

An Ecofeminist Analysis of the Lyrics of *Colours of the Wind* in Disney's Pocahontas (1995)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the lyrics of “Colors of the Wind” from Disney’s animated film Pocahontas (1995) as a discursive site of resistance to colonial paradigms. Performed by Judy Kuhn, the song serves as a pivotal focalization of Pocahontas’s Indigenous wisdom in opposition to Western expansionism. The research investigates how the lyrics construct colonial settlers as “alien” subjects who are ecologically estranged while simultaneously articulating an alternative human–nature relationship grounded in an ecofeminist ethics of care. Employing ecofeminist literary criticism, the study analyzes the lyrics through a close reading informed by the conceptual frameworks of the logic of domination, master identity, and the mechanistic death-of-nature paradigm. The findings reveal that colonial figures are represented as “aliens” through processes of othering and a mechanistic worldview that reduces the Earth to a “dead thing” or a mere object of exploitation. Their inability to comprehend the language of nature reveals a profound ontological disconnection from local ecological networks, effectively rendering them outsiders within the very environment they seek to conquer. In contrast, Pocahontas’s voice rearticulates nature as a living entity, foregrounding a circular model of interconnectedness as a counter-discourse to linear and anthropocentric colonial hierarchies. The study concludes that the settlers’ status as “aliens” is an ideological consequence of the colonizers’ master identity, which rejects ecological relationality. Ultimately, the study underscores the vital contribution of ecofeminist readings of popular culture to critiques of the colonial and patriarchal logics that continue to underlie contemporary ecological crises.

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INTRODUCTION

The song “Colors of the Wind” is one of the main soundtracks of Disney’s animated film Pocahontas (1995), produced by Walt Disney Feature Animation. The film was released as part of a popular cultural project that represents the encounter between Native Americans and European colonizers. In this study, Colors of the Wind is positioned as the primary object of analysis, examined independently from the film’s broader visual narrative. The song is performed at the moment of the first encounter between Pocahontas and John Smith.

The central phenomenon addressed in this research is the manner in which the song’s lyrics represent the colonizer’s ecologically alienated worldview—a perspective that constructs nature as a lifeless object separate from human existence. Through its lyrical discourse, Colors of the Wind simultaneously critiques the colonizer’s inability to comprehend ecological interconnectedness within the local environment he enters. In this context, the song operates not merely as a musical accompaniment to the narrative but as a cultural text that articulates ecofeminist resistance to anthropocentrism and colonialism, portraying the colonizer as an “outsider” who is physically present yet ethically and emotionally disconnected from the ecosystem he seeks to claim.

Throughout the history of colonialism, the relationship between humans and nature has never been neutral (Layden et al., 2025). Territorial conquest, resource extraction, and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples have consistently been accompanied by specific ways of perceiving the Earth and non-human life (Ezenwa, Ezeji, & Iheanacho, 2021).

This worldview continues to be reproduced through various cultural texts, including animated films and popular song lyrics that circulate widely within the global entertainment industry. In Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995), particularly through the soundtrack "Colors of the Wind," this intersection of colonialism, nature, and a woman's voice emerges as a crucial site for critical examination. Although presented in a seemingly simple form, the song operates as a densely ideological cultural text that stages the encounter between colonial logic and Indigenous ecological consciousness.

Like mass media more broadly, Disney productions are never ideologically neutral (Garlen & Sandlin, 2016). Media texts possess the power to shape modes of thinking, reinforce social norms, and reproduce structures of power through representations constructed consciously or unconsciously (Bennis & Ghourdou, 2024). Within a colonial context, such representations extend beyond human-to-human relations to encompass human–nature relations as well. *Colors of the Wind* explicitly contrasts two competing worldviews: the Indigenous perspective, which regards nature as an interconnected living space, and the colonial perspective, which conceptualizes nature as an object available for domination and exploitation.

From an ecofeminist perspective, these phenomena emerge from specific patterns of thought and value systems that are deeply embedded in modern Western civilization. Karen J. Warren's concept of the logic of domination, as discussed by Boylan (2022), provides a critical framework for understanding how patriarchy, colonialism, and environmental exploitation function through hierarchical binary structures. Within this mode of thinking, the world is organized into unequal oppositional pairs, such as humans over nature, colonizers over Indigenous peoples, and masculinity over femininity. These binaries assign unequal moral value, thereby granting ethical legitimacy to the domination, control, and exploitation of those positioned as subordinate.

