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Meanwhile in Texas... Just a man and his rattlesnake

## Coronavirus Is a Warning to Us to Mend Our Broken Relationship With Nature

*Jordan Davidson, EcoWatch*

Davidson writes: "Leaders from three international NGOs - the United Nations, the World Health Organization and WWF International - teamed up to issue a stark warning that pandemics like the coronavirus are a direct result of the destruction of nature caused by humans."

[READ MORE](#)

The controversial Enbridge Line 5 oil pipeline, which runs through the Straits of Mackinac in northern Michigan, has been ordered to temporarily shut down following a ruling on Thursday by Circuit Court Judge James Jamo. An anchor support for the pipeline sustained "significant damage" last week, according to Enbridge Energy. Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, who requested the temporary shutdown, is also involved in separate lawsuits calling for the permanent closure of the Line 5 pipeline. [Bridge](#)



Nevada reduced its percentage of teens who were not in school and not working, from 15% in 2010 to 9% in 2018, according to a new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, but the data was collected prior to COVID-19. (nastya\_gepp/Pixabay)

## [Nevada Inches Up on Child Well-Being, But Still Ranks 46th Nationwide](#)

LAS VEGAS -- Child well-being in Nevada saw small improvements in a new report, but still ranks 46th overall compared with other states -- and that's without anticipated setbacks due to COVID-19.

The [Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count Data Book](#) looks at economic, education, health and other issues related to children's well-being and family stability.

Jared Busker, interim executive director of the [Children's Advocacy Alliance](#) in Nevada, said the state reduced the number of children whose parents lack secure employment, but that was before the pandemic bumped Nevada's unemployment rate to 25%.

He believes future data about children's well-being needs to be watched closely, and said the priority is clear: "We need to continue to advocate for as much as we can to really support our children and families at this time, because they need it now more than they've ever needed it."

The numbers don't take into account the economic fallout from the health crisis, either.

Busker said his group will be monitoring cuts to funding for children and families when a special session of the Nevada Legislature is held in early July to address financial and other pandemic-related issues.

[Nevada improved or stayed the same](#) in 13 of the 16 indicators in the Data Book, but lost ground in the categories of low birth-weight babies; children and teens who are overweight or obese; and the number of children living in single-parent families.

As Nevada reopens, Busker added, his group is looking at ways to make it easier for parents who need affordable child care to return to work.

"For instance, one of the things that we're seeing is that over 50% of our child-care providers that were open prior to the COVID-19 pandemic are now closed," he stated.

In this year's Data Book, Massachusetts ranked first for child well-being, followed by New Hampshire and Minnesota. Louisiana, Mississippi and New Mexico are the three lowest-ranked states.

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### **Higher education and the legacy of land theft**

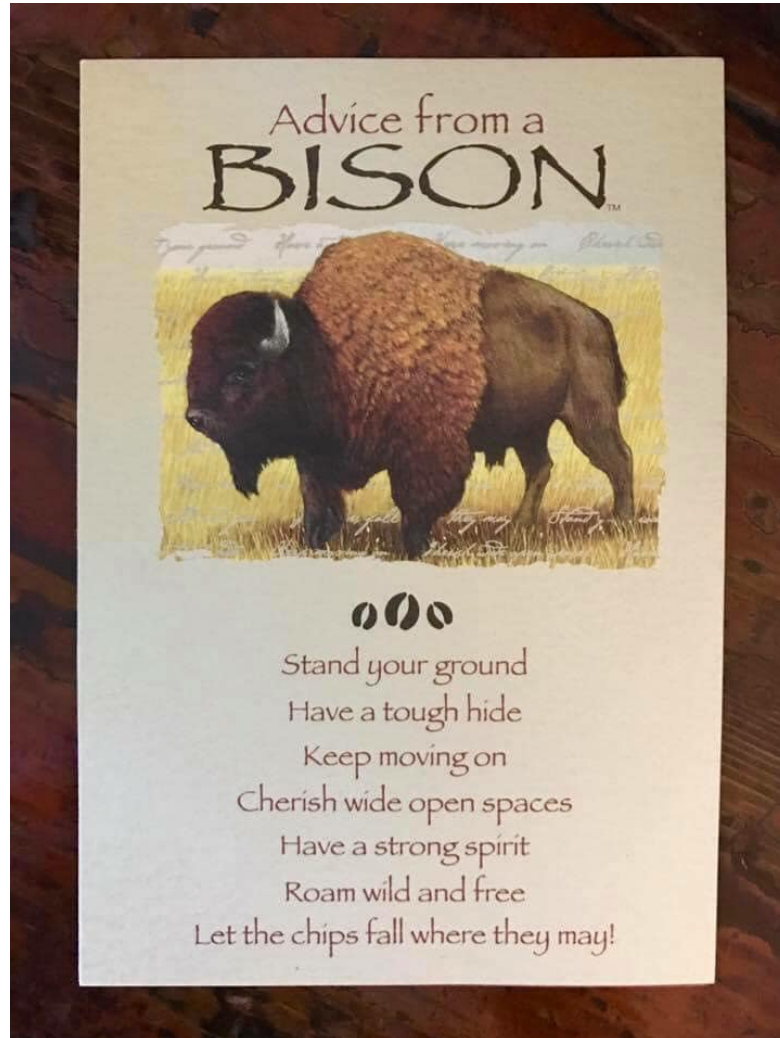
American universities such as Iowa State University, Ohio State University, The University of Florida, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Arizona are all land grant institutions. What does this mean? How did they get.. [indiancountrytoday.com](http://indiancountrytoday.com)

