain its natural cycle, which is why man will remain connected to the environment for the rest of his life. Man establishes a connection with the natural world. The poem signifies the relationship between man and nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything is connected with Everything Else." This is also in line with ecological legislation, Republic Act 6969. Humans need to take action to preserve nature because every little thing affects the environmental balance.

Sampaguita Song

- 14 *You thrust brown hands at me*
- 15 *Flower-laden, smelling like old*
- 16 *Memories, tender at the recall*
- 17 *Of gardens in a province*
- 18 *We have left*
- 19 *And miss.*

In a literal interpretation, these lines narrate the poet's experience seeing a Sampaguita vendor along the highway and how these sampaguita flowers connect with her memories. The poet describes how she remembers her life in the province in lines 15, 16, and 17. The words and or phrases "smelling like old," "memories, tender at the recall," and "gardens in the province." These words also express that man's connection with nature. When she smells the flowers carried by the vendor, she recalls their garden in the province where they previously lived. The smell of the white flowers or sampaguita flowers brings happy memories that have a great part of her during her childhood. It is where the human appreciates every color and shape that surrounds her. It is like a time capsule that takes her back to her previous years. Evasco takes nature as its subject when creating the poem. The poem answers the effect of modern-day human civilization, where places are converted into metropolitan areas. The poem signifies the relationship between man and nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything is connected with Everything Else." Evasco's work is aligned with the ecological legislation Republic Act 7586 that states to protect areas to guarantee the survival of all living things.

Elegy for Exaltacion

- 14 *I would have to walk the breadth*
- 15 *Of this forsaken land*
- 16 *And turn the earth with my bare hands*
- 17 *To find what else remains.*

In a literal interpretation, these lines express man's connection with nature through reflecting, walking, and feeling it. The words and or phrases "walk the breadth" and "turn the earth with my bare hands" in lines 14 and 16 tell that she walks on the land as if her feet are connecting with the earth with every step she makes as she walks. The poet expresses that it is one way of reminding man to slow down and re-establish the connection with nature. She remembers the memories left in the wide area by digging the land with her bare hands. She feels her living connection with nature. It is the land where her grandmother lived. It was simply with nature, and although the land was forgotten and abandoned for a time, she returned to find her grandmother's remaining properties. This poem asserts the idea of the greater concern of fellow creatures, which is the right to live. The poem signifies the

relationship between man and nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything is connected with Everything Else." This is also aligned with the ecological legislation Republic Act 7586 that mandates the protection and ensures the survival of native plants, landscapes, and other resources.

These findings are supported by Love (2010), who states that humans are equivalent to everything else in the common world. This means nothing is superior to anything else; instead, they all have equal rights to live and share the same experience of existence. Moreover, Allred supports these findings by stating that opposite things are interconnected, not opposing forces, just like humans are connected to water. It means that one element could not exist without the presence of the other elements.

Everything Must Go Somewhere

Jade Mountain Peak

- 11 *Inside, I light the lamp*
12 *And cook a simple meal.*

In a literal interpretation, lines 11 to 12 express that everything used and consumed by humans has a place on earth when it goes back to nature. It means nothing is wasted if it is used properly. The words and or phrases "I light the lamp" and "cook a simple meal" mean a simple way of living. It is not an extravagant meal. It costs less and cannot greatly harm the environment. It is a simple way of living in nature's way. A lamp provides light that does not give harsh glare. It is also a way for man to help save the earth's resources by not using electricity, which cuts down the use of utilities. Aside from that, lighting the lamp produces carbon dioxide, which is important for the photosynthesis of plants. The poet expresses that the simple way of living can help people avoid the backfire of the environment. It clearly describes how people are affected by their actions. The food we prepare for every meal comes from the earth's resources. We take this from the earth, process it, use it, and reuse and recycle it. Everything that surrounds us has its usage in nature. The poem signifies that everything used and consumed by man has a place in nature when it is no longer functional to man, or Commoner (1991) puts it in these words, "Everything Must Go Somewhere." This aligns with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, which aims to promote and manage solid waste. This means to reduce, reuse, and recycle. As much as possible, humans need to live by nature in order to maintain its natural function.