The transformation of perceptions of nature emerges as a direct consequence of this logic of domination (Mrozowski, 1999). As articulated by Carolyn Merchant and interpreted by Chunhua and Ziyang (2018), prior to the era of colonialism and the modern scientific revolution, nature was commonly understood as a Living Mother—a living entity endowed with agency and intrinsic value and engaged in reciprocal relationships with humans. However, colonialism and modern science radically displaced this paradigm. Nature came to be reconceptualized as a Dead Machine: inert, passive, and legitimately exploitable for economic gain and imperial expansion. Within the colonial context, this instrumental view of nature operated in parallel with an instrumental perception of colonized territories and the Indigenous populations inhabiting them.

According to Plumwood (1993), the dominant subject—in this case, the colonizer—constructs his identity as the embodiment of rationality, progress, and civilization while simultaneously positioning himself as ontologically separate from nature. Within this framework, nature is reduced to a passive backdrop deemed irrelevant to human existence. This separation produces a condition of ecological alienation, whereby the colonizer no longer perceives himself as part of the local ecosystem but rather as an external authority that arrives to organize, classify, name, and control it. At this point, the colonizer may be understood as an "outsider" on multiple levels: culturally, ecologically, and ethically.

This alienation is further intensified through mechanisms of epistemological dualism and practices of othering, as theorized by de Beauvoir, Borde, and Malovany-Chevallier (2010) and Plumwood (1993). To dominate nature and colonized societies, the colonizer must first construct them as the Other—entities perceived as different, inferior, and not fully human. Through this process, both nature and Indigenous peoples are stripped of relational subjectivity and reduced to objects or resources. Such practices of othering systematically erase empathy by denying any shared existential ground between the colonizer and the colonized. By severing these affective and moral connections, the colonizer becomes physically present within a territory while remaining emotionally and ethically detached from the surrounding environment and its life forms. This condition legitimizes the interpretation of the colonizer as an "alien," a figure fundamentally incapable of recognizing or experiencing ecological interconnectedness.

To interrogate and critique this dominant ideology, the present study positions popular cultural texts as a critical site of analysis through ecofeminist literary criticism (Glottfelty & Fromm, 1996). Literary and popular cultural works are understood as ideological spaces in which values, critiques, and forms of resistance are negotiated. Ecofeminist literary criticism enables an examination of how relationships among humans, nature, and power are symbolically and metaphorically represented within cultural texts. In this context, the lyrics of *Colors of the Wind* are situated as a form

of ecological advocacy that challenges colonial and anthropocentric worldviews while simultaneously offering an alternative vision of human–nature relations.

The ethics of care described by Larrabee (2016) emphasize relational responsibility, empathy, and attentiveness as counterpoints to rights-based and property-oriented ethics that tend to legitimize exploitation. This perspective is integrated with the arguments of Mies and Shiva (2001), who assert that human survival is possible only when humans recognize their interconnectedness within a shared web of life. From a subsistence perspective, humans are not positioned as masters of nature but as integral parts of ecosystems that must be sustained through coexistence and balance. This framework is further strengthened by Gaard's (1997) concept of erotophobia, understood as a fear of nature's wildness, fluidity, and unpredictability. Together, these theoretical foundations illuminate why colonial subjects fail to establish intimate and ethical relationships with nature and provide a basis for reading *Colors of the Wind* as an ecofeminist critique of colonial subjects who are ecologically and culturally alienated.

Previous studies on Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995) have largely framed the film as a cultural text deeply embedded in ecological, colonial, and gendered concerns. Jun-fang (2016), for instance, interprets *Pocahontas* as a medium of ecological philosophy that represents Indigenous environmental wisdom and promotes a vision of harmony between humans and nature. In contrast, studies by Ono and Buescher (2001), Dundes (2001), Liu (2022), and Kiyomi (2000) reveal how the narrative of *Pocahontas* remains entangled in the commodification of Indigenous women, the reproduction of gender stereotypes, Orientalism, and Disney's cultural-industry strategies that construct an illusion of racial harmony. However, much of the existing scholarship continues to focus on the film as a visual and narrative text, emphasizing character representation, plot structure, and identity politics. The lyrical dimension of *Pocahontas*—particularly the song *Colors of the Wind* as an autonomous expressive form—has received comparatively little critical attention, despite the central role of music in conveying ideological critique through emotional and affective registers. This gap underscores the need for a focused analysis of *Colors of the Wind* as a cultural text that articulates ecological and anti-colonial critiques through musical, poetic, and metaphorical language.

