Climate Justice with Kyle Whyte

Christiane Wisehart: Examining Ethics with Andy Cullison is hosted by the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University.

Sandra Bertin: The views expressed here are the opinions of the individual speakers alone. They do not represent the position of DePauw University or The Prindle Institute.

Sandra Bertin: Jen Everett, welcome!

Jen Everett: Thank you.

Sandra Bertin: It looks like we've given you the hosting reins for this show. So I know who you are, but can you tell the listeners who you are?

Jen Everett: So I'm Jen Everett, I teach in the Philosophy department here at DePauw and I co-direct the Environmental Fellows program.

Sandra Bertin: So what are we doing here, Christiane?

Christiane Wisehart: Well Sandra, about a year ago, I interviewed a scholar named Kyle Whyte

Kyle Whyte: Yeah, my name is Kyle Whyte and I work at Michigan State University. I hold the Timnick Chair in the humanities and I'm an associate professor of Philosophy and Community Sustainability.

Christiane Wisehart: He is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. And a lot of his work focuses on the particular effects that climate change is having on indigenous communities. And because we have at DePauw an expert in environmentalism and sustainability, I thought it would be cool to talk about Kyle Whyte's ideas with Jen Everett.

Jen Everett: Ah, now I get it. I was not exactly sure what you meant when you said we're handing you the host duties. I was like, "Holy cow!" Now I get it. Now I get it. I'm being Andy.

Christiane Wisehart: You are being Andy.

Jen Everett: Oh, I'm honored.

Sandra Bertin: You are also being ambushed as it appears.

Jen Everett: A little bit of that.

Sandra Bertin: Great.

Christiane Wisehart: Are we ready to go? Are we ready to try this like brand new way of doing the show?

Jen Everett: Yeah. I'm totally game.

Sandra Bertin: Yes, I'm ready.

Christiane Wisehart: Awesome.

[music starts]

Sandra Bertin: The thing about climate change is that we often talk about it as if it affects everyone equally, but that's not true, is it?

Christiane Wisehart: No, it's not. Where we live, in North America, it's often communities of color, that are affected more by climate change, and according to Kyle Whyte, indigenous people experience environmental problems more severely than other populations.

Kyle Whyte: For a lot of populations, climate change is something that they think will affect them in 50 years or even 100 years, but indigenous people are actually on the front lines of dealing with climate change now. A lot of that has to do with the fact that they live lives that are very closely connected to the earth and natural resources. But also the case that not of their choosing, they live in these very small constrained communities that are very much, you know, smaller areas than they used to live in, and so the range of adaptability to climate change has been lessened.

Christiane Wisehart: I kind of intuitively knew all of that, going into thinking about this, this idea, but when I talked to Kyle Whyte, he brought up a particular way that climate change affects indigenous populations. And, so it affects what he calls collective continuance.

Kyle Whyte: So collective continuance is a conception of what makes societies flourish. For many indigenous people, especially in my tribe, our entire way of life, you know, from government to culture was based on an acceptance that change was normal and that change was always going to happen. And so, the entire society was built on that, it wasn't a resistance to change, it was actually embracing the reality of change. Because of colonialism we had to change very quickly and incurred harms that we probably wouldn't have incurred were we to change at a pace, you know, in a way that allowed us the capacity to avoid harm. So, collective continuance is this idea, it's what goes into making the society adaptive to change in ways that avoid preventable harm. And there's different aspects of that, right, so one is that you have to have the capacity to make difficult decisions in your society, right? So you have to address very hard challenges without, you know, destroying your society. Another aspect is you have to be able to work well with groups of people that aren't part of your society right, and all the various hybrid relationships that go on when societies intermingle with each other. And the other capacity, right, is you have to have the capacity to have ongoing traditions that are subject to change and adaptation where you're able to pull the good things from the past but also reinvent new things in the future, right. So those are your ceremonies, those are your diets, you know,

your other traditions that are what makes life good. If that's what we can understand as a flourishing indigenous society, what makes that work? For a lot of indigenous people, all of these capacities I was talking about are based on whether people have appropriate moral relationships not just with themselves but with plants and animals, ecosystems, depending on what the cosmology of an indigenous people is.

Sandra Bertin: So collective continuance is like whether a group is resilient to the change? Like they can change with their surroundings?