### **Tribe sues Trump administration over checkpoint interference**

Dalton Walker Indian Country Today The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is suing President Donald Trump and 10 other federal officials, saying they abused their authority and threatened the tribe's law enforcement funding and coronavirus relief money.. [indiancountrytoday.com](http://indiancountrytoday.com)

### **IRRRB releases money for Fond du Lac Band initially withheld over 'anti-mining' stance**

<http://strib.mn/2Z7eByc>



### **Deborah Miranda on KPFA's *UpFront***

Deborah Miranda, author of [Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir](#), was a guest on KPFA's [UpFront](#) this week to discuss the politics of making (and tearing down) monuments. Listen to the episode [here](#) (time stamp for Deborah's interview: [1:35:08](#))

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### **Two Arizona tribes, advocacy group join suits**

Ellie Borst Cronkite News PHOENIX - Two Arizona tribes and a Phoenix-based advocacy group joined a pair of lawsuits this week to reverse a Trump administration clean-water rule that critics said would open the "vast majority of Arizona's....



## **To Stop the Age of Extinction, Let's Start by Ditching "It"**

Spring 2015

Calling the natural world "it" absolves us of moral responsibility and opens the door to exploitation. Here's what we can say instead.

**Together, With Earth** By **Robin Wall Kimmerer**

**Mar 30, 2015**

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By **Robin Wall Kimmerer**

**Mar 30, 2015**

Singing whales, talking trees, dancing bees, birds who make art, fish who navigate, plants who learn and remember. We are surrounded by intelligences other than our own, by feathered people and people with leaves. But we've forgotten. There are many forces arrayed to help us forget—even the language we speak.

I'm a beginning student of my native Anishinaabe language, trying to reclaim what was washed from the mouths of children in the Indian Boarding Schools. Children like my grandfather. So I'm paying a lot of attention to grammar lately. Grammar is how we chart relationships through language, including our relationship with the Earth.

Imagine your grandmother standing at the stove in her apron and someone says, "Look, it is making soup. It has gray hair." We might snicker at such a mistake; at the same time we recoil. In English, we never refer to a person as "it." Such a grammatical error would be a profound act of disrespect. "It" robs a person of selfhood and kinship, reducing a person to a thing.

And yet in English, we speak of our beloved Grandmother Earth in exactly that way: as “it.” The language allows no form of respect for the more-than-human beings with whom we share the Earth. In English, a being is either a human or an “it.”

Objectification of the natural world reinforces the notion that our species is somehow more deserving of the gifts of the world than the other 8.7 million species with whom we share the planet. Using “it” absolves us of moral responsibility and opens the door to exploitation. When Sugar Maple is an “it” we give ourselves permission to pick up the saw. “It” means it doesn’t matter.