On the other hand, ecofeminist and ecocritical studies of popular culture have demonstrated that popular texts can function as sites of ecological and feminist advocacy. Philipp (2024) argues that popular music operates as an ecofeminist soundscape that performatively narrates relationships between gender and the environment. Similarly, Nagarajan (2021), Omoera, Ogazie, and Markilolo (2024), and A (2022) show how both Disney and non-Disney animated films serve as pedagogical media for disseminating ecological ethics and critiques of patriarchy. Postcolonial ecocritical studies by Agrawal (2025), Echterling (2017), and Yasin (2024) further reveal that colonialism operates through processes of othering directed at both nature and local communities, producing ecological alienation and severing ethical relationships between humans and their environments. However, despite extensive discussions of the Other, colonial domination, and the ethics of care, relatively few studies explicitly conceptualize the colonizer as an ecologically alienated subject—an “alien.” This study extends previous scholarship and offers new insights into colonialism as a masculine formation marked by ecological and ethical alienation.

This study adopts a fundamentally different position from ecocriticism. While ecocriticism generally centers on representations of human–nature relationships, this research moves beyond ecological description to interrogate the logic of domination that links environmental exploitation with an Indigenous woman's voice. The urgency of ecofeminism in this analysis lies in its exposure of patriarchal–colonial binary structures. Accordingly, the alienation experienced by the colonizer in the lyrics of *Colors of the Wind* is examined as a manifestation of a master identity that systematically devalues entities associated with femininity, intuition, and relationality. Through an ecofeminist framework, this research interrogates the intersections of nature, identity, and power. In doing so, it expands ecofeminist scholarship within popular culture studies and also offers a new perspective on representations of colonialism in media.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach to examine the cultural meanings embedded in the song “Colors of the Wind,” the main soundtrack of Disney's animated film *Pocahontas* (1995), performed by Judy Kuhn. Guided by ecofeminist literary criticism, the analysis explores the interconnections between colonial ideology, power relations, and human–nature relationships as articulated in the song lyrics. The research subject is the lyrics of “Colors of the Wind,” while

the analytical focus centers on the representation of the colonizer's relationship with nature and Native American Indigenous communities, as mediated through Pocahontas's perspective toward John Smith.

Data were collected through close reading, conducted iteratively to identify key lines, metaphors, and symbolic expressions related to ecological interconnectedness, domination, and alienation. This technique enables the interpretation of both explicit and implicit meanings, particularly in contrasting Indigenous relational worldviews with the anthropocentric and masculine logic of colonialism. Data analysis was performed using a descriptive-analytical method, in which the identified lyrical elements were interpreted within an ecofeminist theoretical framework. This process allows the study to demonstrate how "Colors of the Wind" functions as a text of popular culture that articulates an ideological critique of colonial domination, environmental exploitation, and Indigenous marginalization.

The objective of this study is to reveal how "Colors of the Wind" portrays the colonizer as detached from local ecosystems and Indigenous Native American communities. By integrating Larrabee's (1993) concept of the ethics of care with Mies and Shiva's (2001) notions of interconnectedness and the subsistence perspective, this research emphasizes the importance of relationships grounded in responsibility, care, and relational interdependence. Thus, human survival is possible only when humans cease positioning themselves as alien masters and begin to recognize themselves as part of the same web of life. Overall, this study contends that *Colors of the Wind* is not merely a thematic song within an animated film but an ecofeminist critique of masculine colonial logic. Through a female voice represented as originating from Indigenous Native American culture, the song challenges linear, masculine colonial worldviews and offers an alternative vision of a world that is more just, relational, and emotionally grounded.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"Colors of the Wind" is the principal song in Disney's animated film *Pocahontas* (1995), produced by Walt Disney Feature Animation. Within the film's narrative, the song is performed by Pocahontas and explicitly addressed to John Smith, an English colonizer who embodies a colonial worldview toward land and nature. Accordingly, based on the film's narrative structure, the pronoun "I" in the lyrics reflects Pocahontas's internal focalization as the speaking subject, while "you" refers to John Smith as the addressee. Pocahontas's voice thus represents Indigenous Native American subjectivity positioned as the Other and characterized by an intimate, relational understanding of nature. In contrast, John Smith functions as a symbolic representation of the colonizer.