Christiane Wisehart: That's my understanding of it. He is saying that collective continuance is this ability that indigenous peoples have to adapt to change, right. And so I thought like, "Well, isn't that a good thing when it comes to climate change and like colonialism and all this stuff?" But what he is saying is like we have this ability to adapt to change, but what happened was that colonialism like came along and imposed all these harms and we had to adapt really quickly, more quickly than we wanted to. And that the same thing is happening with climate change where change is happening at just too fast a pace and so that's affecting indigenous people's collective continuance.

Jen Everett: I don't care how much resilience your community has if, you know, if people come through your community to destroy it, then it's good to have some depths of reservoirs to recover, to heal, to continue. This is the continuance part I get. But, but when changes are undermining in a really, really profound way, rapid way, the basis of your ability to survive and hold together and have a healthy community, then that's going to be...that’s going to definitely challenge.

Sandra Bertin: So I have a question about what he was saying like in all of this collective continuance is based on a moral relationship between plants and animals.

Jen Everett: And people.

Sandra Bertin: And people. What does he mean by that?

Christiane Wisehart: He actually expanded on that, so I'll play another clip because nestled in his idea of collective continuance is another idea about the importance of maintaining relationships like the relationships you were just talking about, Sandra, and also responsibilities towards those relationships.

Kyle Whyte: Responsibilities are systematic. So for a lot of, like, Potawatomi groups, right, you have, you know, tons and tons of different responsibilities depending on your clan, depending on where you live, depending on your, you know, more extended and more local family relationships, depending on what kind of, you know, land or region you come from. There's this, all these systematic responsibilities that, you know, are supposed to be working in a way that maintains this overall collective continuance. And so I've looked at a couple of different qualities of relationships that make it so that we're able to continue these responsibilities, you know so one of them is the relationships have to involve, you know, high levels of trust. So if you live in a society where for example the members distrust the political leaders and you're not going to be able to make difficult decisions. And so it's very hard to continue responsibilities both of members to leaders, but leaders to members if there's no trust.

Sandra Bertin: He describes like a system of responsibilities where they are like reciprocal responsibilities. So i'm imagining a responsibility to like the animals that you might hunt, but is there responsibility back from the animals? Like what, I'm confused.

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah, I asked him about that actually. So, so like… you know… he, he would say that there's a responsibility of humans towards water to take care of the water and keep it clean and not have like oil like spill into it. And then, but there's also, there's a responsibility going the other way, which is that the water hydrates people and helps us clean ourselves. So there's like a kind of back and forth of responsibilities and there's like an ongoing relationship there, and that colonialism and climate change are like disrupting that relationship.

Jen Everett: I have to say that there's a hesitation I have about everything that we are talking about here that I want to try and get out and then you guys can figure out how to capture it. So in particular, the place where I was beginning to get a little bit itchy is the, you know, what do we have to say about the relationship between indigenous humans in their communities and the fish and the trees and the water, the systems of nature on which they depend. And I find myself probably like many people wanting to imagine an indigenous world view, how it personifies. Does it personify the natural world? And so is that how we make sense of this idea of reciprocal relationships and so on? But I'm just, I'm hesitant about that because I think we can so easily do the simplifying romanticization that, you know, comes from some like Disney Pocahontas kind of context.

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah, I mean, yeah like it just probably needs to be said. It's like three white ladies sitting, talking about, you know, climate change and indigenous peoples, right?

Jen Everett: Right, in rural Indiana, yeah, within a sound booth..

Christiane Wisehart: Right. Yeah so, but I still… I don't know. I want to push forward. I want to… I want to make sure I understand what he is saying because I think I was just really taken by my conversation with him.

Sandra Bertin: And I feel like we have a responsibility to try to understand what he's saying, but it is really good technologies that we are going to… because we come from this Western view of ethics, we're going to… we are going to mess up. And so like, if we can flag something and be like I'm not sure he would think about it this way, but this is how we are going to try.

Jen Everett: I think that's right.

Christiane Wisehart: So I want to return to Sandra's question about reciprocal relationships because Kyle WHyte and I actually talked quite a bit about that.

