

Make Me Smart October 5, 2021 transcript

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Kimberly Adams: But what even is life?

Molly Wood: But what even is life if not just work and podcasting?

Kimberly Adams: Yeah, seriously, work and podcasting.

Molly Wood: Okay, before we get down that dark rabbit hole, Lianna, hit the music. Help.

Kimberly Adams: Oh, my goodness, I go straight to the dark place.

Molly Wood: The show hasn't even started yet. Hey, everyone. I'm Molly Wood. Welcome back to Make Me Smart, the podcast where none of us is as smart or dark place as all of us.

Kimberly Adams: And I'm Kimberly Adams, it's Tuesday, which means it's time to deep dive into a single topic. And today we are talking about the Indian Child Welfare Act, also known as ICWA. This is a federal law that has been around for almost 40 years. And it provides protections for native kids who are up for foster care or adoption. And one of the main things it says is that native kids should be placed with either extended family or stay with native communities whenever possible.

Molly Wood: Right, which is something that doesn't on its face seem particularly controversial, and in fact did end many, many, many decades of Native children essentially being taken away from family and placed with white families. And so we wondered why has this law turned into a huge deal. We're diving deep because it seems to have to do with child custody. But it's drawing the attention of operatives, essentially, who see the chance to undo ICWA as the first step in doing way, away with a whole chain of legislation around native sovereignty, and that has huge implications for land use, ding, ding, ding fossil fuels are involved here, for water rights, for gaming rights. And so the undoing of this one law, which is now at the steps of the Supreme Court, could mean a lot of money for a whole lot of non-native people.

Kimberly Adams: So here to talk with us about all of this is Rebecca Nagle. She's an independent journalist and host of the podcast This Land, you may have heard us talking to her about her first season, which had to do with a different Supreme Court case. But this season is all about ICWA. And Rebecca is a member of the Cherokee Nation. So welcome back, Rebecca.

Rebecca Nagle: Thank you so much for having me.

Kimberly Adams: Well, thanks for being back here. And for having done all this work, digging into this story. A lot of the coverage of these types of stories around ICWA and around native kids tends to focus on the emotional aspects of separating kids in the foster care system from the families who have raised them. So what do our listeners, really me, us, need to understand about how tribal rights and Indian law play into why ICWA in particular has so much significance to tribes?

Rebecca Nagle: Absolutely. And so, prior to the Indian Child Welfare Act passing, there was a big study done that found that 25 to 35% of all Native children had been removed from their families and tribes by the government. And so ICWA was really put in place to try and prevent that from happening, because a lot of those abuses and those abusive practices were coming from child welfare agencies. And that removal affects everyone. It affects the child that is adopted out from knowing their medicine, their culture, their language, even just their family and being connected to that community. It impacts the tribe, you know, indigenous nations, we've endured and survived generations of genocide. And if we're going to build a strong future, you can't really have a future as a nation without children. And so it's, it's vital on all of those different levels.

Kimberly Adams: So let's back up a little bit here. We have this case, Brackeen v. Haaland, who are the players, what happened?

Rebecca Nagle: Yeah, so like I said, it's brought by non-native foster parents. It gets complicated fast because they're actually three families, but the main family and the namesake of the case are Chad and Jennifer Brackeen. And in the summer of 2017, they had been fostering a Navajo and Cherokee toddler for about a year. At that time, the rights of his parents were terminated, which is actually the moment that he was available to be adopted by anyone. His tribe, Navajo Nation, found a Navajo home that was interested in adopting the child. And both Navajo Nation and Texas DFPS started making moves to transfer the child to that home. The Brackeens started filing a bunch of things and you know, trying to fight, fight that movement. And basically what happened is they got some really, really, really powerful legal help down in family court. So the first people to show up is a corporate law firm called the Gibson Dunn. Their clients include people like Chevron and Amazon and Walmart. And so here they are in family court making motions in this custody case. And then the other interesting person to show up is actually the Attorney General of Texas. So like, imagine if you were getting divorced, and you're there in family court, and the AG of your state shows up, it's just extraordinary. And so they actually won the case fairly quickly. You know, and I would say, because of those power players, you know, we can't know what was in the judges head. But pretty much after those folks show up on the scene, the case starts to go their way. And then this, the last thing that is the last barrier for them adopting this child is actually both of his tribes, Cherokee Nation and Navajo Nation, agreeing to the adoption. And that happened the same week, just days after the Brackeens actually filed the federal lawsuit. And so it starts in this really odd place where actually they were winning the custody of the child, not losing the

custody of the child when this lawsuit came to be. Then other foster families joined, a few states joined, and then it's continued to wind its way through the federal court system, and now has been appealed all the way to the Supreme Court.