Clarifying this subject-addressee relationship is crucial, as the lyrics of "Colors of the Wind" operate as Pocahontas's articulated critique of the colonial perspective that separates humans from the natural world. Through this dialogic structure, the song exposes the ideological distance between Indigenous ecological epistemologies and colonial anthropocentrism. The following section therefore examines how the lyrics construct the colonizer as an alienated figure within the local ecosystem, drawing on an ecofeminist interpretive framework.

Constructing the Colonizer as an "Alien"

This section examines how the lyrics of "Colors of the Wind" construct the figure of the colonizer as an alien—an entity that is physically present in a newly occupied land yet ontologically and epistemologically disconnected from the ecosystem it inhabits. Within the song's narrative, a tension emerges between the voice of Pocahontas ("I"), representing an Indigenous woman whose knowledge of nature is relational and feminized, and John Smith ("you"), who embodies a masculine colonizer driven by the desire to conquer the land and forest. From an ecofeminist perspective, this analysis demonstrates that the colonial mentality is not merely a matter of cultural difference but a manifestation of patriarchal domination that seeks to control what is perceived as "wild" and unruly.

The colonizer's alienation is initiated through hierarchical labelling, articulated in the lyric "*You think I'm an ignorant savage.*" From Pocahontas's perspective, the internalization of the term *savage* by John Smith exemplifies Karen J. Warren's logic of domination. By labelling Indigenous peoples as ignorant, the colonizer constructs a binary opposition that places himself at the apex of moral and intellectual hierarchy. This binary framing legitimizes his perceived ethical right to judge, govern, and dominate Indigenous communities. In this sense, the colonizer appears as an "alien" not because of his physical foreignness, but because of his inability to recognize Indigenous spiritual and ecological

intelligence. Instead, he relies on rigid Western masculine standards to interpret a new reality, reinforcing his estrangement from both the land and its people.

The colonizer's ignorance of ecological complexity is further emphasized through the rhetorical question, "*How can there be so much that you don't know?*" This line explicitly positions the colonizer as an alien subject suffering from epistemological blindness. Despite arriving equipped with navigational technologies and modern weaponry, the colonizer remains fundamentally estranged from the organic workings of nature. From an ecofeminist perspective, Pocahontas's voice critiques the masculine arrogance of colonial power, an attitude that equates physical force and technological superiority with absolute knowledge. The colonizer thus appears as a figure incapable of empathy yet convinced of his own epistemic authority, producing a deep rupture between his physical presence on the land and any spiritual or relational understanding of it.

This mentality of alienation is further intensified by the possessive impulse articulated in the lyric, "*You think you own whatever land you land on.*" Here, Pocahontas exposes the colonizer's tendency to transform himself from a guest into a self-appointed master. Within ecofeminist thought, this impulse mirrors patriarchal logics that frame both land and women as property subject to ownership and control. The colonizer functions as an "alien" precisely because he lacks emotional attachment, historical continuity, and ethical responsibility toward the land he occupies. For him, the land appears as an empty space awaiting conquest. This relationship is fundamentally transactional and unidirectional: the colonizer takes, while nature is compelled to give, thereby erasing the possibility of reciprocity between humans and the natural world.

This objectifying worldview reaches its culmination in the lyric, "*The Earth is just a dead thing you can claim.*" The line offers a sharp critique of the colonial shift from understanding the Earth as a living mother to conceiving it as a lifeless machine. By reducing the Earth to a dead thing, the colonizer absolves himself of respect, care, and moral responsibility. As an alien entity, he fails to recognize life in trees, stones, and rivers, perceiving nature merely as raw material for extraction and sale. Such a worldview stands in direct opposition to ecofeminist principles that affirm the intrinsic value of all forms of life. Consequently, the colonizer emerges as a subject operating outside the ecological rhythm of the living world, enabling unchecked exploitation in the name of commodity and control.

