

[Sustainable Wisdom: Integrating Indigenous Knowhow for Global Flourishing](#)

A conference held at the University of Notre Dame, September 11-15, 2016 that brought together an interdisciplinary set of scholars and artists ready to integrate first-nation and mainstream contemporary understandings to move toward a flourishing planet.

Organizer Darcia Narvaez wrote: We take Paul Shepard's words as a guide:

A journey to our primal world may bring answers to our ecological dilemmas...White European/Americans cannot become Hopis or Kalahari Bushmen or Magdalenian bison hunters, but elements in those cultures can be recovered or re-created because they fit the heritage and predilection of the human genome everywhere, a genome tracing back to a common ancestor that Anglos share with Hopis and Bushmen and all the rest of Homo sapiens. The social, ecological, and ideological characteristics natural to our humanity are to be found in the lives of foragers.

Must we build a new twenty-first-century society corresponding to a hunting/gathering culture? Of course not; humans do not consciously make cultures. What we can do is single out those many things, large and small, that characterized the social and cultural life of our ancestors—the terms under which our genome itself was shaped—and incorporate them as best we can by creating a modern life around them. We take our cues from primal cultures, the best wisdom of the deep desires of the genome. We humans are instinctive culture makers; given the pieces, the culture will reshape itself. (Coming Home to the Pleistocene)

How can we integrate the best of modern technology and capacities with the wisdom of first nations? The conference looked deeply into the mindsets, practices and wisdom of first nation peoples across multiple disciplines. The goals of the conference were to (a) Increase understanding of “first” ways; (b) Describe how indigenous cultures foster wisdom, morality and flourishing; (c) Find commonalities among different indigenous societies in fostering these outcomes; (d) Develop synergistic approaches to shifting human imagination towards “first ways.” We expected that the conference would help us envision ways to move toward integrating helpful modern advances with first ways into a new encompassing viewpoint where the greater community of life (diverse human and nonhuman entities) are included in conceptions of wellbeing and practices that lead to flourishing.

In the conference, we brought together an interdisciplinary set of scholars to consider indigenous wisdom from multiple disciplines and to integrate this wisdom with modern knowhow. The speakers were selected for their specialty areas which range from science, history, education, psychology, and anthropology. The purpose of the conference and accompanying books was to bring to a wider audience an awareness of “first ways,” what we know about their effects on flourishing and how to integrate them into modern life for global flourishing.

CONFERENCE VIDEOS

[Welcome](#) (with Two Worldviews by Darcia Narvaez)

[Pokagon Band Culture](#), Marcus Winchester: Pokégnek Bodéwadmik (Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi)

[Preserving Indigenous Ethnohistory and Ecological Knowledge](#). Christopher Ball

[Boarding Schools and Education](#). Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert

[Mother Earth vs. Mother Lode: Native Environmental Ethos, Sustainability, and Human Survival](#). Bruce Johansen

[Spirit of the Salmon: Indigenous Spirituality and Sustainability in the Columbia Basin](#). Andrew H. Fisher

[Modern \(Intellectual\) Shamans and Wisdom for Sustainability](#). Sandra Waddock

[Indigenous Spirituality: A Matter of Significance](#). Four Arrows (Wahinkpe Topa), aka Dr. Don Trent Jacobs

[Spiritual Connections, Obligations and Outcomes: The Foundation of Tlingit Existence](#). Steve Langdon

[Regenerating the Roots of Indigeneity: Resurgence and Resilience in Troubling Times](#). Wazyatawin

[The Indigenous Worldview: Original Practices for Becoming and Being Human](#). **Darcia Narvaez**
Woman Is the Mother of All': Rising from the Earth. Barbara Mann

Orality, Literacy, and the Animate Earth. David Abram

[Guidance from the Trembling Aspen](#). White Standing Buffalo

[Daughters of Mother Earth: The Wisdom of Native American Women](#). Winona LaDuke

[Nature Sense to Innate Wisdom: Effective Connection Modeling & Regenerating Human Beings](#). Jon Young

[Indigenous science](#). Greg Cajete

Magic and the Machine; Reflections on Animism and Technology in an Age of Ecological Wipe-out. David Abram

[The Fortress, the River and the Garden: New metaphors for knowledge symbiosis](#). Robin Wall Kimmerer

[ENOUGHNESS: Indigenous Economics 101](#). Rebecca Adamson

[Aki-gikendamowin \(Learning from the Land\): Indigenous Art, Ecology, and Aesthetics](#). Dylan Miner

[Ancient Light: Picto-Poems and Ekphrastic Poetry](#). Kim Blaeser

[Talking Circle Day 1](#)

[Talking Circle Day 2](#)

In September of 2016, she hosted a conference, [Sustainable Wisdom: Integrating Indigenous Knowhow for Global Flourishing](#). Click the link for information about and videos from the conference.