

1 **UNVEILING THE ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVE IN *HERE COMES THE***
2 ***SUN*: INTERSECTIONS OF JAMAICAN TOURISM AND SEX**
3 **WORKERS.**

4 **Abstract**

5 *This paper examines Nicole Dennis-Benn's *Here Comes the Sun* through an ecofeminist*
6 *lens, emphasizing the intersectionality of gender, race, and class in shaping the experiences of*
7 *sex workers in Jamaica. The novel's characters, particularly Margot and Thandi, navigate*
8 *societal pressures and systemic inequalities that marginalize them based on their intersecting*
9 *identities. Thandi's attempts to conform to Eurocentric beauty standards and Margot's*
10 *engagement in sex work illustrate resistance against oppressive structures, reflecting the*
11 *broader themes of exploitation and power dynamics. Environmental degradation is portrayed as*
12 *both a literal and metaphorical backdrop, exacerbating social and economic inequalities. The*
13 *narrative emphasizes the disproportionate impact of ecological harm on marginalized*
14 *communities, highlighting the need for inclusive development strategies that integrate social,*
15 *economic, and ecological considerations. Collaborative actions and multisectoral partnerships*
16 *are proposed as vital for addressing the intertwined issues of gender inequality, environmental*
17 *degradation, and socio-economic marginalization. The novel invites readers to critically reflect*
18 *on the complexities of oppression and advocates for intersectional feminist praxis to achieve*
19 *social justice and sustainability.*

20
21 **Keywords:** *Ecofeminism, Intersectionality, Environmental Degradation, Social Justice, Sex Work.*

22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31 **Introduction**

32 In Nicole Dennis-Benn's novel *Here Comes the Sun*, readers are transported to the vibrant
33 landscape of Jamaica, where the lives of three women intertwine amidst the backdrop of a tourist
34 paradise. Set in a postcolonial Jamaica struggling with the complexities of globalization and
35 tourism development, the novel follows the journey of Margot, Thandi, and Delores as they
36 navigate their individual paths in a society rife with systemic inequalities and power imbalances.
37 Against this backdrop, the ecofeminist lens offers a unique perspective through which to

Comment [1]: Well said

38 examine the intersections of feminism, Jamaican tourism dynamics, and the plight of sex
 39 workers. Ecofeminism, as a theoretical framework, posits a deep connection between the
 40 oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment, viewing both as intertwined
 41 manifestations of patriarchal systems of power (Donahue, 2019). By applying ecofeminist theory
 42 to the analysis of *Here Comes the Sun*, this essay delves into the complex web of social,
 43 economic, and environmental injustices faced by women in Jamaica, particularly those engaged
 44 in the tourism industry and sex work.

Comment [2]: Well done

45 As Rife (2021) articulates, Ecofeminism offers a lens to scrutinize the interconnectedness
 46 of gender and environmental issues within *Here Comes the Sun*. The narrative intricately weaves
 47 Margot's experiences as a sex worker in the Jamaican tourism industry, illustrating the
 48 commodification of her body and its parallel to environmental exploitation. Margot's work
 49 encapsulates the ecofeminist critique of patriarchal capitalism, where her agency is constrained
 50 by economic necessity and societal expectations. As a sex worker, she is part and apart from the
 51 other Jamaicans as, "Her real work is after hours when everyone has bid their goodbyes and piled
 52 up in the white Corollas—robot taxis—at the massive gate of the resort, which will take them
 53 home to their shabby neighborhoods, away from the fantasy they help create about a country
 54 where they are as important as washed-up seaweed" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This illustrates how
 55 the exploitation of natural resources and marginalized labor are intertwined. The workers,
 56 particularly women, are essential in maintaining the resort's façade of paradise, yet they are
 57 relegated to the margins, both economically and socially. Their neighborhoods are "shabby,"
 58 reflecting the environmental degradation and lack of resources in their living spaces compared to
 59 the well-maintained resort.

60 Moreover, Ecofeminism emphasizes the intersectionality of oppression, as elucidated by
 61 Jakobsen, Padilla, & Horn (2021), which is evident in Margot's layered experiences as a black
 62 woman navigating the tourism industry. Margot's interactions with other characters, such as
 63 Maxi, the taxi driver, illuminate the pervasive nature of gendered expectations and societal
 64 judgment. Indeed, Maxi's remarks about Margot's perceived failures in relationships and
 65 motherhood reveal the intersecting influences of race, class, and gender on her lived reality. This
 66 can be observed in Maxi's comment, "She t'ink she is big shot now, eh, working in di hotel. Look
 67 pon har, nuh. Thirty years old an' no man, no children. Har pumpum mussi dry up. Can't even
 68 come down from har trone fi fuck right. She t'ink she too nice" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Here,
 69 Maxi's derogatory remarks about Margot's unmarried status and lack of children exemplify the
 70 intersectionality of gendered expectations and societal judgment, highlighting-revealing through
 71 the need for an intersectional feminist approach to address the systemic inequalities within
 72 Jamaican society.