The distance between the colonizer and Native American communities is further underscored through Pocahontas's critique of a narrow and exclusionary definition of humanity in the lyric, "*The only people who are people / Are the people who look and think like you.*" Through this line, John Smith is represented as a figure who recognizes humanity only in those who resemble him—white, male, and empowered. This lyric exposes the mechanism of othering, positioning John Smith as a colonial agent who selectively grants human status only to those who mirror his own identity. By restricting the definition of "human" to his in-group, the colonizer gains moral justification to withdraw empathy from "the Others," including Pocahontas as a Native American woman and the natural world surrounding her. Such exclusion produces an existential isolation: the colonizer becomes an "alien" not only to Indigenous peoples but also to the broader world he inhabits, as he refuses to engage with or understand anything beyond his own likeness.

Finally, the colonizer's destructive behavioural pattern is articulated in the lyric, "*If you cut it down, then you'll never know.*" The act of cutting down functions as a metaphor for how masculine domination prioritizes destruction over understanding. The colonizer tends to annihilate what he cannot control. Rather than learning from wild nature and Indigenous communities who have maintained reciprocal relationships with the land across generations, colonial power resorts to physical violence to erase elements of the ecosystem, without regard for Indigenous lifeways rooted in ecological continuity. The phrase "*you'll never know*" serves as a warning: by destroying nature, the colonizer deliberately forecloses the possibility of understanding life itself and of cultivating harmony with Native American communities.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that *Colors of the Wind* constructs the colonizer as an "alien" because he claims without understanding and destroys without guilt. Through Pocahontas's voice, the song reveals that the colonizer has severed himself from the web of life by elevating power and possession values deeply embedded in colonial masculinity. The colonizer becomes alien not because of geographical origin or transcontinental movement, but because

of his failure to love, respect, and relate ethically to nature and other living beings. This reinforces the argument that the exploitation of land and nature is inseparable from the colonial masculine desire to dominate all forms of life deemed inferior.

The theoretical implications of this first section reposition the concept of alienation within ecofeminist discourse. While alienation has traditionally referred to humans' separation from their products (Mukhopadhyay, 2020), this analysis extends the concept to ecological alienation, wherein the colonizer is rendered an alien or foreign entity because of his existential disconnection from the web of life. The findings demonstrate that ecofeminism offers a crucial lens for integrating critiques of masculine colonialism and anthropocentrism as mutually reinforcing logics of domination. Culturally and pedagogically, this deconstruction of *Colors of the Wind* underscores that popular cultural texts are never neutral. Rather, they function as sites of ideological contestation capable of subtly reproducing mentalities of ownership and practices of othering among audiences. This highlights the urgency of critical media literacy in uncovering the values and ideologies embedded within popular cultural narratives.

Ecofeminist Resistance and Ethics of Care

The previous section examined how the colonizer's identity is constructed as that of an "alien" figure estranged from the natural ecosystem. This section now turns to how the lyrics of *Colors of the Wind* become a manifestation of ecofeminist resistance articulated through Pocahontas's voice. Pocahontas is positioned as an Indigenous Native American woman who embodies feminine intuition and spirituality, standing in opposition to John Smith's masculine, dominant, and colonial logic. Through her role as the speaking subject, she offers an ethics of care as an alternative framework for relating to nature and to Indigenous communities whose existence is threatened by the arrival of colonizers intent on exploiting their land.

The first form of resistance emerges when Pocahontas challenges the colonial worldview that reduces nature to a lifeless commodity for sale. This moment functions as a direct response to the lyric, "*The Earth is just a dead thing you can claim.*" From an ecofeminist perspective, perceiving the Earth as a dead object enables the colonizer to justify domination and destruction without moral accountability—an attitude deeply internalized through masculine values of control and conquest. Pocahontas resists this masculine logic of mastery through the lyric, "*But I know ev'ry rock and tree and creature/Has a life, has a spirit, has a name.*" By naming rocks, trees, and creatures and acknowledging their spirits, Pocahontas affirms that nature is a living subject with intrinsic value rather than an object available for colonial appropriation.