Kyle Whyte: One of the important things among many others about reciprocity is that it suggests that there is a constant need to be learning about the things around you. So like in our traditions for example, water has a really important role. And that, you know, people in our community see water as having kind of it's own personality. The different bodies of water have different personalities. So when you think of somebody or something having a personality, that's somebody or something that you want to get to know over time, that your perceptions of that,

you know, personality are going to change, and hence, your attitudes will change, and hence the nature of what you owe that person or being is also constantly changing. And so I think one of the important things about reciprocity is it ensures that we're always very humble with respect to what we don't know about you know, bodies of water or other people. The idea of reciprocity and its connection to care indicates that we're always kind of in a state where we, you know, it's bad if we, you know, pretend like we fully know what's going on. It's also connected to kind of humility. In a lot of indigenous approaches to thinking about stewardship and thinking about reciprocity, the idea is that when you think about how do I think about my relationship or my society's relationship to the environment. And It's one where really the environment, the plants and animals, the ecosystems are ones that, in a large part, dictate how we respond.

Sandra Bertin: It sounds like reciprocity is sort of like a humility where you treat objects and animals as if you don't understand them completely. And so there's like a care that goes into how you treat objects and animals because you can't fully understand them? Question mark, question mark, question mark *laughs*

Jen Everett: It's common in a relationship that we take to the reciprocal to think: The other has their own independent experience in mind, values, needs. And I don't just know what those are. We have these ways of being helpful to each other, but we don't just assume you will be my helper. Right? That's not a reciprocal relationship. So the humility of this other person has another, their own whole set of experiences and needs and constraints and all of that, that I just don't have perfect access to.

Jen Everett: Part of the deal is that we know that our friends are all different. They have their unique needs and personalities and events and stress levels and they're different. And so what goes for one does not just go for all.

Sandra Bertin: And it's so much harder when you think about animals too because obviously there's even more that you don't know about what their constraints are and how the environment is currently affecting them and all that stuff. And that just made me think of like… the hesitancy sort of that he describes in assuming things about animals is not something that I think like settler culture has, which is like it's almost the exact opposite of like assume everything will be fine unless otherwise noted, you know so like killing tons and tons of bison and it's just like that will be fine, right? There's none of that humility in relationship with animals, at least in that instance.

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah, I think settler culture is particularly bad at coming to the environment, coming to animals and plants and having this like sense of knowing what's happening, right? And I think the world of science often has this problem of like, "No. We know what's happening there. So of course, we're going to do this thing because we know about the cellular structure of this plant."

Jen Everett: The particular piece of kind of it's not just Western science. It's not just American settler culture or whatever, but it's a world view about the way that nature functions that is, sort of, the prevailing one in mainstream dominant white culture or whatever, not even white culture, but a dominant view is that there's these regularities in nature that are fundamentally different than the way humans are. So we are each unique and different, but one beetle is the same as another beetle. One ash tree is the same as another ash tree. One, you know, deer is the same

as another deer. That notion of their being and any body of water is going to follow the same physical laws. There's a level on which that doesn't seem that's not crazy and that's not necessarily arrogant. It is a really different way than we tend to think about people on a common sense level. And I think it's a very cool stretch to begin to think about individuality in the non-human world.

Sandra Bertin: It's weird because looking at a human being like if you zoomed into our neural network, you wouldn't be able to see that we have consciousness. We just know that we have consciousness because we can chat. You know what I mean? Like we can talk to each other and find that out. But like the roots of trees, have like the same kind of neural network pattern that they're sending signals to one another and they're chatting and they're talking, but zoomed into that, we're not like, "Oh, yeah, trees have consciousness." Or we assume that they don't, there's no way to actually know that, but we do assume that they're not, you know?

Jen Everett: Yeah, I think that what you are suggesting is appealing to me that one of the fundamental moral responsibilities we have is *not* to be arrogant. This humility is kind of a core virtue or a core moral demand, right, if we want to avoid wrongdoing in the world. The assumptions that we make about whether we are or aren't affecting anything of significance need to be continually challenged.

Sandra Bertin: I'm immediately overwhelmed by the amount of destruction I personally cause on a day-to-day basis and how much that would change my life to be like humble towards the environment on a daily basis.