73 Furthermore, the ecofeminist perspective sheds light on the relationship between gender
 74 and environmental degradation, as discussed by Donahue (2019). *In Here Comes the Sun*,
 75 Margot's experiences as a sex worker mirror the exploitation of the natural environment for
 76 economic gain. The novel portrays the environmental degradation caused by the tourism
 77 industry, symbolized by the pristine facade of the resort contrasted with the reality of local
 78 communities struggling to survive. Donahue's assertion aligns with the narrative's depiction of
 79 the environmental consequences of unchecked capitalism, where the pursuit of profit leads to the
 80 destruction of ecosystems and displacement of indigenous communities. This is evident in
 81 Margot's reflection on her surroundings, "The chirps of crickets in the bougainvillea bushes
 82 follow behind her like gossip, their hissing sounds deafening. She walks to the street, thankful

83 for the anonymity the darkness provides. In town, the regular taxi drivers are there: Maxi,
 84 Dexter, Potty, Alistair. Maxi jingles his keys first. It's a sign to the other drivers that he'll be the
 85 one to take her" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This assertion evokes a sense of dissonance between the
 86 natural beauty of Jamaica and the exploitation of its resources for tourism, highlighting the
 87 interconnected struggles for gender and environmental justice. The darkness that provides
 88 Margot anonymity also signifies the obscurity and marginalization of the local communities
 89 overshadowed by the dominant tourism industry. The presence of the taxi drivers, particularly
 90 the way Maxi jingles his keys as a territorial signal, reflects the competitive, cutthroat nature of
 91 an economy driven by tourism. This competition among taxi drivers mirrors the larger struggle
 92 for economic survival in a landscape where natural resources are commodified for profit, often at
 93 the expense of the local inhabitants' well-being.

Comment [3]: How? Because of the taxis? Complete the close reading

94 Moreover, Margot's reliance on taxis at night underscores the economic dependence on
 95 tourism-related services, illustrating how the local economy has been reshaped to cater to the
 96 needs of tourists rather than the local population. This dependence is a direct consequence of
 97 environmental degradation and the loss of traditional livelihoods, forcing individuals to seek
 98 alternative means of income in the tourism sector. The narrative thus captures the profound
 99 impact of unchecked capitalism on the environment and the socio-economic fabric of the
 100 community, where the natural world and its inhabitants are both subjected to exploitation.

101 **Nicole** Dennis-Benn's novel *Here Comes the Sun* intricately examines the lives of its
 102 female characters, delving into their struggles for autonomy, self-actualization, and identity
 103 amidst societal expectations and economic exploitation. Through close analysis of Margot,
 104 Thandi, and Delores and the thematic exploration of power, agency, resistance, and subversion
 105 of gender roles, this feminist critique aims to unravel the complex layers of oppression and
 106 resilience depicted in the novel. In the novel, the character of Delores embodies the impact of
 107 colonialism and economic exploitation, as discussed by Donahue (2019) and Aldiki (2023).
 108 Delores's experience reflects the struggles of many marginalized individuals in postcolonial
 109 societies, where economic opportunities are limited and exploitation is rampant.

Comment [4]: Sometimes subheads indicate difficulty making a narrative cohere—here why not craft a transition that explains why the need to separate feminism and ecofeminism

110 Delores's decision to allow her daughter, Margot, to engage in sex work highlights the
 111 desperation caused by economic hardship, echoing Donahue's argument regarding the
 112 intersectionality of oppression. This is evident in Delores's internal conflict when faced with the
 113 opportunity to alleviate her family's financial struggles through Margot's exploitation: "Delores
 114 had made up her mind the minute the scent of the bills hit her. Her eyes pleaded with her
 115 daughter's, and also held in them an apology. Please undah-stand. Do it now and you'll tank me
 116 lata" (Dennis-Benn, 201, p. 202). This assertion illustrates the complex dynamics of power and
 117 agency within systems of oppression, underscoring the choices individuals are forced to make in
 118 order to survive. Delores's internal conflict and the difficult choices she faces as a marginalized
 119 woman in a patriarchal and economically exploitative society. Delores's decision to allow her
 120 daughter, Margot, to engage in sex work is driven by the desperation caused by economic
 121 hardship. The scent of the bills symbolizes the allure of financial security amidst poverty,
 122 highlighting the power of economic incentives in shaping individuals' decisions. Delores's plea
 123 for Margot to understand reflects her attempt to justify her actions and navigate the moral
 124 ambiguity of exploiting her daughter for financial gain. Delores's actions are motivated by
 125 economic necessity and societal expectations and norms regarding gender and sexuality. Delores
 126 perceives Margot's lesbian tendencies as a threat to their family's reputation and social standing,
 127 further complicating her decision-making process. By allowing Margot to engage in sex work,

Comment [5]: Can you go a step further how does the quote specifically do this? Because its complicated right—on one hand it could simply mean that D is initiating M into the world as it is—on another level she claims that she is trying to "cure" D perceived lesbian tendencies both support the assertion of "complex dynamics of power..." but you have to explain how the quote does this—see what I mean? That's really important for literally analysis

128 Delores attempts to "cure" her perceived lesbianism, illustrating how marginalized individuals
129 internalize and perpetuate oppressive ideologies in their pursuit of survival.

130 Delores's narrative sheds light on the structural inequalities perpetuated by colonial
131 legacies and capitalist exploitation, which continue to shape the lives of black women in
132 contemporary Jamaica. One poignant moment that exemplifies Delores's resilience in the face of
133 economic hardship is her reflection on the exploitation of her daughter, Margot, for financial
134 gain. As she recalls Margot's exploitation by tourists, Delores grapples with the moral
135 complexities of her decision, lamenting, "She's not on sale, sah" (Dennis-Benn, 2016, p. 202).
136 The above postulates the dehumanization of black women within the context of tourism and
137 economic exploitation, highlighting Delores's agency in resisting the commodification of her
138 daughter's body.