The Macrame-Bead Maker

- 1 *Some pieces of string from an old chinese shop*
2 *And multi-colored beads from the sea*
3 *Lie scattered at your lap*
4 *Ready for weaving a necklace for me.*
5 *First you tie a single knot*
6 *And the following strands entwine*
7 *As mind and hands form definite*
8 *An ancient tribal design.*

In a literal interpretation, lines 1 to 8 of the poem unfold the idea that everything in nature can be used and recycled. This is precisely aligned with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, which aims to lessen waste by recycling and reusing it. It all exists because it has its purpose and usage. The words and or phrases "some pieces of string from an old Chinese shop," "multi-colored beads from the sea," and "ready for weaving a necklace" also mean that gifts of nature do not only give life and color to sea but to give people livelihood through making jewelry like a necklace; but people should always remember that all these gifts of nature have limitations. They cannot continue to make a profit out of it unless they take good care of Mother Nature. The poet expresses that it is man's imagination to make a design that will fascinate and catch other people's attention. Nature has provided us with everything we need, but our great responsibility is to care for and preserve it. The poem signifies that nature provided man with everything they needed, and it is man's responsibility to put it in a proper place after using it. Commoner (1991) puts it in these words: "Everything Must Go Somewhere."

Scaling Jade Mountain

- 8 *And dewdrops taste*
9 *Of orange-blossom nectar*
10 *In a golden cup.*

In literal interpretation, lines 8 to 10 of the poem express that everything in nature has its utilization. The words and or phrases in lines 8 to 9, “dewdrops taste” and “orange-blossom nectar,” also mean the abundance of honey that can be seen along the way. The poet shows that honey is a natural medicine or source of food for both man and animals. Everything that can be seen in nature has its usage and purpose, but too much use can destroy its natural cycle and may hinder its production. People live in a home where life exists, and anyone wishing to live on this planet must fit into the environment. The poem signifies that nature provided man with everything they needed, and man is responsible for taking care of it. This aligns with the ecological legislation Republic Act 7586, which aims to protect and conserve the environment and its biodiversity. Commoner (1991) puts it in these words, “Everything Must Go Somewhere.”

Sampaguita Song

- 20 *Back home the sampaguitas*
21 *dry in an earthen dish*
22 *leaving the scent of warm*
23 *brown palms that offered an extra garland for*
24 *Bueno Mano.*

In a literal interpretation, these lines tell of the poet’s simple life in the province. It is when man’s life is not yet controlled by technology. The poet specifies the simplicity of living in lines 20, 21, 22, and 23. The words and or phrases “back home the sampaguitas,” “earthen dish,” “leaving the scent of warm,” and “brown palms that offered an extra garland” also mean they use the earth’s resources in making a living. The natural scent of the flowers gives a relaxing aroma to their place. These flowers also gave them extra income, a resource for the people. Nature has provided us with everything that we need. We cannot live without nature and vice versa, but we should always remember that nature needs us to look after it. We should not abuse its natural resources because everything has its limitations. This is in line with the ecological legislation Republic Act 7586, which states that places should be protected to maintain the ecological process and life-support system. Our earth is a restricted world. The poem signifies that nature provided man with everything they needed and that man must look after it because they are only the steward of this beautiful planet. As Commoner (1991) puts it in these words, “Everything Must Go Somewhere.”

Elegy for Exaltacion

- 18 *The linens are moth-eaten,*
19 *The weevils bore through the posts,*
20 *The woodwork and the stored grain.*

In a literal interpretation, the poets express that nothing is created without purpose in lines 18 to 19. The words and or phrases “linens are moth-eaten” and “weevils bore through the posts” likewise suggest that abandoning things does not mean it is no longer useful. Things that are decomposable are either eaten or converted into other usable things. It could mean shelter or food for other forms of life in nature, just like the weevils that make holes through the post and another part of the cottage made of wood, making it their home or source of food. Stored grains are good sources of food for insects. Evasco’s work agrees with Pope Benedict’s idea in Koenig-Bricker (2009), where he speaks out for creation and justice, which people can use but remember not to abuse. It means

that people oversee the gifts of God to develop and care for them. People can use it but should also consider its responsibilities in every action. The poem signifies that man is provided with abundant gifts from nature. A man should consider his importance in maintaining the balance of nature, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Everything Must Go Somewhere."

Nature Knows Best

Jade Mountain Peak

- 3 *Under the blossoming raintrees*
4 *The beaten grass path tells:*
5 *The master's familiar footfall*
6 *Is seeking another secret trail.*
- 13 *Tonight, Jade Mountain is teaching me*
14 *The lesson of meaningful silence.*