Jen Everett: I don't know. I'm not sure that I find it that way. It, I find, I can understand it because the idea is like everything toward which I need to be mindful or about which I need to be humble is another potential demand on me, and especially if we think about morality and being a good person and all of that as about the constraint on what we would do with our own self-interest if left to our own devices. Then, every new moral demand is somehow a weight upon me. But that's not the only way to think about ethics, and, you know, even Aristotle in the virtue of tradition. Even in the Western tradition, there's a way of thinking about ethics as being self-expanding, being a matter of growth as I become more mindful to other things I'm not. It doesn't cost me. It awakens me. You know, it strengthens me.

[music]

Christiane Wisehart: So I want to talk about this idea of like the structure of the world affecting your ethics. Tell me if I'm mischaracterizing what you just said. In some ways, there are structures in place that affect how you can behave ethically, right?

Jen Everett: Yeah.

Christiane Wisehart: So Kyle Whyte brought up this idea in a really interesting way because he talked about the preventable harms that colonialism imposes on indigenous peoples.

Kyle Whyte: Issues like climate change and other environmental problems are not just sort of things that are felt economically by tribes but there are things that actually erode the fabric of our society. And you can look at them in a very detailed way and their interaction with

colonialism as things that really do unravel our trust, our redundancy. This is why they imposed preventable harms, you know, on our society.

Christiane Wisehart: When he was talking about that, it seemed like colonialism was in some ways eroding ethics or like eroding the possibility of ethics, so I asked him about that.

Kyle Whyte: As native people we don't trust the settlers society, right. It's very hard to have ethical diplomatic relationships because all the cards are stacked against us. In fact, because of the situation that we're in, it's often times very good to practice distrust. You know, actually to cultivate distrust because there's many things that you don't want the settler society to know. For example if you're exercising a particular treaty right, oftentimes as native people we emphasize the legality of those treaties because they were ratified by congress. So a lot of times the goal is to act in adversarial way, in a legalistic way, and not in a way where we're actually trying to, you know, educate and celebrate with the settler society, with what our traditions are, with their traditions are. That's not to say that education is not a key thing, but often times it's not a good strategy.

Christiane Wisehart: I just thought that was very interesting, that he- this idea of trust that he brought up and that because colonialism completely eroded trust. It took away this very important part of like their ethical life.

Jen Everett: When I listen to what he is talking about there, I'm hearing about the articulation of cultural harms, harms to cultural norms, and the fabric, right, of a people that is really multifaceted. It's part of everything from day-to-day behavior and the food and the rituals and the relationships between generations and all of this and humans in the land, right? The other thing that I hear there is that part of what a culture's identity consists in... It's continuance. As you put it, right, it's about our ethical norms. And so, you know, in an ideal world where everything was just and fair and people had a history of treating one another with respect and dignity and we didn't have a history of colonialism and oppression and that sort of stuff. Then, the standards of expectation among people and within a culture and across cultures and so on presumably would be very high. I think there's a lot of work in feminist philosophy on this where you have relationships of hierarchy and domination. The same kind of trust and caring and giving and generosity and so on that you might expect between people who respect each other on an equal level just are not the right expectation. It’s not - you don't want people to be self-sacrificing within a context of abuse.

Sandra Bertin: It's just like if you're put into a situation where when you follow the rules that society has given you, you are forgotten or killed in the case of like indigenous people.

Jen Everett: And people of color.

Sandra Bertin: And people of color. And, what that dominant culture has done to you is that it’s stripped what's right and wrong into now what allows you to survive might be what you've never considered to do before, maybe lie, cheat the system or in other ways try to survive. And, that just struck me as such a different type of harm that I've ever considered before.

Jen Everett: I mean the one thing that I feel some desire to push back on is the notion that there isn't already virtue and morality in these acts of resistance that wouldn't be necessary in more ideal circumstances.

[music starts]

Jen Everett: It's courageous one might say to not trust where you've been told you must always be trusting.

[music ends]

Christiane Wisehart: So when I talked to Kyle Whyte, he told me that indigenous communities often have a fairly different way of looking at environmental conservation and stewardship. And he was saying that one of the ways that indigenous communities approach stewardship differently is by using this way of thinking called care ethics

Kyle Whyte: The idea of care ethics I think is an important one overall in ethical theory and feminist philosophers have created, you know, extremely important body of literature on care ethics. I initially became attracted to the idea because I noticed that when indigenous people were talking about, and writing about, and practicing their own ethics that they oftentimes use the English language word 'care' to describe their, basically their approach to how to live in the world, and how to live with the land, how to live with plants and animals.