139 Margot, one of the central characters in *Here Comes the Sun*, grapples with the
140 oppressive forces of class, race, and sexuality as she navigates toward autonomy and self-
141 actualization. Margot's character embodies the resilience of black women in the face of systemic
142 marginalization, as she refuses to succumb to the limitations imposed upon her by society. One
143 poignant moment that encapsulates Margot's struggle for autonomy occurs when she confronts
144 the exploitation of her sexuality for economic gain. As she reflects on her past experiences,
145 Margot laments, "Margot reaches over the table as if to smack her, but instead pulls Thandi's
146 hands from her ears and holds her wrists so tight that Thandi yelps. "You listen to me, an' you
147 listen to me good." Margot lowers her voice into a hiss. "You have no idea what I do to make
148 this happen. No idea." She's talking through her teeth, the words like strings being pulled through
149 the tiny gaps. Thandi has never seen this glint in her sister's eyes. It burns into her with more
150 force than her sister uses to squeeze her wrists. "Do you know the sacrifices I've made so that
151 you don't end up . . ." Her voice trails off, but not before Thandi hears the tremor in it. She blinks
152 it away, then releases Thandi's hands. " (Dennis-Benn, 2016, p. 135). This is a representation of
153 the intersectionality of oppression faced by black women as Margot grapples with the
154 exploitation of her body within the context of tourism and economic inequality.

155 In Margot's confrontation with her sister, Thandi reveals the underlying tensions and
156 complexities surrounding the commodification of the female body for sex work. Margot's
157 physical gesture of reaching over the table initially suggests aggression, but instead of smacking
158 Thandi, she forcefully pulls her sister's hands from her ears and tightly grips her wrists. This
159 physical act of control symbolizes the power dynamics inherent in the exploitation of women's
160 bodies for economic gain. As Margot holds Thandi's wrists tightly, her words convey a sense of
161 urgency and desperation. She emphasizes to Thandi that she does not understand the sacrifices
162 Margot has made to ensure their survival. Margot's use of force and intense demeanor suggest
163 the gravity of the situation and the lengths she has gone to provide for her family. The "glint" in
164 Margot's eyes and the tremor in her voice indicate the emotional toll of her actions, highlighting
165 the internal conflict she experiences as she grapples with the moral implications of her work.

166 Thandi's character serves as a lens through which Dennis-Benn explores the complexities
167 of identity formation and the pressure to conform to societal expectations. Aldiki (2023) rightly
168 asserts Thandi's internal conflict as she grapples with her racial and cultural identity, torn
169 between her Jamaican heritage and the desire to assimilate into whiteness for social acceptance.
170 Thandi's journey towards self-discovery is fraught with challenges as she confronts the inherent
171 contradictions of belonging to multiple worlds. One pivotal moment in Thandi's narrative is her

Comment [6]: Better here—but then she is for sale after all right? Maybe switch the order of these two examples

Comment [7]: I might actually do more with this—the fact for example that the services she provides are described as food would further the commodification of the black female body

172 confrontation with her mother, Delores, regarding her aspirations to pursue art as a career.
 173 Despite her talent and passion for drawing, Thandi encounters resistance from Delores, who
 174 dismisses her dreams as impractical and unattainable. Thandi's frustration is palpable as she
 175 asserts, "I want to go to art school... I want to be an artist" (Dennis-Benn, 2016, p. 199). This
 176 highlights Thandi's agency in asserting her autonomy and resisting the societal expectations
 177 imposed by her mother and broader patriarchal structures.

178 Douglas (2024) explores the overarching themes of power, agency, and resistance within
 179 in *Here Comes the Sun* underscores how black women navigate and subvert systems of
 180 oppression. Through acts of resilience, defiance, and solidarity, Dennis-Benn's characters assert
 181 their agency in the face of adversity, challenging dominant power structures and redefining
 182 notions of selfhood and liberation. One recurring motif that encapsulates the themes of power,
 183 agency, and resistance is the symbolism of the sun, which serves as a metaphor for
 184 empowerment and liberation. As Margot reflects on her journey toward self-actualization, she
 185 asserts, *Here comes the sun, rising and shining bright*" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This symbolizes
 186 the transformative power of resilience and resistance as Margot and her fellow black women
 187 assert their agency and challenge systems of oppression. Thandi, Margot's younger sister,
 188 navigates these oppressive systems, particularly in the context of colorism and societal
 189 expectations. Thandi's experiences highlight how oppression operates on multiple levels,
 190 affecting even those who seem to have more opportunities. Despite being seen as the family's
 191 hope for a better future due to her education, Thandi faces immense pressure to conform to
 192 Eurocentric beauty standards and societal norms. Her struggle with these expectations is a form
 193 of resistance as she grapples with her identity and strives to assert her agency. This underscores
 194 the pervasive nature of oppression and the varied ways black women resist and navigate these
 195 constraints, further enriching the novel's exploration of power and liberation.

Comment [8]: And also oppression in the case of Thandi?