In a figurative interpretation, lines 3 to 6, 13, and 14 express that nature has provided man with all he needs. It is one's discretion to do what is needed and right to preserve nature's gifts. The poet describes how fortunate man is in lines 3, 4, and 13 because nature provides everyone with everything. The words and or phrases "blossoming rain trees," "beaten grass," and "Jade Mountain is teaching me" also mean that man has everything. The natural assets give man the chance to enjoy the earth's beauty. It gives man the chance to feel the natural cooling temperature. In the wilderness, where wild plants grow and grasses stand tall, it looks messy, making nature beautiful and unique. It still possesses its natural cycle, and when man connects with nature, it can tell man's needs and emotions. However, man's activity causes the untimely deterioration of the grass. A man should learn to recognize nature's beautiful abilities and limits. Jade Mountain is teaching man the meaning of silence. One can learn that even in silence, there is still meaning. Nature has always tried to connect with man, but man is blinded by the ways of living in the modern world. Man needs to re-establish the connection with nature through listening in deep silence because nature knows best. Nature is a place outside the modern world where people feel relaxed and well. Man needs to follow the laws of nature because we depend on them, and nature is our life support system.

The findings of Evasco's work are similar to those of Rueckert (1996), who states that the outcomes of human activities harm the planet's fundamental life and emotionally supportive networks. Moreover, nature has maintained its mysterious power and does miracles that sometimes cannot be explained by man. The poem signifies that nature is the master. Nature knows what is best for man. Everybody needs nature to survive. Without it, one is weak, or Commoner (1991) puts it in these words, "Nature knows best."

The Macrame-Bead Maker

- 2 *And multi-colored beads from the sea*
3 *Lie scattered at your lap*
4 *Ready for weaving a necklace for me.*

In a figurative interpretation, lines 2 to 4 of the poem narrate the abundance of nature. Everything in nature has its value that man needs to recognize. The poet illustrates that nature knows what is best for man in lines 2 and 4. The words and phrases "multi-colored beads from the sea" and "ready for weaving" talk about nature's ability to provide man with everything that can help us survive, like the richness of pearls from the sea. These could be a source of income for man, but too much use can harm nature's ecosystem. A man should utilize his natural resources but with limitations. Nature gives its natural elements for free and, in the same way, teaches man its role, place, and proper manner in dealing with nature. The poem signifies that nature provided man with enough resources, but one must limit its usage and not disturb nature's normal cycle. Commoner (1991) puts it in these words, "Nature knows best." Evasco's work is aligned with the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, which aims to protect and conserve water resources. Humans must learn to limit its usage to allow future generations to enjoy freshwater and marine wealth.

Scaling Jade Mountain

- 1 *Overtaken by mist*
- 2 *A moss-covered rock I take*
- 3 *And lay my head upon.*
- 4 *The half-way climb*
- 5 *Has brought me here*
- 6 *Where willows sing*
- 7 *A plaintive lullaby*
- 8 *And dewdrops taste*
- 9 *Of orange-blossom nectar*
- 10 *In a golden cup.*
- 11 *After this restful interlude*
- 12 *I will climb*
- 13 *Jade Mountain's other half.*
- 14 *Should I find you are not there,*
- 15 *I will stand at the summit air*
- 16 *And breathe to you*
- 17 *A wistful song of waiting.*

The third ecological law nature knows best is expressed in Lines 1 to 17 of the poem. In a literal interpretation, the poet's experience utilizing and appreciating nature's gifts, like listening to a bird's song, the taste of honey, and the airman breathing. Nature includes all life forms and their places, like a moss-covered rock in the poem. Life on the rock may not be visible to our naked eyes, but other creatures exist and have a role in the ecosystem. The poet expresses that man is part of nature's existence; man must take care of the gifts given by nature. It is time for man to give back to nature by protecting and preserving it.

In a figurative interpretation, the words and or phrases in lines 15 to 17, "I will stand the summit air," "breathe to you," and "wistful song of waiting," also mean man learns to hope and wait for the right moment. Hopefully, man still has the chance to do what is good for humanity and the environment. The poem shows that human activities have been damaging nature's natural processes. For this, man should change lifestyles, or as Commoner (1991) puts it, "Nature knows best." Evasco's work is aligned with the environmental legislation Republic Act 7586, which maintains biodiversity and ensures the sustainable use of natural resources. Humans must act now and avoid damaging the environment like deforestation because what we have now is given freely by Mother Nature.

Sampaguita Song

- 1 We see you every night intercept
- 2 The narrow chance at highway
- 3 Living the jammed traffic of your days
- 7 Your shanks gleam thin at the intersection,
- 8 Beating the stop light to the edge
- 9 Of danger.