This recognition repositions nature not as the Other devoid of identity, but as an entity entitled to ethical recognition, much like Pocahontas herself, whose identity is inseparable from the community and ecosystem to which she belongs. By asserting that every element of nature possesses spirit and life, Pocahontas directly challenges John Smith's status as an "alien" who fails to perceive the intrinsic value beyond physical objects. If the colonizer becomes alienated because he views nature as inert and exploitable matter, *Colors of the Wind* suggests that genuine interconnectedness begins with recognizing nature as a living subject. Through this ecofeminist articulation, Pocahontas offers an ethics of care grounded in relationality, responsibility, and mutual recognition as a counter-discourse to colonial domination.

Pocahontas's voice in *Colors of the Wind* further articulates resistance by challenging the colonizer's epistemological system that demeans Indigenous knowledge. She reverses the label "*ignorant savage*" imposed upon her and exposes the intellectual arrogance of the colonizer through the rhetorical question, "*How can there be so much that you don't know?*" In this moment, Pocahontas reveals that John Smith is uncivilized, not because of a lack of technology or rationality, but because his heart is blind to the affective and spiritual dimensions of nature. This critique underscores the limits of the colonizer's masculine intelligence, which relies solely on logic, calculation, and physical power, and contrasts it with Pocahontas's spiritual intelligence grounded in empathy, intuition, and relational awareness. Through this interrogative lyric, Pocahontas displaces the colonial narrative that positions the colonizer as the bearer of civilization and reframes him instead as an "alien" figure, an outsider lost within a web of life he refuses to understand because he rejects emotional and intuitive ways of knowing.

The critique continues with Pocahontas's rejection of the colonizer's greed and fixation on monetary valuation. She confronts the colonial tendency to calculate the worth of all beings through economic exchange in the lyric, "*And for*

once, never wonder what they're worth." Here, nature and Indigenous communities are reduced to raw materials whose value is determined by colonial interests. Against this logic, Pocahontas introduces a subsistence perspective that resists private ownership and commodification, most explicitly articulated in the line, *"You think you own whatever land you land on."* This resistance affirms that fulfilment and ethical coexistence do not emerge from accumulation or possession, but from the capacity to recognize and respect nature's existence without the desire to dominate or colonize it.

At the core of the ethics of care offered by Pocahontas is the dissolution of the hierarchical distance between humans and nature through the language of kinship, as expressed in the lyric, "The rainstorm and the river are my brothers / The heron and the otter are my friends." Colonial patriarchy typically constructs a hierarchy in which men occupy the highest position, while women and nature are relegated to subordinate roles (Adugna, 2025). Such a structure can only be dismantled by erasing the ontological divide between culture and nature. Pocahontas accomplishes this by replacing relations of mastery with relations of kinship, transforming the colonial "master-object" paradigm into a familial and reciprocal bond. The colonizer becomes an "alien" precisely because he severs these bonds in pursuit of masculine domination and unilateral ownership.

The culmination of Pocahontas's ecofeminist resistance lies in her proposal of a circular worldview that directly challenges the colonizer's linear and extractive logic—arrive, take, and destroy—which is deeply rooted in masculine notions of progress. This destructive tendency is foregrounded in the warning, *"If you cut it down, then you'll never know,"* which exposes John Smith's failure to engage in dialogue with nature. While the colonizer advances a linear vision of development centered on conquest and extraction, Pocahontas offers the metaphor of the circle of life through the lyric, *"We are all connected to each other / In a circle, in a hoop that never ends."* The circle signifies equality, interdependence, and continuity among all living beings. This awareness of interconnectedness stands as the antithesis of colonial alienation. The colonizer becomes alien not because of geographical origin but because he insists on positioning himself outside the ecological circle and pursuing an illusion of dominance. In contrast, Pocahontas affirms that human existence becomes meaningful only when it is fully embedded within the web of life itself.

The in-depth analysis in this subsection yields several important implications for ecofeminist discourse within popular culture. The findings demonstrate that the colonizer's alienation is not merely a matter of geographical displacement or physical migration but rather a failure of both affect and cognition to understand life and produce ethical knowledge. Conceptualizing the colonizer as an "alien" emerges as a consequence of a master-identity paradigm that rejects relationality with nature and with human communities beyond its own group. Colors of the Wind effectively reverses the colonial narrative that labels Native American communities as primitive or alien. Instead, the song reveals that it is not Indigenous peoples who are uncivilized or foreign, but the colonizers themselves, who are unable to comprehend the language of nature, metaphorically articulated as the "colors of the wind."