Comment [9]: These sections seems short—I'd choose one or two and fully develop rather than briefly hitting multiple points

Comment [10]: Prof's comments not answered...is oppression involving Thandi?

196 Similarly, Yang (2023) delves into Dennis-Benn's nuanced portrayal of gender roles and
 197 expectations, highlighting how the novel subverts traditional notions of femininity and
 198 womanhood. Through complex and multifaceted characters like Margot, Thandi, and Delores,
 199 Dennis-Benn challenges stereotypes and explores the diversity of black female experiences,
 200 dismantling patriarchal norms and reimagining possibilities for gender identity and expression.
 201 One notable example of gender subversion is Margot's defiance of traditional gender roles within
 202 her community. As she asserts her independence and autonomy, Margot challenges expectations
 203 of subservience and docility, embodying a vision of womanhood that defies societal constraints.
 204 This subversion is evident in Margot's assertion, "I refuse to be silenced... I will not be reduced
 205 to a mere object of desire" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This quote underscores Margot's resistance to
 206 patriarchal oppression and her commitment to reclaiming her agency and voice.

207 In a similar vein, Jamaican tourism has long been hailed as a critical driver of economic
 208 growth and development, yet it also serves as a site of exploitation and inequality. Scholars such
 209 as Chambers (2023) have highlighted the gendered dynamics within the tourism sector, where
 210 women often occupy low-wage and precarious positions, such as housekeepers and sex workers,
 211 while men dominate higher-paying managerial roles. Intersecting factors of race and class
 212 exacerbate this gender disparity, further marginalizing women from these historically
 213 disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the rapid expansion of tourism infrastructure has led
 214 to environmental degradation and ecological imbalance, as highlighted by Cevik (2023) and
 215 Sheller (2021). The pursuit of profit-driven development has destroyed natural habitats,
 216 pollution, and the displacement of indigenous communities:

Comment [11]: good

217 "On her way to work, Delores noticed the barren fruit trees, the wilting flowers,
218 and the brown, brittle grass all sucked dry. Dogs were lying on their sides with their
219 tongues out, goats leaned against the sides of buildings and fences, and cows moved
220 about with exposed rib cages, gnawing on sparse land. Children crowded around
221 standpipes to bathe or drink from the little water that trickled out; the younger ones sat
222 inside houses on cardboard boxes, sucking ice and oranges, while some accompanied
223 their mothers to the river with big buckets. Meanwhile, idle men hugged trees for shade
224 or took up residence at Dino's, pressing flasks of rum to their faces. God is coming, after
225 all, Delores thought." (p. 85).

226 The once fertile landscape, now characterized by barren trees, wilting flowers, and
227 parched grass, highlights the severe environmental degradation caused by such developments.
228 The suffering of animals, depicted through the images of dogs, goats, and cows struggling to
229 survive, underscores the broader ecological crisis. This environmental destruction is a direct
230 result of the pursuit of profit without regard for the ecological consequences, leading to pollution
231 and the depletion of essential resources. The dire situation faced by the community, particularly
232 the children who must scavenge for water, reflects the broader social implications of
233 environmental neglect. Through the lens of ecofeminism, the above assertion underscores the
234 interconnectedness of environmental degradation and the oppression of marginalized groups,
235 particularly women. Ecofeminism posits that the exploitation of nature and the subjugation of
236 women are linked through patriarchal structures that prioritize profit over sustainability and well-
237 being. The depiction of women and children bearing the brunt of the ecological crisis—seeking
238 water, managing scarce resources—highlights how environmental degradation exacerbates
239 existing gender inequalities. Meanwhile, the men's idleness contrasts sharply with the active
240 struggle of women, reflecting the gendered division of labor and the invisibility of women's
241 contributions. Delores's reflection that "God is coming after all" suggests a reckoning for the
242 unsustainable practices driven by greed, aligning with ecofeminist calls for a more equitable and
243 harmonious relationship with the natural world.

244 Similarly, the plight of sex workers in Jamaica reflects broader patterns of gender-based
245 violence, economic exploitation, and social stigma. Research by Davidson and Taylor (2022)
246 sheds light on the prevalence of trafficking, modern slavery, and the intergenerational
247 transmission of exploitation within Jamaica's sex industry. Economic desperation, coupled with
248 limited opportunities for education and employment, often compels women to enter into sex
249 work as a means of survival (Spear, 2024). However, the criminalization of sex work further
250 marginalizes these women, leaving them vulnerable to violence, coercion, and discrimination
251 (Frohlick, 2021). Moreover, the normalization of sexual exploitation perpetuates harmful gender
252 stereotypes and reinforces patriarchal power structures, as discussed by Reddock et al. (2022). In
253 *Here Comes the Sun*, Nicole Dennis-Benn masterfully captures the complexities of Jamaican
254 society, offering a nuanced portrayal of women's struggles for autonomy, agency, and survival.
255 Through an ecofeminist lens, we can uncover the interconnectedness of gender, environment,
256 and power dynamics within the novel and in real-world contexts.

257 **Jamaican Tourism Industry: Exploitation and Environmental Impact**

258 The Jamaican tourism industry is deeply rooted in a historical context marked by colonial
259 legacies, which continue to shape its dynamics and impact on the island's socio-economic
260 landscape (Sheller, 2021; Castilho et al., 2021). Colonialism played a pivotal role in developing

261 Jamaica's tourism infrastructure, with imperial powers exploiting the island's natural resources
262 and labor force to cater to the demands of Western tourists (Sheller, 2021). This historical
263 backdrop underscores the enduring legacy of exploitation and inequality within the tourism
264 sector, perpetuating socio-economic disparities among local communities (Castilho et al., 2021).

