Eco-feminist Ideology in The Birthmark and Rappaccini's Daughter

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Sharing striking similarities in plots, characterization and themes, The Birthmark and Rappaccini's Daughter may be regarded as two sisters among Hawthorne's short stories. Besides, they may also be honored as two rare flowers in eco-feminist literature due to their display of a profound meditation on the relationships between human beings and nature, and between male and female, especially due to their double concerns over both nature and female. This paper will explore the profound eco-feminist ideology in the two works, centering on their criticism of the overdeveloped western sci-tech civilization and patriarchal culture.

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Get an answer for "How are Hawthorne's stories "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "The Birthmark" thematically similar?" and find homework help for other Rappaccini's Daughter questions at eNotes. One of the themes which connects "Rapaccini's Daughter" and "The Birthmark" is that of the intellectual pride of the scientist. In Hawthorne's time, science was not what chemistry and physics are today; rather, it was closer to alchemy, which has spiritual ties. Scientists of this time sought to not only solve the mysteries of nature, but also to master and perfect them. Both Rapaccini and Alymer seek to master nature by perfecting their beloved women. One of the themes which connects "Rapaccini's Daughter" and "The Birthmark" is that of the intellectual pride of the scientist. It is not long, however, before their tragic flaws are revealed; a poisonous presence and a small birthmark and from that point, the demise of these women and the "plucking apart" of their beauty happens through the actions of male characters who are seeking...