At the level of representation, Pocahontas's voice in the song offers a model of agency for marginalized groups to resist hegemonic power through an ethics of care, empathy, and relational responsibility. Such representations challenge reductive assumptions and stereotypes imposed upon marginalized identities, which often strip both humans and non-human life of their moral value. This dehumanizing logic ultimately erodes humanity's capacity to genuinely care for the Earth and other living beings. The ethical shift foregrounded in this study—from a paradigm of domination to one of care and stewardship—demonstrates that the message of circularity in Colors of the Wind functions as a critical reminder: as long as humanity persists in maintaining a linear logic of domination, it will remain alienated from the planet it inhabits. This alienation forecloses the possibility of forming a truly spiritual, ethical, and sustainable relationship with the Earth.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Colors of the Wind, a central song in Disney's Pocahontas (1995), constitutes a powerful articulation of an ecofeminist critique directed at colonial mentality and logic. Through an ecofeminist lens, the colonizer, represented by John Smith, is constructed as an "alien," an entity experiencing ecological alienation. This "alien" status does not merely refer to John Smith's position as a newcomer to the land inhabited by Pocahontas's community; rather, it emerges from his failure to understand nature because of a worldview fundamentally detached from the web of life. The colonizer arrives carrying the logic of domination, which reduces nature to a lifeless object

and a commodity to be claimed. This worldview produces an unbridgeable distance between the human subject as colonizer and nature as object, rendering the colonizer's presence within the local ecosystem inherently destructive and ontologically disconnected from lived ecological reality.

The findings further demonstrate that the lyrics of *Colors of the Wind* function as a site of resistance through Pocahontas's voice, which advances an ethics of care as an alternative ethical framework. Rather than resisting through violence, the song articulates resistance by naming nature and establishing kinship relations, such as recognizing rivers as "brothers." This ethical stance dismantles hierarchical boundaries between humans and nature, replacing a mindset of domination with one of stewardship and responsibility.

Moreover, *Colors of the Wind* subverts dominant colonial narratives. Whereas colonizers typically position themselves as bearers of progress and civilization, the song exposes them as uncivilized and "savage" because of their inability to comprehend the language of nature. This epistemic blindness toward ecological systems legitimizes their identification as "aliens." By replacing a linear colonial logic of arrival, conquest, and extraction with a circular and relational worldview—the circle or hoop—the song asserts that human existence can be considered ethical and "civilized" only when it acknowledges universal interconnectedness with all forms of life.

Theoretically, these findings reaffirm the relevance of ecofeminism as a critical lens for analyzing popular cultural texts. This study expands the concept of alienation in colonial studies by situating it within an ecological framework, in which humanity's separation from nature constitutes the most fundamental form of alienation. Through *Colors of the Wind*, dominant colonial narratives are dismantled to reveal that Western notions of progress often mask profound moral ignorance under the guise of instrumental power. Ecofeminism thus emerges not merely as an environmental theory but as a cultural critique that integrally connects patriarchy, colonialism, and anthropocentrism.

Finally, this study underscores the importance of critical media literacy for contemporary audiences. *Colors of the Wind* offers a model of agency for marginalized and Indigenous communities to challenge hegemony through narratives grounded in care, empathy, and relational ethics. Pocahontas's representation as an intellectually sovereign speaker disrupts the assumption that Native American communities are alien to civilization. Instead, the song reverses this logic, demonstrating that those who fail to understand the language of nature are the ones truly alienated from the essence of life on Earth.

This research ultimately calls for a paradigmatic shift from an ethic of domination to an ethic of care in humanity's relationship with ecosystems and the natural world. The song's message of circularity serves as a reminder that, as long as humanity persists in maintaining a linear logic of domination and treating nature solely as a capitalist resource, it will remain alienated on its own planet. Failure to reintegrate into the unbroken circle of life risks extinguishing humanity's capacity to inhabit the Earth in a spiritual, ethical, and sustainable manner. Recognizing ecological interconnectedness, therefore, is no longer a poetic ideal but an essential condition for humanity's future existence.

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