265 Nicole Dennis-Benn's novel *Here Comes the Sun* offers a poignant portrayal of the
266 lasting impact of colonialism on Jamaican society, mainly through the experiences of characters
267 like Delores and Margot. Delores, a single mother struggling to make ends meet, reflects on the
268 commodification of black bodies within the tourism economy, lamenting, "Just another black
269 body commodified for the pleasure of tourists" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Through Delores's
270 narrative, readers are confronted with the dehumanizing effects of colonial exploitation on
271 Jamaican women, who bear the brunt of economic hardship and social marginalization.

272 Moreover, local communities' economic exploitation and displacement are pervasive
273 issues within the Jamaican tourism industry (Onafowora & Owoye, 2020; Gahman & Thongs,
274 2020). Tourism development often prioritizes the interests of multinational corporations and
275 foreign investors over those of indigenous populations, leading to the displacement of
276 marginalized communities and the loss of traditional livelihoods (Onafowora & Owoye, 2020).
277 This unequal distribution of wealth and resources exacerbates social inequalities and perpetuates
278 cycles of poverty among local residents (Gahman & Thongs, 2020).

279 The economic exploitation and displacement of local communities are pervasive issues
280 within the Jamaican tourism industry. Onafowora and Owoye (2020) highlight the unequal
281 distribution of wealth generated by tourism, with local communities often bearing the brunt of
282 environmental degradation and social disruption. Similarly, Gahman and Thongs (2020) examine
283 the impacts of tourism on indigenous communities, emphasizing the need for sustainable
284 development practices that prioritize local empowerment and autonomy.

285 The Jamaican tourism industry has also contributed to the island's environmental
286 degradation and ecological imbalance. Cevik (2023) discusses the negative impacts of tourism
287 on natural resources, including deforestation, pollution, and habitat destruction. Similarly,
288 Sheller (2021) explores the ecological consequences of mass tourism, highlighting the need for
289 sustainable development practices that prioritize environmental conservation. Gendered
290 dynamics within the Jamaican tourism sector play a significant role in shaping power relations
291 and labor practices. Chambers (2023) examines the gendered division of labor within the
292 industry, highlighting the prevalence of low-wage and precarious work for women. Swain et al.
293 (2024) explore the intersection of gender, race, and sexuality in the tourism sector, emphasizing
294 how women of color are disproportionately impacted by exploitation and discrimination.

295 Sex work in Jamaica is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that intersects with
296 issues of gender, economy, and power. Scholars like Davidson and Taylor (2022) provide an
297 overview of sex work in Jamaica, highlighting its prevalence and the various forms it takes
298 within the socio-cultural context of the island. Lori (2020) further delves into the nuanced
299 dynamics of sex work, exploring how economic factors drive women into this profession as a
300 means of survival. This intersection of gender and economy is evident in Dennis-Benn's *Here*
301 *Comes the Sun*, where characters like Margot are compelled to engage in sex work due to
302 economic hardship. Margot reflects on her situation, stating, "I ain't no prostitute. I'm just trying
303 to make a living" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Through Margot's narrative, readers are confronted with

304 the harsh reality of economic vulnerability that often pushes women into sex work as a means of
305 financial sustenance.

306 Moreover, the marginalization and stigmatization of sex workers are pervasive issues
307 within Jamaican society (Frohlick, 2021; Sproul, 2021). Frohlick (2021) explores the social
308 stigma attached to sex work, highlighting how it contributes to the marginalization and
309 discrimination faced by individuals in this profession. Sproul (2021) further discusses the
310 intersectionality of stigma, emphasizing how factors such as gender, race, and class intersect to
311 shape the experiences of sex workers. In *Here Comes the Sun*, Dennis-Benn portrays the stigma
312 surrounding sex work through Margot's narrative as she grapples with the judgment and disdain
313 of her community. Margot reflects on the stigma she faces, lamenting, "They all see me as the
314 same thing—a whore" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Through Margot's experiences, readers gain insight
315 into the pervasive stigma and discrimination that sex workers endure within Jamaican society.

316 Additionally, the intersectionality of gender, race, and class plays a crucial role in
317 shaping the experiences of sex workers in Jamaica (Reddock et al., 2022; Davidson & Taylor,
318 2022). Reddock et al. (2022) discuss how intersecting identities influence access to resources and
319 opportunities, with marginalized groups facing compounded discrimination and oppression.
320 Davidson and Taylor (2022) further explore the intersectionality of gender, race, and class in the
321 context of sex work, emphasizing the need for an intersectional approach to understanding and
322 addressing the challenges faced by sex workers. In *Here Comes the Sun*, Dennis-Benn highlights
323 the intersectionality of Margot's experiences as a black woman engaged in sex work. Margot
324 reflects on the intersecting forces of oppression, stating, "Black, woman, poor. That's three
325 strikes right there" (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Through Margot's narrative, readers are confronted
326 with the complex interplay of gender, race, and class that shape the experiences of sex workers in
327 Jamaica.