Sandra Bertin: Wait, so what is care ethics?

Jen Everett: Whereas some of the main bodies of thought in ethical theory put the emphasis on, say, consequences of our actions, the morality of what we should do, the core thing is make the world a better place. That's one way, that's a consequentialist way, or the core of morality is to do one's duty what's intrinsically right and avoid the things that are intrinsically wrong and sort of a matter of rules. Or, in a virtue approach, the main thing about morality is to be the best kind of person one can be. In care ethics, the center of gravity is the maintenance of relationships, is the maintenance of one another's well-being. Our fundamental responsibility isn't make the world a better place, but care and maintain the network of relationships on which we all depend.

Christiane Wisehart: And really quick, let's hear how Kyle Whyte defines care ethics

Sandra Bertin: Okay**.**

Kyle Whyte: And so what I've come up with is that from an indigenous perspective, right, a care ethics is one where you see yourself and the plants, animals and ecosystems around you as as part of a system of reciprocal responsibilities. And that you can understand the nature of these responsibilities in the same way that we understand kinship relations or family relations, where really the goal is to not only understand what your responsibilities are but how they change over time as those you have responsibilities to also change, right, as they get older they change their goals or what they're doing. And also this idea that plants, and animals, and ecosystems, right, were involved in a caring relation because we don't just think of them as sort of inert objects, but we think of them as having some kind of agency. Now that doesn't mean it's the same kind that humans have, but it is much more than objecthood. And so there too, you get a strong sense

that it’s a caring relationship, it's not just a kind of control over a neutral object. And so I think you see a lot of indigenous traditions, you know certainly not all of them but who use terms like guardianship, stewardship, caretaker to describe how they feel that they relate to the plants, animals, other beings, ecosystems around them.

Christiane Wisehart: I just thought it was really… it was really cool and interesting to apply care ethics to thinking about the environment. Because like, just in general, when I think about environmental ethics, like I immediately get overwhelmed. And I go kind of like the most simplistic route, which is like, "I’ll just change my light bulbs. Or, like, I'm going to stop using plastic bags." And so… Like thinking about it, thinking about the environment in terms of care just opened my mind up to like, kind of a more holistic way of thinking about stewardship and the environment.

Sandra Bertin: Yeah, My favorite part of it as I understand it so far is that it exist in a system. Yes, it's a reciprocal relationship between maybe just two things, but as it exists in a system, which I think closes like really important loopholes in my understanding of it. Like, I was trying to think of it in like an outside of an environmental situation. Like, if we are thinking about, let's say a financial scandal, so like maybe if you just think of a relationship approach, then you might be encouraged to lie for a friend or something to help them cover up something because you care about your friend. But like because that part of the system is included, so that it benefits everything in the system, that's like no longer acceptable. That's how I'm thinking of it at least like, because it's a dedication to one another relationships between two things, but then as it benefits the whole system, I feel like that is a really holistic way like you said to approach ethics.

Jen Everett: What I heard was Kyle talking about modeling ethics in relation to the natural world on families, the language of stewardship and guardianship. That's the language we use in real - and he also talked about relationships changing and developing over time as members of, say, a family mature. So my responsibilities of care with respect to my daughter at eight years old are different than they were when she was six years old and they were when she was two years old, right. The things that it's right to do for her are different now than they were then. So the content of what I'm obligated to do has changed over time as she has changed and our family system has changed, right so our family as the system in this case. But I think the point that you are making Sandra about being required to take a kind of system's approach and not just a sort of one of how do I as an individual care for that individual and that's all of what care ethics is about. I think you’re right that all the best versions of care ethics require that we take a larger systemic perspective on whatever relationship we are talking about.

Sandra Bertin: Right, cause yeah. I was just trying to think of an example that challenged the loyalty as best policy kind of example and it does. It does challenge that I think.

Jen Everett: It's a stereotype of and not that hard to understand a stereotype of what care ethics is about that it's always about personal relationships and maintaining them at all cost in this sort of one-on-one kind of way. I think some of the early criticisms of care ethics kind of interpreted it as that sort of thing. My friend takes precedence over the impersonal world of politics or justice or whatever.

Sandra Bertin: I don't see it like that at all because of that inclusion of the system.