Molly Wood: And this is, you know, it's interesting, because I think you have made the point that, that mainstream media has gotten distracted by the kind of emotional nature of this case, but it is on its face really emotional, right?

Rebecca Nagle: Absolutely, absolutely. I mean, spending a year going through, you know, court transcripts, reading testimony, honestly, I think the thing that was the hardest was talking to family members, you know, who, through no choice of their own, the stories of what happened to their families are part of this federal litigation. And it is heartbreaking, you know, and I think what's interesting in sort of all of the pain and all of the harm that has happened to these children to these families, and to, you know, the pain that some of these foster parents have experienced, I just think it's a really odd interpretation to center the experience of the foster parents. And I would argue that that's not the purpose of foster care. You know, the purpose of foster care isn't to help people who want to adopt a child to find an adoptable child, the purpose of foster care is to give a child and a family in crisis support, and most often that support is temporary.

Kimberly Adams: So this case is about foster care and children in foster care. It's a pretty narrow set of family related issues. And yet, you have, as you report out in your podcast, all of these other groups involved that typically don't get involved in issues like this. Where's the money coming from behind this fight? And why are these groups so involved?

Rebecca Nagle: Yeah, so litigation like this is extremely expensive. And we don't know for sure, in this case, how much the plaintiffs have, have, how much they have spent. In a previous case, there was actually a motion for attorneys fees that was, at the end of all of it, in excess of \$1 million. And so you know, in that case, it was over a million dollars. And they've, they've brought, they brought a bunch of cases in the past decade. So this is not cheap. And here, here's where the big bucks come in. So there's kind of two camps. One camp is sort of a universe of right wing organizations, operatives and funders. And we focused on the organization that has really spearheaded and led that effort, this organization called the Goldwater Institute. We had one question, who gave them the money to fight ICWA, and why? And what we found was that it was this foundation called the Bradley Foundation, and the purpose of that funding had nothing to do tribes had nothing to do with equity had nothing to do with children. It was about building conservative state infrastructure. And Goldwater wanted to build a state litigation alliance. So just like there's coordinated state bills, where you see like, states all passing like voter ID laws at the same time. They wanted to do that with litigation, litigation that would advance a conservative agenda. And they used ICWA as kind of one of their early test cases. The other big pot of money is pro bono work that is being provided by corporate lawyers and corporate law firms. So the law firm behind this case is a really, one of the biggest law firms in the world, Gibson Dunn, and they have a lot of resources and a lot of power, and they've put it behind this case. And so, you know, there's a possibility that this corporate law firm just really, really cares

very deeply and genuinely about who raises this native toddler whose custody case, by the way, has already been settled. Or, you know, we found that these lawyers are using arguments that would have implications for both oil, the oil and gas industry and the gaming industry, which often comes up against tribal sovereignty and native rights. And not only are those broader implications there, but they're actually taking arguments, like the, they're using these two arguments in this case, this equal protection argument that ICWA is based on race, and the states rights argument. And the corporate lawyers we found had already used those arguments to attack tribal gaming. So they took the arguments that they use to attack tribal gaming, and then brought them into these ICWA cases. And so I don't think it's a leap of logic to think, well, if they win in the arena of ICWA, then they can take those same constitutional arguments back to the gaming industry.

Molly Wood: Can you draw that line for us, for people who sort of don't understand how sovereignty works? And how it might, you know, prevent non native companies from making money? Like, draw that bright line for us. If ICWA falls, how does that benefit gaming and fossil fuel interests?

Rebecca Nagle: Right, so tribal gaming accounts for half of all gaming revenue in the United States. So the last annual tally, it was around \$30 billion. And tribes can build casinos without state regulation. And where there is state regulation, there's usually compacts which means that no non native gaming is allowed in the state. And so tribes can build casinos where non native developers can't, and have carved out a really significant chunk of the market. When it comes to oil, it's actually kind of shocking, but um, tribes, you know, we only have jurisdiction over about 2% of all land in the United States. But that land contains about a third of all fossil fuel resources in the US, worth an estimated \$1.5 trillion. And so if tribal land water rights evaporates, then people have access to that land. And I think the other thing that we've also seen is that those treaty rights have been expanded to threaten fossil fuel infrastructure and other places. Like I think the Dakota, the fight over the Dakota Access pipeline is a great place where the pipeline wasn't being built. I mean, it was being built like a mile, but it wasn't being built within the reservation boundaries of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, but it threatening their drinking water was a violation of their treaty rights. And so um, you know, it just so happens that Gibson Dunn is actually the corporate law firm that represented the company behind that pipeline. And so as indigenous resistance and indigenous rights become both a public and then in the courts, you know, a legal, part of a big resistance to fossil fuel industry. You know, we, we found tape where, you know, lobbying organizations that represent Gibson Dunn clients have talked openly about how indigenous resistance like this needs to be stopped. And so those, those are, those are the ways that those interests line up.

