

Food Sovereignty and Environmental Justice

Humanity in Action Rights & Resistance Series
DeLesslin George-Warren (Catawba)



Agenda

1. Food Sovereignty?
2. Settler Myths
3. Indigenous Leadership in Environmental Justice
4. Landscape of Food Sovereignty on Turtle Island
 - a. Guest: Merry Manson (Dine)
5. Questions

CAVEAT



[Indian Country Today](#) > [News](#)

Two pueblos have some of the highest infection rates in US



Aliyah Chavez
12 hours ago

NEWS / UNITED STATES

Navajo Nation: Fears of hunger as COVID-19 lockdown to intensify

Navajo authorities set to beef up coronavirus restrictions as US aid trickles into tribal lands facing food insecurity.

by Creede Newton



2 hours ago



Food security impacts everyday life for many Navajo across their tribal lands [Andrew Cullen/Reuters]

Message from Mashpee Chairman: We Will Take Action to Prevent the Loss of Our Land - Friday, March 27, 2020

“At 4:00 pm today -- on the very day that the United States has reached a record 100,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and our Tribe is desperately struggling with responding to this devastating pandemic -- the Bureau of Indian Affairs informed me that the Secretary of the Interior has ordered that our reservation be disestablished and that our land be taken out of trust. Not since the termination era of the mid-twentieth century has a Secretary taken action to disestablish a reservation.”

#StandWithMashpee

Petition: <https://sign.moveon.org/petitions/stand-with-the-mashpee>

Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

“Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you may take care of them.

Introduce yourself. Be accountable as the one who comes asking for life. Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer.

Never take the first. Never take the last. Take only what you need.

Take only that which is given.

Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

Never take more than half. Leave some for others. Harvest in a way that minimizes harm.

Use it respectfully. Never waste what you have taken. Share.

Give thanks for what you have been given.

Give a gift, in reciprocity for what you have taken.

Sustain the ones who sustain you and the earth will last forever.”

Food Sovereignty?

Don't you mean food security?

Food Security: Access to adequate food

Food Sovereignty: Community control of production, access, preparation, and distribution of culturally, ecologically relevant food

USDA Revised Food Security Definitions

USDA's labels describe ranges of food security

Food Security

- **High food security** (*old label=Food security*): no reported indications of food-access problems or limitations.
- **Marginal food security** (*old label=Food security*): one or two reported indications — typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.

Food Insecurity

- **Low food security** (*old label=Food insecurity without hunger*): reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
- **Very low food security** (*old label=Food insecurity with hunger*): Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

Indigenous Women on Food Sovereignty

“Food sovereignty is an affirmation of who we are as indigenous peoples and a way, one of the most surefooted ways, to restore our relationship with the world around us” -- **Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe)**

Indigenous Women on Food Sovereignty

“The land is our identity and holds for us all the answers we need to be a healthy, vibrant, and thriving community. In our oral traditions, our creation story, we are taught that the land that provides the foods and medicines we need are a part of who we are. Without the elk, salmon, huckleberries, shellfish, and cedar trees, we are nobody. (...) This is our medicine; remembering who we are and the lands that we come from.” – **Valerie Segrest (Muckleshoot), Muckleshoot Traditional Foods and Medicines Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2015).**

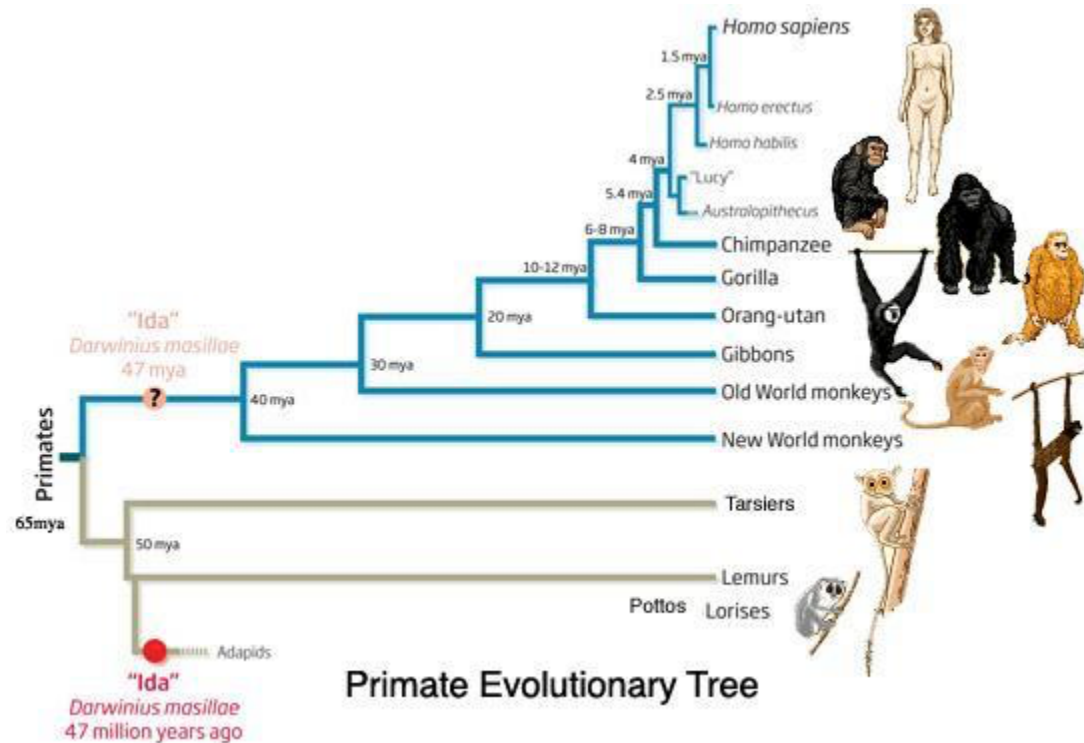
That Settler Society Tells Itself About the Land

1. Civilization vs. Nature

And other hierarchies

Clear claims of anthropocentrism, of the relative worthlessness and proper subjugation of wild nature, are frequently found in ancient Greek and Roman philosophers. Here, rationality is established both as the substance of dignity and worth and as the dividing line between the human and the nonhuman (as well as marking the proper hierarchies between some humans and others). Plato, in the voice of Socrates, makes clear his limited estimation of the value of wild things in the *Phaedrus* (section 230d) when he writes, “I am devoted to learning; landscapes and trees have nothing to teach me—only the people in the city can do that.”