In a literal interpretation, lines 1 to 3 and 7 to 9 of the poem narrate the poet's experience of seeing a Sampaguita vendor crossing the road. The poet describes the danger of selling flowers in lines 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9. The words and or phrases "we see you every night intercept," "narrow chance at the highway," "jammed traffic," "beating the stop light to the edge," and "danger" means the highway or road where the vendor usually stays to sell the flowers is a busy and dangerous place because of the vehicles that keep on passing from one direction to the other direction. The vendor should keep his phase with the traffic lights so that he does not get hit by the vehicles. Further, it talks about how modern-day humans change a certain place. This has resulted in a narrow road and

traffic. Mankind's activities and lifestyles may improve the economic situation of a country, but this, in turn, would damage the ecosystem and may cause harm and extinction to humans and other creatures. Developing metropolises should also have a simple lifestyle, like in many provinces, which would help nature maintain its sensitive balance. Evasco's work is aligned with the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System Presidential Decree No. 1586, which states that all environmentally critical initiatives have the potential to have a major negative impact on the environment. The poem signifies the effects of modern-day activities on the people in a certain place. This place has changed due to the emergence of technology. Modern technology still cannot replace the convenience that nature can give to people; it provides free services like water, air, and a wide place to stay. Commoner (1991) puts it in these words: "Nature knows best."

Elegy for Exaltacion

- 4 *With garden up front, unkempt,*
5 *The weeds everywhere bristling.*

In a literal interpretation, lines 4 to 5 of the poem speak of the wilderness of the place. The poet describes how untidy the area is in lines 4 and 5. The words and or phrases "unkempt" and "weeds everywhere bristling" mean that man may not appreciate its untidy appearance, but it is where the true beauty of nature exists. Weeds may not have value to people, but they play a role in maintaining the ecosystem's natural balance. This aligns with the environmental legislation Republic Act 7586, which aims to protect areas to keep their biodiversity and secure a renewable use of resources. Commoner (2015) supports these findings in the third ecological law, which states that people have broken out of the circle of life. Endless cycles have been converted into man-made, like cities sprawling in many areas that disturb the natural cycle of nature. The analysis of Marjorie Evasco's poems reflects Commoner's (1991) three ecological laws. Indeed, it is an ecopoetry.

3.2 Ways Ecological Laws are Presented in the Select Poems of Marjorie Evasco

The second phase examines how Commoner's three ecological laws are presented in the poems (see Table 2), signified in the poems' different lines.

Poem	Everything Is Connected to Everything Else		Everything Must Go Somewhere		Nature Knows Best	
	Literally	Figuratively	Literally	Figuratively	Literally	Figuratively
Jade Mountain Peak		✓	✓			✓
The Macrame-Bead Maker		✓	✓		✓	
Scaling Jade Mountain		✓	✓			✓
Sampaguita Song		✓	✓			✓
Elegy for Exaltacion	✓		✓		✓	

Everything is Connected to Everything Else

Jade Mountain Peak

- 4 *The beaten grass path tells:*
8 *And listen to the wind song*
9 *A strangles lute whispering*
13 *Tonight, Jade Mountain is teaching me*

Table 2 shows that the first ecological law is presented figuratively in lines 4, 9, and 13. The poet uses personification in lines 4, 8, 9, and 13, giving human attributes to the words and phrases, "beaten grass path tells," "wind song," "a strangles lute whispering," and "Jade Mountain is teaching me." The poet describes that the beaten grass path tells that the man is seeking another path. The man also listened to the Aeolian sound, which he considered a song. The sound that the wind produced is a song to the man. The lute is given a human characteristic that of a whisper. Moreover, Jade Mountain teaches the man the meaning of silence. Evasco's work is aligned with the environmental legislation Republic Act 7586, which requires nations to manage places to increase biological

variety and safeguard regions from damaging human use. In the hope of preserving and conserving natural resources, humans have to do what is expected of them to maintain a balance of nature. This affirms Commoner's (1991) view that humans need to accept and nourish nature while reducing their controlling behavior; instead, they need to participate in repairing the damage humans have done.

The Macrame-Bead Maker. Table 2 shows that the first ecological law is presented figuratively in line 11 of the poem "The Macrame-Bead Maker." This line says, "We are spiders at our ancient loom." This line shows that man is compared to spiders. The poet uses a metaphor that describes man as a spider that makes its own home, the one making its destiny and identity. Everything that happens to a man is interconnected, like the spider web, and each strand is essential. The absence of one strand imbalances the whole web. Every event that happens to a man is connected to another event, which makes the man a better person. Man is a painter of his life. It is up to him to use what color he likes. This affirms Commoner's (1991) view that an ecosphere has a mutual interrelationship between one life and another. That is the reason for the presence of spiders on the planet. They are alive to teach man that everything is as important as man. Man cannot live alone in the ecosphere. Foster (2005) stated that the ecosystem is composed of different systems that are complicated and interconnected. This interrelation also means the whole system may experience devastation under utmost tension.