Kimberly Adams: So why is ICWA in particular the entry point for these types of challenges?

Rebecca Nagle: You know, I mean, I, I can't, you know, say what is in the minds and the hearts and hearts of the folks who have brought these cases, you know, the evidence that I can provide as a journalist, it's just here is what happened. And there was a case that went to the Supreme Court in 2013. And it got a lot of press coverage. That was very, very favorable to the

white adoptive couple and not favorable to ICWA and tribes. And so they totally won that case in the court of public opinion. And then, in the Supreme Court decision, in that 2013 case, they didn't, like ICWA wasn't struck down. But you could tell based on the questions and some of the language and the decision that the justices were very sympathetic to this idea that ICWA is based on race, and this is racial discrimination. And so since that kind of partial victory in the, what was called the baby girl case, in 2013, since then, ICWA has been challenged more times than the Affordable Care Act. And so I think it's a combination, honestly, of the press coverage of the issue and the response from the courts.

Molly Wood: It's kind of like, I mean, this sounds very cynical, but I've seen over and over that in the tech industry, it's like when you want to pass a surveillance law or you want to expand surveillance, you always sort of say it's to protect the children, like these are emotional cases that people can get really worked up about.

Rebecca Nagle: Exactly. And, you know, it is much favorable to say, you know, we don't want to rip native child out of the only home that they've ever known, versus well, my white casino developer, like his constitutional rights are being violated that he can't build a casino where a tribe is, you know, and they're using the same constitutional arguments to say both things, but which one is more, you know, which one is something that's going to be more favorable in the public eye?

Kimberly Adams: You know, listening to the first episode in particular, I was really struck by how much of the argument, especially for the Brackeen family in why they felt like they should adopt this native child even over ICWA and all of these other considerations had a lot to do with sort of this Christian evangelical narrative around adoption. What role is this playing into all of it, all the way up to the Supreme Court?

Rebecca Nagle: Absolutely. So the adoption world is a very complicated place. And one really big layer to it is that among especially white Christian evangelical communities, since the 90s, there's been this call to adopt, you know, there are huge racial and economic disparities between the families who are looking to adopt and the families who are caught up in our child welfare system, who are disproportionately families of color and families that are poor. And so I think that we as a country haven't really wrestled fully with the ethical questions that that brings up. And so I think, you know, you can see some of those, some of those things come up in this case.

Molly Wood: Right. Like, there's a lot going on here because the issues for families and children affected by ICWA are super real. And the potential for this impacting, you know, American Indian law writ large is also a really big deal. And I just, before we let you go, I want to ask you, what do you think is the likely outcome if this case is heard by the Supreme Court.

Rebecca Nagle: Um, yeah. It's hard to say, you know, everyone's kind of watching abortion as the tell tail sign of, you know, how radical is the supreme court. And I would argue that everybody should be watching this case. There are so many reasons that this case, just like, let

alone that it's a 40-year-old law, that like the foundations of federal Indian law, again, have existed since the beginning of the Republic. So the arguments being made in it are radical, but even just the way this case was brought was extremely radical, you know, they found a ultra conservative judge who's made these radical decisions. In Texas, there was no discovery. So there's actually no evidence collection of the underlying custody cases. A lot of what's been reported in federal court, in our reporting, we actually found is straight up factually inaccurate. And then there's this huge question of whether or not the plaintiffs have standing, you know, for the most part, all of the underlying custody cases that began, this case have actually been settled. And so technically it's moot, you know, and how are you harmed by a federal law that doesn't let you adopt Native children like, if you're the white family that won custody, which is the Brackeens, and so they're making huge stretches to meet the threshold and civil procedure to even have standing. And normally conservatives are the ones who are kind of the standing hawks and so I think it'll be really interesting one, just to see how the Supreme Court takes it up. And, and then to see what they decide, you know, and I think it's for folks who are watching the court, I always say that federal Indian law is the canary in the coal mine, like what the courts are willing to do to tribes, I think everyone should be concerned about. And this case for this term, I think, will be, will be an important one to watch.