-“American Wilderness Philosophy” in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*



2. Hunters and Gatherers in the Wilderness

“Oh look, a blueberry!”

“Civilization needs pure wildness.”
-- John Muir

3. The Land as Resource

The land is our relation

Brief History of Colonization and the Environment

Mariposa Battalion is formed by volunteers - Sanctioned by California - from Gold Rush prospectors who began systematically burning villages of people in Yosemite Valley to remove them. This would become Yosemite National Park

To Tu Ya/Maria Lebrado Yorte



“The last survivor of the Mariposa Battalion’s 1851 raid, To-tu-ya, translated to “Foaming Waters,” witnessed the invasion and destruction of her home in Yosemite Valley and the murder of her uncle when she was a child. Known in her 90s as Maria Lebrado Yorte, she returned to Yosemite in the late 1920s and told the story of that experience.” - National Park Service

United States forces Lakota people to forfeit land on threat of starvation



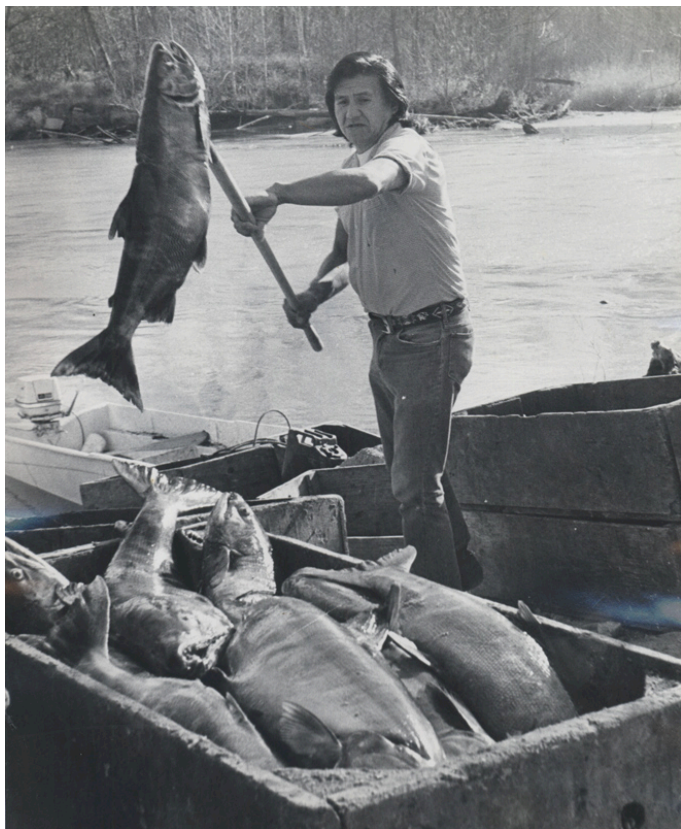
Catawbas forced to deforest land or face starvation



Emma Canty-Brown

Court recognizes that access to fish and wildlife was "not much less necessary to the existence of the Indians than the atmosphere they breathed." (United States v. Winans, 198 U.S. 371, S. Ct. 662, 49 L. Ed. 2d 1089 [1905]).

Fish-ins begin near Nisqually Reservation (on the traditional territories of Nisqually, Puyallup, and Muckleshoot peoples) to protest violation of treaty rights



Left: Billy Frank, Jr (Nisqually) - 1973 || Right: Allison Bridges (Puyallup) - Sept 4, 1970

Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota Resistance to the Dakota Access Pipelines receives global attention after security workers released attack dogs on Land Protectors.



President Trump severely reduces Bears Ears National Monument to allow for resource extraction.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Hawai'ian protection of Mauna Kea recieves global attention as celebrities begin to support the cause.

Global attention turns to protectors at Wetsuwetan and Unistoten as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police raid protection camps.

Indigenous Leadership

Not inclusion

80% of the world's biodiversity is located on indigenous controlled lands

Only 25% of the world's lands are controlled by indigenous peoples

Autumn Peltier, 15



When Autumn Peltier was just 8 years old, she attended a ceremony at a reservation where she saw a sign warning that the water was toxic, according to the CBC.

Growing up on a freshwater island in Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory in Canada, Peltier says she [had never experienced](#) toxic water. The memory of that sign stayed with her.

Six years later, at the age of 14, Peltier is fighting for water conservation and indigenous water rights. She says she was inspired by her great aunt, Josephine Mandamin, an indigenous activist who walked the shores [of all five Great Lakes](#) to raise awareness for water conservation.

Autumn Peltier (Anishinaabe)



[View More on Instagram](#)



2,133 likes

helenagualinga

INDIGENOUS BLOOD, NOT A SINGLE DROP MORE!

As we are facing one of the biggest crisis in human history, climate change. Indigenous people , protectors of the amazon and preventers of further climate destruction are criminalized, persecuted and murdered for defending LIFE and BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS. STAND WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE!

source=ig_embed took over TIMES SQUARE. #climatejustice

Helena Gualinga, 17

Landscape of Food Sovereignty on Turtle Island

Questions?

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