



#PodcastsInTheClassroom

Episode Question Ideas: Episode 87

Tribes, Indigenous People and the False Urgency of Climate Adaptation with Dr. Kyle Powys Whyte

<https://www.americaadapts.org/episodes/tribes-indigenous-people-and-the-false-urgency-of-climate-adaptation-with-dr-kyle-white>

Full Episode Questions

- What is managed retreat? How might the concept of managed retreat differ across populations who are Indigenous and non-Indigenous, living in neighbouring regions and experiencing similar climatic changes?
- What is and has been the role of colonization and colonized histories in the experiences of climate change impacts on Indigenous peoples and Tribal Nations?
- Doug and Dr. Whyte discuss how existing Treaty Rights may influence interactions with climate change in some places. How might Treaty Rights be used as a legal tool for combating climate change?
- What is climate resilience? What does it mean to be resilient to climate change as an individual and as a society? What did you learn about climate resilience from this episode?
- What is climate urgency? How would you define climate urgency in your personal and localized contexts? How might climate urgency differ across perspectives? How can we respect the differences in these perspectives while actively engaging in adaptation as a society?

Segment Questions

- At 29:00, Dr. Whyte shares his insights about how strengthening community connections and relationships between tribal members living in disparate areas “can be an important way of thinking about adaptation.” What does he mean by this? In what ways do you see this idea applying to members of your own community who might grow up outside its geographical and cultural boundaries, and later return to work in environmental sectors? Do you see relationship-building as a tactic you might want to incorporate into your adaptation efforts? How would you work on this?



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- At 34:30 Dr. Whyte argues that from an Indigenous perspective, “when people respond urgently, they forget about their ethical obligations to others.” Unpack what he means by this and how it applies to climate adaptation and mitigation programming. Is this a new perspective for you? In what big or small ways have you seen “urgency creating unethical behavior” in your local communities?
- Beginning at 52:50, Dr. Whyte explains how climate science is not a “smokeless science.” What does he mean by this? Is this a new idea for you? What does it mean for you as a consumer of climate science research?

Related Open Education Materials

Learn more about issues raised in this episode! You may find the following open educational resources from MIT OpenCourseWare of interest.

[*11.941 Use of Joint Fact Finding in Science Intensive Policy Disputes, Part I*](#)



Dr. Herman Karl and Professor Lawrence Susskind share materials from a seminar on the role of science and scientists in ecosystems and natural resources management. Along with the syllabus, readings, and lecture notes, the course includes a video of a one-hour guest lecture on indigenous peoples’ relationship to the land.

Image caption: The landscape of eastern Oregon, where most land is managed by government agencies. (Photo courtesy of Bob Alverts.)



[**21A.429J Environmental Conflict**](#) In this ethnographically-focused graduate-level course, Professor Christine Walley explores competing understandings and uses of “nature” as well as the power relationships in which environmental interactions are embedded. Available materials include the course syllabus, reading list, and assignments.

Image caption: A sign used in the debate over the water-pollution crisis in Flint, MI (Image courtesy of [Senate Democrats](#) on flickr. License CC BY.)



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[24.02 Moral Problems and the Good Life](#)

Professor Sally Haslanger shares materials from a course on issues arising in public debate on matters of social justice. Educators have access to the syllabus, reading lists, and lecture notes, including notes from two lectures on the role of intrinsic-value arguments in environmentalist discourse.

Image caption: A homeless man sleeping in a park in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This course covers both theoretical philosophical topics and their application in the real world. (Image courtesy of [Gonzalo Sáenz](#).)



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