Molly Wood: Rebecca Nagle is an independent journalist and host of the podcast This Land, the second season of which is all about ICWA, which sounds like an amazing story. If you have not already heard it, you should definitely dig in. Rebecca, thanks so much for the time.

Rebecca Nagle: Thank you so much for having me.

Molly Wood: Amazing. I mean, there is so much in there, and that's 100% true, what is the court willing to do, you know, to native people in America, because it's a sign of what they're willing to do to anyone. That's amazing. That's remarkable.

Kimberly Adams: I have to say, I was really struck by this whole evangelical, Christian adoption line part of the podcast, because as you know, and maybe some others do, who've listened to me talk before, I spent, like 15 years in an evangelical Christian education. And that was a huge part of it, the adoption, and many of the folks that I went to school with were kids from different countries who had been adopted by white evangelical Christian families who felt that, you know, this was their duty as Christians. And so hearing sort of the other side of that play out in this circumstance was really fascinating to me. And, you know, I'm not gonna say who is or isn't a good or bad parent, or how that should go. But it really does reveal those, those power dynamics that she was talking about. And that's just one part of all of that, right?

Molly Wood: That's just one slice that, by the way, impacts so much lawmaking and behavior in America today, still, but that's just one slice of everything that is like, this is a massive line of dominoes. And I hope that that is what you have taken away from this is, that this is a phenomenal issue with a ton of money at stake, not to mention, you know, families. And it just is, it's really remarkable. And I'm glad we got to dig in, although clearly you need a whole podcast season to really get at all of the meat of it.

Kimberly Adams: She talked about Gibson Dunn, but like she also mentions in her reporting the Goldwater Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Bradley foundation and all of these, you know, groups that we've heard about as, but don't necessarily associate with playing a role in family law.

Molly Wood: Exactly. It's like, think about the family law, but don't sleep on the one and a half trillion dollars worth of fossil fuels. Like it's, there's a lot. There's a lot in there. Okay, all right, we're gonna take a break.

Kimberly Adams: Yes, send us your comments on the show. Yes, deep breaths. You can send us your comments on today's show by sending us an email or a voice memo to makemesmart@marketplace.org.

Molly Wood: You can also call us and leave us a voice message. Our number is 508-827-6278, also known as 508-82-SMART. We'll be right back.

Molly Wood: And we're back, just like that. And it is time for the news fix. What do you got? What do you got today?

Kimberly Adams: No, I want you to go first because yours is actually a bit newsier and a lot. Yes.

Molly Wood: Although I like yours. So obviously, there still is a lot of Facebook happening. The whistleblower Frances Hagan is speaking today, I think even as we are talking, she may still be testifying. She, of course, released her written testimony that she's going to be delivering to the Senate Commerce subcommittee. And, you know, look, it, there was a pretty good summary about the five issues that she is alleging, right? She's saying that Facebook misled the public, misled investors--that's the pretty substantive part because she's also made complaints to the SEC--has harmed teens, affected global societies and political polarization, and contributed pretty directly to the Capitol riots. So those are serious allegations. Facebook has been making the rounds, you know, on, in various interviews saying like, we're, no, right? Nope, we're doing everything we possibly can. We didn't do that. We didn't do any of that. In fact, that's just, that's absurd for you to even say that. They're also saying we have been asking for regulation for two and a half years. I heard Monika Bickert say that on NPR this morning, like, listen, guys, we've been asking the United States to make some rules for us to follow for two and a half years. The whistleblower herself is saying you guys need to regulate Facebook. And as I have said more than one time on this podcast, if you don't want Facebook to do certain things to your society, you need to regulate it. Like if you didn't, when we decided we didn't want tobacco companies to sell a product that killed people to anybody that they wanted to not let them know, we put regulations into place. Seat belts, right, airbags. Like this is a company as I said yesterday, that has had essentially zero regulation. It is, the idea that we keep sitting around blaming Facebook for making money, which is actually what companies in this country and the capitalist system are designed to do, is getting a little ridiculous. Like, get it done.

Kimberly Adams: I just wonder if we even have the structure of government to respond to an entity like Facebook.