Christiane Wisehart: Well and for me the keyword… So for you the keyword might be system, but for me, the keyword is responsibility, that if you bring in responsibility to a relationship, that kind of puts it in a whole ... I don't know. It makes me think about it completely differently and what you are saying about like your daughter. It's not just about loyalty and love and hugging her. It's about your responsibility to cultivate certain ways of thinking about the world in her, right, and that responsibility entails some hard things sometimes, right?

Jen Everett: Right, right. I think this is one of the things that's exciting about care ethics is that it really is generated out of close attention to the moral dilemmas that arise all the time in the realm of the family. But anybody who takes family relationships seriously is familiar with the dilemmas of how ought I to act in this case. Am I doing my duty by, you know, being supportive in this case or am I shirking my duty by being supportive in this case of what the other family member wants? Those kinds of dilemmas are rife in family life and a nice model I think as Kyle is saying for thinking about our relationships with the natural world.

One form of relationship that's a clear antithesis to care is a relationship of use. Right so, if I think of my child or my partner as tools for my ends, this is… I don't have to work very hard at showing how that's not a caring relationship with them.

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah because and that… You just totally hit on something that I find so problematic about ... so I'll just use this specific example of about the way, you know, the media in the United States tends to talk about the environment. The story is usually, you know, we should take care of this body of water because if we don't, it's going to cost us ... You know there's some projection. It's going to cost us over the next 10 years $23 million. So shouldn't we take care of this body of water because it's going to cost us, right? And I love your sort of like the care ethics just sort of obliterates that because like we can't always frame our relationships with the world in terms of capital. What a limited and [beep] way of looking at the world.

Jen Everett: The way of thinking about the value of the natural world is always coming up in my courses on this stuff of course because I also do environmental ethics. And you know you can instrumentalize nature economically. That's definitely one way that we do it. It's not the only way we do it. We also you know, just to think of nature as being the place of solace for us in a non-economic way is ... There's nothing intrinsically wrong with that if it's not the only thing. If we think, "Look, the value of those woods is what they give to us when we go there to experience it," but a non-instrumental approach and more caring approach is going to try to de-center the use even non-economic uses from our thinking. That's there, but it's not the only thing.

Sandra Bertin: That's so hard for me. Like, I think I'm able to do to separate myself from an economic use for sure, but from a personal use because walking in the nature park and being in the nature park is so central to my mental health. It's really, really hard for me to not approach the nature park as a space for me. You know, I think I have a lot of difficulty with it.

Jen Everett: A little bit of challenge here. I can't think of my relationship with my daughter as not being totally enriching and fulfilling for me. I can't think of it as being it's all about her benefit and none of it comes back to me. This is the reciprocity thing to come back to Kyle, right? I mean, it's not that the benefit to you isn't something that you should take seriously. If anything, we should pay more attention to the ways we are enriched by our connections to others including non-human others, but that's compatible with there being more to the story.

Sandra Bertin: Well I think when I hear that though that like we are in a relationship and we were part of like this thing together, my mind jumps immediately to like Jainism. Like I operate in extremes exclusively.

Jen Everett: I guess so.

Sandra Bertin: So, I'm like, "Should I be sweeping the ground in front of me to make sure that I don't kill any bugs or… like can I eat from like big factory farms?" *laughs*

Jen Everett: Maybe… maybe, well okay yeah, those are pretty big extremes. I mean maybe what Christiane was pointing out is some things are developmentally appropriate for kids and some things are, you know, ecologically appropriate for ... So there's plenty of death and killing in the natural world. You could say it's sort of inappropriate to put an absolutist respect for the rights to life of every individual being that be like, I don't know, like expecting something developmentally and appropriate for my daughter, right. That might make some space for, we are natural beings too. We are not gods. We interact in the natural world as consumers of it, but that doesn't mean that anything goes like "Go factory farms. Yay!"

[music]

Christiane Wisehart: So one of the things that I think I'm going to take away from doing this episode is to just keep Kyle Whyte's idea of approaching the world with humility in mind. And Jen, you spoke about that a little bit too and mentioned that approaching the world with arrogance can lead to many problems. And so, so yeah I think that's what I'm going to try to take away is to try to bring to my relationship to the environment a whole lot more humility and a whole lot less arrogance and a lot of that I'm just going to have to unlearn, right, because part of being like a middle class white lady living in the United States means that I've got a lot of arrogance kind of embedded in my brain when it comes to thinking about the environment. So yeah, I think that's what I'm going to think about.

