

Annotated Bibliography: Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants

Cecire, Natalia. "Environmental Innocence and Slow Violence." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 47, no. 1/2, 2019, pp. 171-188.

In "Environmental Innocence and Slow Violence," Natalia Cecire explores how ideas of innocence—particularly as they relate to childhood and time—shape how environmental harm is represented in culture. Using Benh Zeitlin's 2012 film *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, Cecire focuses on how the film visualizes what literary scholar Rob Nixon calls "slow violence": the gradual, often invisible damage caused by environmental destruction. She introduces the concept of "environmental innocence," a belief that individuals (especially children) are untouched by or unaccountable for ecological harm. Cecire argues that the film both critiques and reinforces this idea—challenging the myth that we have time to remain innocent in the face of environmental collapse, while also placing the burden of responsibility onto Hushpuppy, the film's young Black protagonist. In doing so, Cecire reveals how racial and environmental innocence are deeply intertwined, and how even efforts to move beyond race through posthuman or fantastical perspectives often reproduce racialized assumptions of who must bear the weight of responsibility.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. "Weaving Traditional Ecological Knowledge into Biological Education: A Call to Action." *BioScience*, vol. 52, no. 5, 2002, pp. 432-438.

In "Weaving Traditional Ecological Knowledge into Biological Education: A Call to Action," Robin Wall Kimmerer argues for the integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)—the "knowledge, practice, and belief" regarding relationships between living beings and their environments, developed by Indigenous peoples—into mainstream biology education. She contends that TEK offers not only values such as respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. Kimmerer emphasizes that TEK can complement Western science, enriching fields like conservation biology, ecological restoration, and environmental monitoring. She outlines practical strategies for incorporating TEK into science education, including dedicated courses, integrated lab activities, and collaboration with Indigenous knowledge holders. Throughout, Kimmerer stresses the need for educators to approach TEK with respect, care, and recognition of its Indigenous traditions. Ultimately, she presents TEK as a powerful resource for reimagining the human relationship with the natural world and for broadening the cultural and ethical scope of scientific learning.

Rademacher, Anne, Mary L. Cadenasso, & Steward T. A. Pickett. "Ecologies, One and All: Singularity and Plurality in Dialogue." *Environmental Humanities*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2023, pp. 128–140. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-10216195>.

"Ecologies, One and All: Singularity and Plurality in Dialogue" by Anne Rademacher, Mary L. Cadenasso, and Steward T.A. Pickett explores how the field of ecology can be understood both as a single scientific discipline and as a set of diverse, overlapping

approaches. The authors—two natural scientists and one social scientist—argue that while modern ecology has its roots in Western science, it has developed into a more flexible practice that embraces context, change, and multiple ways of modeling the natural world. What is often treated as a single body of ecological knowledge is actually made up of many different, sometimes even conflicting, models—what the authors call “ecologies” in the plural. As a whole, the article strives to encourage meaningful dialogue between natural scientists and environmental humanities scholars by pointing to shared understandings, such as the idea that scientific knowledge is shaped by social context and that humans are integral parts of ecosystems.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

In *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson advances a vision of Indigenous freedom rooted in Nishnaabeg (an Ojibway First Nation) thought and practice. She argues that true renewal requires removing recognition of the settler state and instead embracing “ground normativity”—ethical relationships based on consent, reciprocity, and respect. Through storytelling and embodied knowledge, Simpson outlines a decolonial politics centered on refusal, care, and relationality. As a whole, the book calls for Indigenous nationhood grounded in land-based practices and co-resistance with other marginalized communities.

Tippett, Krista. (May 2022). “Robin Wall Kimmerer: The Intelligence in All Kinds of Life.” *On Being*, 28 Apr. 2016. *On Being Project*,

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4vFECUiUsyfgkkgTnjphMW?si=03ffd287cc584c1b>

In this interview with Krista Tippett, Robin Wall Kimmerer reflects on the deep connections between scientific knowledge and Indigenous wisdom. As a professor of environmental biology, Kimmerer explores how Western science often treats plants as objects, while Indigenous traditions view them as living beings with agency, intelligence, and spirit. Here, Kimmerer introduces her idea of “the grammar of animacy,” and emphasizes the principle of reciprocity—the belief that humans not only receive from the Earth, but also have a responsibility to give back—both concepts that she covers in *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Throughout the conversation, Kimmerer shares examples from the plant world—such as the cooperative nature of mosses—to illustrate the importance of interdependence over competition. She challenges the traditional view that humans are separate from (and often above) nature, and instead offers a vision of joyful responsibility: one in which recognizing the Earth’s gifts, like food and beauty, calls us all into deeper care and gratitude.