Scaling Jade Mountain. Table 2 shows that the first ecological law is presented figuratively in line 6 of the poem "Scaling Jade Mountain." This line says,

6 *Where willows sing*
17 *A wistful song of waiting*

The poet uses personification to give human characteristics to the trees called willows, which sing a plaintive lullaby. The trees are trying to communicate with humans in a way that the movement of the branches produces a sad song. It tells the people that its natural process is disturbed by the people who hike and climb the mountain. Jade Mountain wants to preserve its forests and the other creatures present in the place. More than that, nature is giving man the hope in waiting. It teaches man to be patient and that people can reconnect to nature and do what is good for everyone because nature provides man with everything they needs. This affirms Commoner's (1991) view that hope is in the poem. It teaches man to hope regardless of the environmental crisis. Man is destroying the natural community for this; ecologists have agreed that humans and nature can exist, collaborate, and be plentiful in the biosphere.

Sampaguita Song. Table 2 shows that the first ecological law is presented figuratively in lines 15 and 16 of the poem "Sampaguita Song." These lines say,

15 *Flower-laden, smelling like old*
16 *Memories, tender at the recall*

These lines illustrate how a flower is compared to old memories. The writer uses a simile to compare the flower and the old memories. The flower is compared to old memories with a great part of the persona. There is a connection between the persona and the flower that reminds him of the life he had in the province. Moreover, every creature on this planet has the right to live and not be disturbed by humans. This implies that flowers, like other living things, have the right to stay where they belong. This affirms Watson's (1983) idea that mankind should not abuse their power over other creatures. They need to consider that birds, flowers, trees, and other individual species have a right to live, not to be disturbed or destroyed, and to be with other species.

Elegy for Exaltacion. Table 2 shows that the first ecological law is presented literally in lines 14 to 17 of the poem "Elegy for Exaltacion." These lines say,

14 *I would have to walk the breadth*
15 *Of this forsaken land*
16 *And turn the earth with my bare hands*
17 *To find what else remains.*

These lines describe how the persona walks across a wide land area and finds what else remains. The poet describes how the persona turns the soil with his bare hands, literally describing how the man reconnects with nature. This confirms Commoner's (1991) view that humans need to help even the smallest thing that is part of the whole system. Man needs to protect nature by making laws as part of an ecological vision that focuses on the rights of every creature.

Everything Must Go Somewhere

Jade Mountain Peak. Table 2 shows that the second ecological law is presented literally in lines 11 to 12 of the poem "Jade Mountain Peak." These lines say,

- 11 *Inside, I light the lamp*
- 12 *And cook a simple meal.*

The poet describes what the man lighted inside the cottage and the kind of meal he cooks for dinner. The man lighted a lamp that will give enough brightness inside the cottage while waiting for the night to pass, and the word "simple" means the man prepares a meal that is not costly. This affirms Button's view in *How to Be Green* that even a small action is what the environment needs to help regain its natural system. It re-examines man's role and responsibility in transforming nature back to its original natural process.

The Macrame-Bead Maker. Table 2 shows that the second ecological law is presented literally in lines 1 to 4 of the poem "The Macrame-Bead Maker." These lines say,

- 1 *Some pieces of string from an old chinese shop*
- 2 *And multi-colored beads from the sea*
- 3 *Lie scattered at your lap*
- 4 *Ready for weaving a necklace for me.*

These lines signify the importance of recycling. The poet describes in lines 1, 2, and 4 how pieces of string from an old Chinese shop and pearls of different colors from the sea are used to make a necklace. Nothing is wasted because things are reused and formed into other beautiful creations. This affirms Button's view that humans must consider every action they take toward the environment to avoid living in a chain reaction. Humans must live responsibly.

Scaling Jade Mountain. Table 2 shows that the second ecological law is presented literally in lines 8 to 10 of the poem "Scaling Jade Mountain." These lines say,

- 8 *And dewdrops taste*
- 9 *Of orange-blossom nectar*
- 10 *In a golden cup.*

These lines tell the richness of nature. The poet describes in lines 8 to 10 one of nature's free services to man. The juice of fruits and the secretion of plants that attract insects are made into honey. Everything extracted from something out of their abundance will serve as a source of food and life for other creatures. Everything is preserved and recycled in nature. It also shows that man can get honey from nature, considering responsibilities in every action. Everything that is in nature has its purpose, which will be of great help to the ecosystem. This affirms Foster's (2005) view that there are no neglected things in nature. Each has its usage when other living organisms excrete it.