Jen Everett: How about you, Sandra?

Sandra Bertin: I feel like I have a lot. I've learned a lot in just this little time. I think the whole notion of care ethics feels like, you know when you hear something that you're like, "I kind of believe in that." You got a little fire in your heart. I got a little fire in my heart right now for care ethics. I'm just really into that idea of thinking of your individual relationships with people and with the environment as part of a system. That is just giving me so much life right now. But that also means, I'm going to continue I think to struggle because I have such an extreme personality that I'm going to oscillate probably between some extremes for a while before I land on what is my part of the system and how do I have this reciprocal relationship with nature that isn't me focused, but that also isn't Jainism. [laughs] That's probably what I'm going to do next.

Jen Everett: I like that. That's pretty nice. Usually, when I think about and teach around climate ethics, a lot of the focus is on the responsibility of polluters and sort of mainstream big, you know, hegemonic institutions of power industry and culture, so mainstream culture. And the question is about the weight of responsibility of the contributors to the problems of climate change is a problem because rich countries and middle class individuals and so on are

contributing so much in a way of emissions. And the focus is really then on us again, the sort of dominant group and what thinking about collective continuance does is kind of de-center that ... So the ways Christiane was wanting to investigate that concept like what is Kyle trying to articulate about one of the costs of climate change that we don't always attend to and that's pretty interesting. That's pretty interesting and not the standard way I approach issues of environmental justice.

Sandra Bertin: To complete your ambush of the day, to come full circle, if you were to write a review for the show on iTunes, what would you say?

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah like, if you were to login into iTunes and rate and review the show, how would you approach that Jen?

Jen Everett: So, you must sometimes get people who say really witty like, "Listen to three white ladies in Central Indiana, try to get in the head of an indigenous scholar and solve the world's problems," something like that.

Christiane Wisehart: Good.

Jen Everett: That kind of thing you're talking about?

Christiane Wisehart: Yeah.

Sandra Bertin: Five stars or one star?

Jen Everett: Five stars or one star?

Sandra Bertin: Could go either way.

Jen Everett: Oh yeah… That will depend on how well you edit. We'll see. Good Lord. Okay.

Sandra Bertin: I like that you are holding us. You're not going to let us get away with anything**.**

Jen Everett: Holy cow!

Christiane Wisehart: Well cause the thing is even if you don't listen to the show through iTunes, like rating us there and reviewing us there, is super important for our visibility. And so that’s like, you know, that really helps spread the word about the show.

Sandra Bertin: Yeah, or you could tell a few friends about us. That’d be really helpful too. And if you're trying to get into contact with us, you can find us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram.

Christiane Wisehart: All the channels.

Sandra Bertin: Examining Ethics.

Christiane Wisehart: We also have a regular old email address. It's examiningethics@gmail.com.

Sandra Bertin: We love hearing from you guys. Some of you have reached out to us about episodes in the past and we always love it.

Christiane Wisehart: And Jen, thank you so much for joining us today and for sharing your wise words with us.

Sandra Bertin: Thank you.

Jen Everett: No. Thanks for having me on. This is super fun. I hope I didn't screw it up so badly that you won't have me back.

Christiane Wisehart: You definitely didn't screw it up. This is awesome.

Sandra Bertin: Thank you.

Jen Everett: That's fun.

Sandra Bertin: That's it guys.

Christiane Wisehart: That's our show. Thanks.

Sandra Bertin: Bye.

Christiane Wisehart: Bye.

[music]

CREDITS:
Christiane Wisehart: Examining Ethics with—
Sandra Bertin: wait wait wait start over
Christiane Wisehart: Examining Ethics with Andy Cullison is hosted by the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University. Sandra Bertin and Christiane Wisehart produced the show. Our logo was created by Evie Brosius. Our music is by Cory Gray, Blue Dot Sessions and Minden and can be found online at freemusicarchive.ORG.
Examining Ethics is made possible by the generous support of DePauw Alumni, friends of the Prindle Institute, and you the listeners. Special thanks to Jen Everett for joining us on our discussion today.