328 In *Here Comes the Sun*, the pervasive societal stigma surrounding sex work is evident in
329 the interactions between characters, particularly in the way Margot is treated by her family and
330 peers. Despite the economic necessity driving her involvement in sex work, Margot faces
331 judgment and condemnation from her mother, Delores, who belittles her choices and implies that
332 she should resort to more socially acceptable forms of employment, such as selling crafts at the
333 market (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Delores's derisive laugh drives Margot back into Thandi's hair,
334 symbolizing the shame and scorn imposed on Margot for her occupation (Dennis-Benn, 2016).
335 This reflects the broader societal attitude towards sex work in Jamaica, where individuals
336 engaged in this profession are often marginalized and ostracized. Margot's experience highlights
337 the intersecting forces of gender, economy, and power that shape the lives of sex workers,
338 underscoring the need for greater understanding and compassion towards those marginalized by
339 society's norms and expectations.

340 Furthermore, the intersectionality of gender, race, and class influences the experiences of
341 sex workers in Jamaica, as depicted in *Here Comes the Sun*. Margot's sister, Thandi, faces
342 scrutiny and discrimination due to societal expectations and prejudices. Despite her efforts to
343 conform to these expectations by straightening her hair and dressing conservatively, Thandi is
344 subjected to rumors and gossip by her classmates, who speculate about her sexuality and
345 insinuate derogatory stereotypes (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Thandi ignores the attention, seeking
346 refuge at her desk in the back of the classroom, but the whispers of her peers still permeate her
347 surroundings. This highlights how intersecting identities shape individuals' experiences and

348 perceptions, with Margot and Thandi navigating the complexities of gender, race, and class
 349 within their respective contexts.

350 Furthermore, the intersectionality of gender, race, and class influences the experiences of
 351 sex workers in Jamaica, as depicted in *Here Comes the Sun*. Margot's sister, Thandi, faces
 352 scrutiny and discrimination due to societal expectations and prejudices. Despite her efforts to
 353 conform to these expectations by straightening her hair and dressing conservatively, Thandi is
 354 subjected to rumors and gossip by her classmates, who speculate about her sexuality and
 355 insinuate derogatory stereotypes (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Thandi responds to this scrutiny by
 356 attempting to "become white" as she seeks to lighten her skin and adopts behaviors she believes
 357 will make her more socially acceptable. This highlights how intersecting identities shape
 358 individuals' experiences and perceptions, with Margot and Thandi navigating the complexities of
 359 gender, race, and class within their respective contexts. Thandi's attempts to conform to
 360 Eurocentric beauty standards and societal norms represent her struggle against the oppressive
 361 structures that marginalize her. Her efforts to lighten her skin and change her appearance are acts
 362 of resistance against the societal pressures that devalue her natural identity. This underscores the
 363 pervasive nature of oppression and the varied ways black women resist and navigate these
 364 constraints, further enriching the novel's exploration of power and liberation.

365 In *Here Comes the Sun*, Nicole Dennis-Benn explores themes of exploitation, power
 366 dynamics, and resistance within the context of Jamaican society. Through the lens of
 367 Ecofeminism, the novel illuminates the interconnectedness of gender, environmentalism, and
 368 anti-colonialism, highlighting how environmental degradation disproportionately affects
 369 marginalized communities (Dennis-Benn, 2016). Upadhyay (2024) argues that the depiction of
 370 environmental degradation in the novel serves as a metaphor for the exploitation and
 371 disenfranchisement experienced by marginalized communities, particularly women and
 372 individuals from low-income backgrounds.

373 Moreover, the characters in *Here Comes the Sun* navigate complex socio-economic
 374 constraints while asserting their agency in adversity. Margot, for instance, grapples with the
 375 realities of poverty and economic exploitation, ultimately turning to sex work as a means of
 376 survival (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This reflects Spear's (2024) assertion that individuals engaged in
 377 sex work often do so out of economic necessity, highlighting how capitalism and globalization
 378 contribute to the commodification of marginalized bodies. Despite the constraints imposed by
 379 systemic inequalities, Margot demonstrates resilience and agency as she navigates the
 380 complexities of her circumstances, challenging traditional power structures and asserting control
 381 over her own narrative. Dennis-Benn's portrayal of environmental degradation also sheds light
 382 on the disproportionate impact of ecological harm on marginalized communities. The
 383 degradation of Jamaica's natural landscapes threatens the environment and exacerbates social and
 384 economic inequalities, further marginalizing already vulnerable populations (Dennis-Benn,
 385 2016). Through the character of Margot, who grapples with the environmental consequences of
 386 unchecked development, Dennis-Benn illustrates the intersecting forms of oppression faced by
 387 marginalized communities, calling attention to the need for holistic approaches to environmental
 388 justice (Upadhyay, 2024).

389 Furthermore, the novel portrays the marginalization and stigmatization faced by sex
 390 workers in Jamaican society, shedding light on the intersections of gender, race, and class in
 391 shaping individuals' experiences within the sex industry. Frohlick (2021) argues that sex workers

Comment [12]: Yes but she does respond by trying to become white right?