But in Anishinaabe and many other indigenous languages, it’s impossible to speak of Sugar Maple as “it.” We use the same words to address all living beings as we do our family. Because they are our family.

What would it feel like to be part of a family that includes birches and beavers and butterflies? We’d be less lonely. We’d feel like we belonged. We’d be smarter.

In indigenous ways of knowing, other species are recognized not only as persons, but also as teachers who can inspire how we might live. We can learn a new solar economy from plants, medicines from mycelia, and architecture from the ants. By learning from other species, we might even learn humility.

Colonization, we know, attempts to replace indigenous cultures with the culture of the settler. One of its tools is linguistic imperialism, or the overwriting of language and names. Among the many examples of linguistic imperialism, perhaps none is more pernicious than the replacement of the language of nature as subject with the language of nature as object. We can see the consequences all around us as we enter an age of extinction precipitated by how we think and how we live.

Let me make here a modest proposal for the transformation of the English language, a kind of reverse linguistic imperialism, a shift in worldview through the humble work of the pronoun. Might the path to sustainability be marked by grammar?

Language has always been changeable and adaptive. We lose words we don’t need anymore and invent the ones we need. We don’t need a worldview of Earth beings as objects anymore. That thinking has led us to the precipice of climate chaos and mass extinction. We need a new language that reflects the life-affirming world we want. A new language, with its roots in an ancient way of thinking.

If sharing is to happen, it has to be done right, with mutual respect. So, I talked to my elders. I was pointedly reminded that our language carries no responsibility to heal the society that systematically sought to exterminate it. At the same time, others counsel that “the reason we have held on to our traditional teachings is because one day, the whole world will need them.” I think that both are true.

English is a secular language, to which words are added at will. But Anishinaabe is different. Fluent speaker and spiritual teacher Stewart King reminds us that the language is sacred, a gift to

the People to care for one another and for the Creation. It grows and adapts too, but through a careful protocol that respects the sanctity of the language.

He suggested that the proper Anishinaabe word for beings of the living Earth would be Bemaadiziiaki. I wanted to run through the woods calling it out, so grateful that this word exists. But I also recognized that this beautiful word would not easily find its way to take the place of “it.” We need a simple new English word to carry the meaning offered by the indigenous one. Inspired by the grammar of animacy and with full recognition of its Anishinaabe roots, might we hear the new pronoun at the end of Bemaadiziiaki, nestled in the part of the word that means land?

“Ki” to signify a being of the living Earth. Not “he” or “she,” but “ki.” So that when we speak of Sugar Maple, we say, “Oh that beautiful tree, ki is giving us sap again this spring.” And we’ll need a plural pronoun, too, for those Earth beings. Let’s make that new pronoun “kin.” So we can now refer to birds and trees not as things, but as our earthly relatives. On a crisp October morning we can look up at the geese and say, “Look, kin are flying south for the winter. Come back soon.”

Language can be a tool for cultural transformation. Make no mistake: “Ki” and “kin” are revolutionary pronouns. Words have power to shape our thoughts and our actions. On behalf of the living world, let us learn the grammar of animacy. We can keep “it” to speak of bulldozers and paperclips, but every time we say “ki,” let our words reaffirm our respect and kinship with the more-than-human world. Let us speak of the beings of Earth as the “kin” they are.



[Robin Wall Kimmerer](#) is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, founding director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment, and Distinguished Teaching Professor at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, New York. She is the author of *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses*, and *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*.

#### Bigger Than Science, Bigger Than Religion

- [Deep in the Amazon, a Tiny Tribe Is Beating Big Oil](#)
- [From Watersheds to Mountains, What If We Based Our Borders on Nature?](#)
- [When the Grandmothers Awoke](#)
- [Depaving Cities, Undamming Rivers—Here’s How We’re Undoing the Damage](#)
- [Nature Needs a New Pronoun: To Stop the Age of Extinction, Let’s Start by Ditching “It”](#)
- [Wendell Berry on Climate Change: To Save the Future, Live in the Present](#)





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<https://heydaybooks.com/catalog/>

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## Opinion

### On the Limits of Care and Knowledge: 15 Points Museums Must Understand to Dismantle Structural Injustic

By Yesomi Umolu

## **National Archives: Join us on a Virtual Vacation**

Summer is officially upon us, and while many of us may have put our vacation plans on hold this year, we invite you to explore the country with us -- through the National Archives Catalog!