Sampaguita Song. Table 2 shows that the second ecological law is presented literally in lines 20 to 24 of the poem "Sampaguita Song." These lines say,

- 20 *Back home the sampaguitas*

- 21 *dry in an earthen dish*
 22 *leaving the scent of warm*
 23 *brown palms that offered an extra garland for*
 24 *Bueno Mano.*

These lines tell how the sampaguita in their province is used. The poet describes how they make a profit from selling it. The words and or phrases “offered an extra garland” and “buena mano” mean that flowers are not only for decorations but also for a living. They can help people make a decent livelihood. However, if people focus only on making money from the free services offered by nature, this destroys the species. This affirms Commoner's (1991) idea that the free market is one of the causes of the environmental crisis. People only think of the wealth they can get from nature, setting aside its unfavorable effect on everyone.

Elegy for Exaltacion. Table 2 shows that the second ecological law is presented literally in lines 18 to 20 of the poem “Elegy for Exaltacion.” These lines say,

- 18 *The linens are moth eaten,*
 19 *The weevils bore through the posts,*
 20 *The woodwork and the stored grain.*

These lines signify that everything has a place in the environment. An object needs another object to balance the natural process of nature. The words and or phrases “linens are moth-eaten” and “weevils bore through the posts” also mean that the moths eat the cloth, the weevils perforated the wooden posts, other parts of the cottage like the window, and the stored grains that have been forgotten. It also means that many natural resources, such as grains, are extracted from the environment. It reaches the point that the stock is left without thinking about how to use it. This affirms the view of Baxter and Bruce (2008) that the more commodities are extracted from nature, the more it reduces natural supplies. It simply means that everything will return to nature, and nature processes things to be useful again. However, with too much trash, nature cannot process it all for decomposing, resulting in piling up trash in the environment.

Nature Knows Best

Jade Mountain Peak. Table 2 shows that the third ecological law is presented figuratively in lines 3 to 6 and 13 to 14 of the poem “Jade Mountain Peak.” These lines say,

- 3 *Under the blossoming raintrees*
 4 *The beaten grass path tells:*
 5 *The master's familiar footfall*
 6 *Is seeking another secret trail.*
 13 *Tonight, Jade Mountain is teaching me*
 14 *The lesson of meaningful silence.*

These lines illustrate that nature knows exactly what is good for the ecosystem. The words and or phrases “blossoming raintree,” “beaten grass path says,” “Jade Mountain is teaching,” and “lesson of meaningful silence” also mean that nature gives man complete things, and man must care for and preserve it. Nature has been beautiful since the day the planet God created Earth. Jade Mountain is compared to a man who teaches man the meaning of silence. It is not just the stillness, but it also means peace. This affirms Johnson's (1991) view that, millions of years ago, nature was thoroughly fascinating. It does not need any improvement (np).

The Macrame-Bead Maker. Table 2 shows that the third ecological law is presented literally in lines 2 to 4 of the poem “The Macrame-Bead Maker.” These lines say,

- 2 *And multi-colored beads from the sea*
 3 *Lie scattered at your lap*
 4 *Ready for weaving a necklace for me.*

These lines indicate that man improves what is provided by nature. The poet describes how pearls are used to make necklaces. The words and or phrases “multi-colored beads from the sea” and “weaving a necklace” mean that nature has provided mankind with everything, such as the multi-colored beads. Nature knows what to provide people with everything they need for survival. For example, these beads or pearls can be a source of livelihood for people, but people should never forget that everything has limitations. People should not take anything for granted because it will not always be available. This affirms Markowitz's (2018) idea that mankind knows the results of its actions. Any man-made improvements in nature may adversely affect the whole planet.

Scaling Jade Mountain. Table 2 shows that the third ecological law is presented figuratively in lines 1 to 17 of the poem “Scaling Jade Mountain.” These lines say,

- 1 *Overtaken by mist*
- 2 *A moss-covered rock I take*
- 3 *And lay my head upon.*
- 4 *The half-way climb*
- 5 *Has brought me here*
- 6 *Where willows sing*
- 7 *A plaintive lullaby*
- 8 *And dewdrops taste*
- 9 *Of orange-blossom nectar*
- 10 *In a golden cup.*
- 11 *After this restful interlude*
- 12 *I will climb*
- 13 *Jade Mountain's other half.*
- 14 *Should I find you are not there,*
- 15 *I will stand the summit air*
- 16 *And breathe to you*
- 17 *A wistful song of waiting.*

These lines narrate the importance of nature in a person's life. Nature could create new life. The poet describes how the person strives hard to reach the mountain. The words and or phrases “breathe to you” and “a wistful song of waiting” also mean that nature mends the missing part of a person's life. Nature has remained inexplicable and is the foremost important thing on the planet to help other living things survive. This affirms Naess' (1984) idea that humankind should behave ecologically because it is vital for human survival. Nature is life for all humanity.