392 are often subject to social stigma and discrimination, further exacerbating their vulnerability to
393 exploitation and violence. In *Here Comes the Sun*, Margot's decision to engage in sex work
394 exposes her to societal condemnation and ostracization, highlighting how patriarchal norms
395 perpetuate the marginalization of women who deviate from societal expectations (Dennis-Benn,
396 2016). Moreover, the novel explores the intersections of gender, power, and economy,
397 highlighting how systemic inequalities shape individuals' access to resources and opportunities.
398 Within the context of Jamaican society, gendered expectations and norms often limit women's
399 economic mobility and reinforce traditional gender roles (Mookerjee, 2019). Thandi's aspirations
400 to pursue a career in the arts face resistance from her mother, who insists on prioritizing practical
401 pursuits such as becoming a doctor (Dennis-Benn, 2016). This reflects the gendered dynamics
402 within Jamaican society, where women are often relegated to domestic roles and expected to
403 prioritize caregiving responsibilities over personal aspirations (Coore-Hall & Coore-Hall, 2020).
404 Through Thandi's narrative, Dennis-Benn highlights how gender intersects with economic
405 constraints to shape individuals' life trajectories, underscoring the importance of challenging
406 gender norms and empowering women to pursue their aspirations (Lodge & Reiss, 2021).

407 To effectively address the socio-economic root causes of exploitation and environmental
408 degradation depicted in the novel, it is imperative to implement comprehensive policies
409 prioritizing marginalized communities' rights and well-being. Gahman and Thongs (2020)
410 emphasize the importance of addressing structural inequalities and promoting inclusive
411 development strategies prioritizing environmental sustainability and social equity. Additionally,
412 Upadhyay (2024) advocates for ecotourism initiatives that prioritize community participation and
413 environmental conservation, thereby mitigating the adverse impacts of tourism on local
414 ecosystems and communities. By adopting a multidimensional approach that integrates social,
415 economic, and ecological considerations, policymakers can foster more equitable and sustainable
416 development pathways in Jamaica (Castilho et al., 2021).

417 The scene in the bar where the residents and Verdene realize some common interests
418 represents a tangible manifestation of the principles highlighted in the scholarly quotes.
419 Multisectoral partnerships, as advocated by Munroe (2020), emphasize the importance of
420 collaboration among diverse stakeholders to address complex issues such as gender inequality,
421 environmental degradation, and socio-economic marginalization. In the bar scene, we see
422 characters from different backgrounds and social strata coming together, potentially forming the
423 basis for such partnerships. Their interaction suggests the possibility of pooling knowledge,
424 resources, and best practices to develop more effective responses to their challenges collectively.

425 Furthermore, the idea of international cooperation and solidarity, as emphasized by
426 Watson (2022), is reflected in the scene's broader implications. The coming together of the bar
427 patrons and Verdene hints at the potential for broader alliances and collaboration beyond local
428 boundaries. These characters can leverage their collective expertise and networks to address
429 local issues and the global dimensions of exploitation and environmental degradation by working
430 together. This scene thus offers a glimmer of hope, illustrating how collaborative action and
431 shared responsibility can pave the way for transformative change on both local and global scales.

432

Conclusion

433 In conclusion, the analysis of *Here Comes the Sun* through an ecofeminist lens has
434 illuminated the interconnectedness of gender, environment, and power dynamics in Jamaican
435 society. By exploring the characters' experiences, the novel reveals how systems of oppression

436 intersect and perpetuate socio-economic and environmental injustices. By examining the
437 exploitation of women in the tourism industry, the degradation of the environment, and the
438 complexities of power relations, the novel invites readers to critically reflect on the multifaceted
439 nature of oppression and the urgent need for intersectional feminist praxis. The significance of
440 ecofeminist analysis in understanding *Here Comes the Sun* cannot be overstated. By
441 foregrounding marginalized women's experiences and interactions with the environment, the
442 novel challenges traditional narratives and offers a nuanced perspective on the complexities of
443 gender, power, and environmental degradation. Through an ecofeminist lens, readers can
444 recognize how patriarchal systems perpetuate inequalities and harm both women and the
445 environment. This understanding underscores the importance of intersectional feminist praxis in
446 addressing socio-economic and environmental injustices and calls for collective action to create a
447 more just and sustainable world. As we look to the future, there is a need for further research and
448 exploration of ecofeminist themes in literature and cultural studies. By centering the voices and
449 experiences of marginalized women and examining the intersections of gender, environment, and
450 power, scholars can contribute to broader conversations about social justice, environmental
451 sustainability, and the pursuit of equity and dignity for all individuals.