Some of our favorite records of life in the United States include the Environmental Protection Agency's Project [DOCUMERICA collection](#) held in the Still Pictures branch of the National Archives at College Park.



From 1971 to 1977, the EPA hired freelance photographers to capture images documenting subjects of environmental concern and everyday life in America in the 1970s.

The National Archives digitized more than 15,000 photographs from the series. Some of the subjects are beach and mountain scenes; urban areas including junk yards, streets, buildings traffic control; air and water pollution; waterfronts; mining scenes; and people.

Explore more DOCUMERICA resources from the National Archives:

[Photographed: Summertime in 1970's Chicago](#) on the Rediscovering Black History blog.

Explore our [Google Arts & Culture exhibit](#).

["DOCUMERICA: Snapshots of Crisis and Cure in the 1970s"](#) Prologue article.

National Archives [DOCUMERICA collection on Flickr](#).

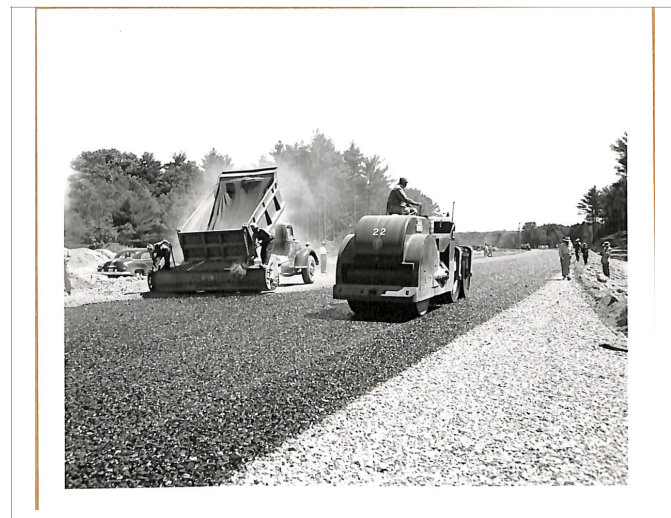
### **America's Scenic Byways**

This series of digital photographs was accumulated and maintained by the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) and [consists of photographs of 150 roads](#) located throughout the United States.

These images served as a visual record of roads designated as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads by the United States Department of Transportation based on archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities.

### **Bureau of Public Roads**

It wouldn't be summer without a little road construction!



*Bituminous Asphalt Mix on Newburyport Turnpike, 6/1952. [National Archives Identifier 169136966](#)*

This [series of photographs documents the role of the Bureau of Public Roads](#) in federally supported highway construction projects, planning, road material and construction research, and highway safety and maintenance.

Have you tried our [Bureau of Public Roads tagging mission](#) yet?

[New to the citizen archivist program? Learn how to register and get started.](#)

[Citizen Archivists, there's a group just for you!](#) You can share tips and strategies, find new challenges, and get support for your work. Get started with our poll: [What kinds of records do you like to transcribe.](#)

*Ed note: 1) I hope that each tribe is documenting its journey through Covid19 as future generations will find it extremely interesting if not helpful just as the oral histories and some photo documentation from the 1918 and other pandemics have been. I know there have been a lot of pictures of the calmed Pyramid Lake but there are other tiny little nuances in each community.*

*2) If anyone has the time to go through the above collections, they are bound to be rewarded with "unseen" photographs of tribal areas just as the Bureau of Reclamation archives in Lakewood, CO, yield fabulous documentation of lands considered as well as those chosen for the first 10 dam projects in the early 1900's.*

## Indian Country's COVID-19 syllabus

As of May 6, 2020 10:30 am EDT in the Indian health system. Confirmed by tribes, the Indian Health Service, state public health agencies or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Indian Country Today needs your help to gather positive...

**Read more**  
**[indiancountrytoday.com](http://indiancountrytoday.com)**

I'm just sitting here  
being indigenous...  
and you?