Sampaguita Song. Table 2 shows that the third ecological law is presented figuratively in lines 1 to 3 and 7 to 9 of the poem “Sampaguita Song.” These lines say,

- 1 *We see you every night intercept*
- 2 *The narrow chance at highway*
- 3 *Living the jammed traffic of your days*
- 7 *Your shanks gleam thin at the intersection,*
- 8 *Beating the stop light to the edge*
- 9 *Of danger.*

These lines signify the effects of modern human activities on the environment. It describes where it is developed into an urban area, such as roads that have been constructed and people experiencing traffic jams. These transformations bring economic progress to a certain place but also have their downside. It can bring people danger and hamper the normal cycle of nature. This affirms Foster's (2005) view that people's recreation of improving the economy affects the main life situation on earth because of one's interest and exclusive control of the market. The change made by man is dangerous to the whole natural system because it affects the natural process of nature.

Elegy for Exaltacion. Table 2 shows that the third ecological law is presented literally in lines 4 to 5 of the poem "Elegy for Exaltacion." These lines say,

4 *With garden up front, unkempt,*
5 *The weeds everywhere bristling.*

These lines show the messiness of the place. It talks about the untidy garden and the weeds that are growing everywhere. Looking at this at first glance, it is messy, and we can conclude that nature is forgotten. However, this messiness is what makes nature unique and undisturbed by people. In this way, nature can slowly heal its wounded parts and return to its original natural process. In agreement with Rueckert (1996), the findings also show that human culture is associated with the physical world, influencing and being influenced by it. It means that whatever habits and activities the people do in a certain community will influence nature, and in turn, people will also be influenced by it.

Coupe's idea (2000) concerns the larger question of justice, of the rights of our fellow creatures, of forests and rivers, and ultimately to the biosphere itself. According to the findings, all creatures can enjoy what nature bestows for everyone, like the poems' beaten grass, weevils, willows, flowers, and weeds. These creatures have the right to experience and live in the biosphere. Table 2 reveals that the first ecological law is conferred figuratively in the following poems: Jade Mountain Peak, The Macrame-Bead Maker, Scaling Jade Mountain, and Sampaguita Song. The second ecological law is presented literally in the five select poems. The third ecological law is shown figuratively in Jade Mountain Peak, Scaling Jade Mountain, and Sampaguita Song.

3.3 Marjorie Evasco's Concept of Ecology

The third phase involves analyzing Commoner's three of the four ecological laws presented in the poems and Marjorie Evasco's concept of ecology.

Table 3. Analysis of the ecological laws presented in the poems and Marjorie Evasco's concept of ecology

Poem	Ecological Laws	Evasco's Concept of Ecology
Jade Mountain Peak	Everything is Connected to Everything Else Everything Must Go Somewhere Nature Knows Best	Nature as the teacher.
The Macrame-Bead Maker	Everything is Connected to Everything Else Everything Must Go Somewhere Nature Knows Best	Nature is Life.
Scaling Jade Mountain	Everything is Connected to Everything Else Everything Must Go Somewhere Nature Knows Best	There is hope in nature.
Sampaguita Song	Everything is Connected to Everything Else Everything Must Go Somewhere Nature Knows Best	The conflict between nature and modernization.
Elegy for Exaltacion	Everything is Connected to Everything Else Everything Must Go Somewhere Nature Knows Best	Human behaviors affect nature.

Jade Mountain Peak

The first poem focuses mainly on the idea of nature as the teacher. It means that nature teaches humans to be humane to their fellow creatures. Mankind is not created to be superior to its fellow creations, but it exists to care for and preserve what God has given them. In nature, man learns to appreciate every little thing in the environment. It is accepted that human beings learn by interacting with their environment, through which man learns the lesson of their actions and decisions. As stated by Gallo (2014), nature becomes our teacher in a way that there are several situations in our lives that we struggle with, and by just looking and reflecting on the rapid flow of the river followed by smoothed glides and see that every hard point in life will pass. When we forget that life is wealth, we look at fruit trees to bear fruits and provide us with food. These simple ways of nature teach people to live and love life.

The Macrame-Bead Maker

The second poem presents the idea that nature is life. This means that people's lives depend on nature. There would be no great civilization on this planet if there were no nature because it is the source of life for all living things. Nature has provided human civilizations everything they need to live and survive, like water, air, and food. In agreement with the idea presented by Gallo (2014), humans are inseparable from nature. Man needs clean air to breathe, fertile soils to produce nutritious foods, and water to drink.