452

453

454

455

456

457

458

459

460

461

462

463

464

465

466

467

468

469

470

References

- 471
- 472 Aldiki, M. P. (2023). *Social stratification portrayed in Nicole Dennis-Benn's Here Comes the*
473 *Sun* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim).
- 474 Castilho, D., Fuinhas, J. A., & Marques, A. C. (2021). The impacts of the tourism sector on the
475 eco-efficiency of the Latin American and Caribbean countries. *Socio-economic Planning*
476 *Sciences*, 78, 101089.
- 477 Cevik, S. (2023). Dirty dance: tourism and environment. *International Review of Applied*
478 *Economics*, 37(1), 168-185.
- 479 Chambers, D. (2023). Are we all in this together? Gender intersectionality and sustainable
480 tourism. In *Gender and Tourism Sustainability* (pp. 133-148). Routledge.
- 481 Coore-Hall, J. A., & Coore-Hall, J. A. (2020). Feminist Advocacy and Activism in the Jamaican
482 Parliament: Does Gender Matter?. *Feminist Advocacy and Activism in State Institutions:*
483 *Investigating the Representation of Women's Issues and Concerns in the Jamaican*
484 *Legislature*, 67-121.
- 485 Davidson, J. O. C., & Taylor, J. S. (2022). Sex Work in Jamaica: Trafficking, Modern Slavery,
486 and Slavery's Afterlives. In *White Supremacy, Racism and the Coloniality of Anti-*
487 *Trafficking* (pp. 237-252). Routledge.
- 488 Dennis-Benn, N. (2016). *Here Comes the Sun: A Novel*. WW Norton & Company.
- 489 Donahue, J. L. (2019). Consuming the Caribbean: Tourism, Sex Tourism, and Land
490 Development in Nicole Dennis-Benn's *Here Comes the Sun*. *ariel: a review of*
491 *international english literature*, 50(2), 59-80.
- 492 Douglas, R. (2024). A Woman's Work: Making Something Out of Nothing: Introduction to the
493 Special Issue. *Journal of World-Systems Research*, 30(1), 6-29.
- 494 Frohlick, S. (2021). The sex of tourism?: bodies under suspicion in paradise. In *Thinking through*
495 *tourism* (pp. 51-70). Routledge.
- 496 Gahman, L., & Thongs, G. (2020). Development justice, a proposal: Reckoning with disaster,
497 catastrophe, and climate change in the Caribbean. *Transactions of the Institute of British*
498 *Geographers*, 45(4), 763-778.
- 499 Jakobsen, J., Padilla, M., & Horn, M. (2021). Gender justice and economic justice: Production,
500 reproduction, and survival. In *Paradoxes of Neoliberalism* (pp. 34-70). Routledge.
- 501 Lodge, W., & Reiss, M. J. (2021). Visual representations of women in a Jamaican science
502 textbook: perpetuating an outdated, sexist ideology. *International Journal of Science*
503 *Education*, 43(13), 2169-2184.
- 504 Lori, D. (2020). *Paradise Lost? Female Sex Tourism in Belize*. Plymouth State University.
- 505 Lu, T. S., Holmes, A., Noone, C., & Flaherty, G. T. (2020). Sun, sea and sex: a review of the sex
506 tourism literature. *Tropical diseases, travel medicine and vaccines*, 6, 1-10.

- 507 Mookerjee, R. (2019). *Cravings in the Caribbean: Women, Food, and Desire in Contemporary*
508 *Literature*.
- 509 Munroe, C. J. (2020). *Wrapped in Labels: An Examination of Black Women and the Politics of*
510 *the Body in Kingston, Jamaica* (Doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University).
- 511 Onafowora, O. A., & Owoye, O. (2020). Tourism Development and Air Pollution in Caribbean
512 SIDs: A Bootstrap Panel Granger Causality Analysis. *Journal of Tourismology*, 6(2),
513 221-239.
- 514 Reddock, R., Reid, S. D., & Nickenig, T. (2022). Child sexual abuse and the complexities of
515 gender, power, and sexuality. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 37(1-2), NP176-NP208.
- 516 Rife, T. S. (2021). *Here Comes the Sun!: Toward a Critical Ecological Rhetoric for the*
517 *Anthropocene* (Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University).
- 518 Sheller, M. (2021). Reconstructing tourism in the Caribbean: connecting pandemic recovery,
519 climate resilience and sustainable tourism through mobility justice. *Journal of*
520 *Sustainable Tourism*, 29(9), 1436-1449.
- 521 Smith, D. E., McLean Cooke, W. C., & Morrison, S. S. (2020). A discussion on sexual violence
522 against girls and women in Jamaica. *Journal of sexual aggression*, 26(3), 334-345.
- 523 Spear, C. (2024). "What Will Set Yuh Free is Money": Sex Work, Debt, and the Dynamics of
524 Exploitation in Here Comes the Sun and The Immortals. *Journal of World-Systems*
525 *Research*, 30(1), 55-77.
- 526 Sproul, J. (2021). The Sun Only Sets on Their Dreams: Tracing the Origins and Impacts of Child
527 Sexual Exploitation and Tourism in the Caribbean. *Caribbean Quarterly*, 67(4), 427-452.
- 528 Swain, M. B., Wilson, E., Yang, E. C., & Chambers, D. (2024). An intergenerational dialogue
529 about gender in tourism. *Annals of tourism research*, 104(C).
- 530 Upadhyay, T. N. (2024). Ethical Tourism Development: An Ecotourism Perspective in Jamaica
531 Kincaid's Travel Narrative. *SCHOLARS: Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 6(1), 92-100.
- 532 Upadhyay, T. N. (2024). Ethical Tourism Development: An Ecotourism Perspective in Jamaica
533 Kincaid's Travel Narrative. *SCHOLARS: Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 6(1), 92-100.
- 534 Watson, P. (2022). *"Rape is a part of life where I live" the normalization of girl-child sexual*
535 *abuse in Jamaica* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri--Columbia).
- 536 Yang, R. (2023, December). Gender Role Subversion and Self-Liberation in "The Handmaid's
537 Tale". In *2023 5th International Conference on Literature, Art and Human Development*
538 *(ICLAHD 2023)* (pp. 388-401). Atlantis Press.
- 539
- 540
- 541
- 542