

Reflection week 6: braiding sweetgrass

CODE220

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When reading this chapter I had to remind myself what reciprocity even means. Reciprocity means the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit. In regarding to the question about “money-based economy”, we can see reciprocity in the money-based economy with exchanging money in a store after you buy something or working and getting paid for it, but often this fails to really show us true reciprocity. Kimmerer’s question about consuming justly highlights the need for awareness and responsibility in our consumption choices. To see a more reciprocity we would need to implement principles of integrity, sustainability, respect, and mutual benefit into our consumer patterns.

The convenience of rampant consumerism complicates our participation in reciprocity in several ways, but one of the most important ones that I could think of is, cultural and ethical overshadowing. In a consumer-driven society, profit motives can overshadow ethical considerations. The values of reciprocity and respect for life can be pushed to the side in favor of convenience and “cost-effectiveness”, further complicating our ability to engage meaningfully with the sources of our consumption.

I would say that I agree with Kimmerer's statement saying that "not everything should be convenient". I think this because many convenient options are hard to sustain or just unsustainable in general. Embracing some inconvenience can lead to more sustainable choices that prioritize long-term health over short-term. Cultural values can significantly impede the adoption of practices, just like Kimmerer's Honorable Harvest does, in lots of ways. For example, in cultures that often emphasize individualism, the focus is often on personal gain and convenience rather than communal responsibility. This can make it difficult to embrace reciprocal relationships with nature and our environment. But overcoming these cultural "barriers" can be a challenge but would really be beneficial in creating a good habitat for respect and community over profit.

In this chapter Kimmerer encourages us to have more reciprocal thoughts and think more mindful about our surroundings. A lot of times in this book the idea of mindfulness and is a reoccurring theme and really challenges us as readers to think more like that and about our surroundings.