Scaling Jade Mountain

In the third poem, it is revealed that Evasco's idea is that there is hope in nature. The implication is that nature gives people hope in their chaotic world. People nowadays are busy coping and making life in the modern world. We do not want to waste any minute because if it happens, we are one day behind others. In this case, one is burnt out. Our body, mind, and soul also need time to recharge; connecting and spending time with Mother Nature is a way of recharging. People realize that everything is capable of remarkable things. In the poem, the persona overcomes the difficulty of climbing the mountain. He is persistent and determined to reach the top of the mountain even if he encounters obstructions, like low visibility due to mist and the slippery way caused by the moss-covered rock. Even if it causes everything and he finds out that there is nothing on top of the mountain, he still waits and hopes for a change that helps nature. In nature, people can find many signs of hope on our planet. Prowse (2015) cites examples where even the scrap things people created still hope to improve the planet. For example, refused vegetables, eggshells, and leaves are converted into rich nutrients that feed and help build the topsoil. Despite people's deeds of destroying nature, it continues to thrive even in the tiny cracks, like the great life force in tree roots that cracks parking lots, roads, and establishments. This is a sign of God's grace and hope that people have the chance to explore and affirm our connections with nature.

Sampaguita Song

This literary piece focuses on the idea of conflict between nature and modernization. Inventions are created to make people's lives comfortable. New lifestyles are sprouting, and people have many things to choose from to make them comfortable, such as wide railways for transportation, but such construction also has a downside. It destroys areas that could be a place for trees and flowers to grow and animals to live. People have altered the state of the natural system through different activities like converting natural habitats into cities. The effect of modernization on the environment is complicated. It is visible in every aspect of human life, from a place of forestry to agricultural areas, from food to industry. Nature has completely changed in the modern era through modernization. Even though people conveniently live in the modern world, our environment is heavily affected and getting worse daily. The reshaping of nature is dangerous because it affects the ecological goods and services provided by nature to us. If this happens, nature and its ecological services will be degraded. Indeed, it is our responsibility to restore nature's natural process.

Elegy for Exaltacion

This focuses on the idea of how human behavior affects nature. It reflects on how people have affected nature through their actions and choices. If not treated early, people lose the chance to bring back the natural process of nature. For example, the persona can no longer mend the broken pots in the poem. Figuratively, these broken pots mean the place where, once a natural habitat, nature rules on its own. However, due to human disturbance, it degrades. Human behavior can make great changes to the environment. Lee states that human behavior positively and negatively affects the ecosystem. It further states that the negative behavior of energy consumption has a closer influence on the ecosystem than the positive behavior of environmental protection. With this, people need to reduce the negative activities that will affect the environment. To summarize, Marjorie Evasco presents different concepts of ecology in each poem. In Jade Mountain Peak, nature is viewed as the teacher; in The Macrame-Bead Maker, nature is life; in Scaling Jade Mountain, the concept of ecology is that there is hope in nature; in Sampaguita Song, the idea of ecology is that there is conflict between nature and modernization; and in Elegy for Exaltacion, human behaviors affect nature.

4.0 Conclusion

The select poems of Marjorie Evasco eloquently reveal the intrinsic values of nature. Through the lens of ecocriticism, it is demonstrated that each of Evasco's five poems embodies Commoner's (1991) three ecological laws: "Everything is Connected to Everything Else," "Everything Must Go Somewhere," and "Nature Knows Best." These poems underscore ecological systems' interconnectedness and cyclical nature and highlight the natural world's inherent wisdom and self-regulating principles. Furthermore, Evasco's poetry vividly illustrates the

beauty and significance of nature, inviting readers to appreciate and reflect on the vital role that the environment plays in our lives. This study thus affirms the profound ecological insights embedded in Evasco's work, emphasizing the need for greater environmental awareness and stewardship. Future research could delve deeper into the specific poetic techniques Evasco employs to convey these ecological themes, point out the Commoner's fourth ecological law, and explore the broader implications of her work within the context of contemporary environmental literature and feminism.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Eileen Joy D. Sarita, the author, choose Marjorie Evasco's select poems: "Jade Mountain Peak", "The Macrame-Bead Maker", "Scaling Jade Mountain", "Sampaguita Song", and "Elegy For Exaltacion" as the focus of this study and to examine it through ecocritical analysis that investigates the reflection of the Commoner's three of the four Ecological Laws. The data analysis of the select poems, the revision of the manuscript and the encoding is solely done by the author.

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