

## Val Plumwood (1939-2008)

Shortly before this issue went to press we learned the sad news that Dr Val Plumwood had died suddenly at her home in the bush at the age of 68 as a result of a stroke. Val was a founding figure in the global intellectual movement aimed at reconfiguring western philosophy, seeking to move it from human-centrism and toward eco-centrism. She brought a feminist perspective to this work and was foundational to what came to be known as ecofeminism. In recent years she has been a leading figure in the ecological humanities and has contributed to the Ecological Humanities Corner both directly, through her own publications, and less directly, through her role as referee and provider of stimulating ideas.

Amongst the general public Val was well known for a number of reasons, all of which stem from her commitment to living her philosophy, not just thinking it. She was a forest activist and a public intellectual. Perhaps most iconically, she survived being grabbed by a crocodile that pulled her into the death roll. Her nearly completed, and long awaited book, *The Eye of the Crocodile*, was her exploration of the philosophical implications of the experience of being prey, and thus of being a participant in ecological relationships that expose human vulnerability.

Val was a Fellow at the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at The Australian National University for a number of years, first as an ARC fellow and later as a Visiting Fellow. In recent years she had also held Visiting Professorships at a number of universities around the world, including University of California Berkeley, University of Lancaster, McMaster University (Ontario), and University of Frankfurt.

She was a prolific author, with three major books to her credit, and translations into numerous languages including Chinese and Turkish. As well, she authored over a hundred articles and encyclopaedia entries. She is featured in Joy Palmer's volume *Fifty Key Thinkers on the Environment* (Routledge 2001), along with Buddha, Gandhi, St Francis of Assisi and others. We are honoured to publish one of her most recent papers in this issue of *Australian Humanities Review*.

Deborah Rose, 10 March 2008