Molly Wood: Yeah. Well, we have though, we have in the past. We let me this is what Lena Khan is coming in saying, this is what Tim Wu has been writing about. He's like, we have antitrust laws. This is what they're for. Like, they have made the argument that existing antitrust law, and so is Amy Klobuchar, that existing antitrust law is plenty to take on a company like this. And frankly, when we want to create new rules for companies, I mean, like the UK, what is it? You can't buy those kinder eggs here? Like, you know, you get like, we can make up any rule we want to protect people. And so like, I am actually a little bit over people blaming Facebook for being Facebook. Like I know that sounds ridiculous to say, right, like, but look, there are some entities in the world that we know do harm. Like we know that alcohol is poison. And we still allow it. We know that the oil and gas industry is contributing to the climate crisis and has, has peddled this information about it for decades, most likely, which is what we're going to hear about in front of a Senate Commerce Committee. We know that Facebook does some harm to society, if you don't want that to happen, that's why we have laws, like stop asking them to fix it. I'm just annoyed, I'm just over it.

Kimberly Adams: So I guess the better question is, what's wrong with our enforcement mechanism that we're not using the clauses that we have. And that is the fault of our lawmakers. Everybody needs to do better.

Molly Wood: It's like, so embarrassing at this point that they're just calling them and like, yelling at them, like, no, I'm yelling back at you like you, you are the ones who are supposed to fix it. You're the parents here, lawmakers.

Kimberly Adams: You know, this is, this is actually funny because I was slacking with Stephanie Hues who's like following the, the hearing today. And she was like, is it normal that a bunch of people who are not even on the committee come in to ask the same questions over and over again for a committee hearing? And I was saying they just want to be on TV. They just want to be on TV. And this why the hearing is stretching on, on and on. It's like, when we have this system that's so set up to reward grandstanding, that gets in the way of actual policymaking.

Molly Wood: 100%, 100%. And then finally, before, before I bring us all down, I'm just gonna say I read this great piece in The Upshot recently that I can't even find, I think I put in the wrong link that was like from last year, but there was, I will find the right link, producers, and you can cut out this like rambling part about it. However, I did read a piece in The Upshot that talked about the two month cycle of COVID that seems to be relatively identifiable at this point and the fact that delta cases themselves are falling and quoted, and I thought this was really important and I'm just gonna keep saying it, quoted the former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb as saying that at this point, because immunity is becoming more widespread through either vaccines and or, or infection, that I hope, I quote, another wave as large, as damaging and the

as the Delta wave will not be possible. Barring something unexpected, said Dr. Scott Gottlieb, I am of the opinion that this is the last major wave of infection.

Kimberly Adams: I'm scared of that.

Molly Wood: I just, I wanted to believe it so bad. I want to believe it. I don't care. I am. Speak it into existence. Exactly.

Kimberly Adams: Yes, yes. Okay. Yeah, let's, let's go with that. Um, so mine. I'm just gonna have hope. So mine is actually a story that I saw over the weekend that I noticed because I randomly saw someone referencing it in senate testimony that I was looking at a while back, which is about this FEMA system called what, what did they call it, I just had it here, I lost it. Risk rating 2.0, right, which was like, huh, that's an interesting thing. Risk rating 2.0 is about to kick in. And this is basically where FEMA is actually trying to let people pay the cost of living in flood zones. And I know that you've covered this on Marketplace Tech in the past, these new models and maps that are being made thanks to all this new technology, of exactly where the climate crisis is going to cause more flooding in the future. And there's been reporting on Marketplace Tech and all throughout Marketplace about how we chronically underprice flood insurance. And the federal government ends up bailing people out over and over again, when the properties on which they live in areas prone to flooding and even more prone to flooding due to the climate crisis, get flooded over and over again. So risk rating 2.0 is basically going to, starting in April, kick up people's flood insurance premiums. And they're going to go up about 18% per year for like, the next 20 years. And there's this really good explanation of it in the Washington Post that lays out that some parts of the country under this new metric are just going to become unaffordable. So here's how they explain it. Most homeowners will see modest increases starting at \$120 per year, in addition to what they already pay. And a few will see their insurance cost decrease, but wealthy customers with high value homes will see their costs skyrocket by as much as \$14,400 per year. About 3200 property owners, mostly in Florida, Texas, New Jersey and New York, fall into that category. And so the argument that, you know, officials are making is that the people who want to build really expensive houses in places prone to hurricane and flooding, like they need to eat that cost. But it will be, of course, there's pushback to this already. But anyway, it's just something I'm fascinated in watching and seeing whether it actually ends up happening because that's a lot of money for a lot of people in swing states.

Molly Wood: I'm like, fascinated, I'm just obsessed with the idea of risk, like the risk that is posed by the climate crisis and how ultimately the whole ballgame is insurance, and reinsurance. And that's where it all falls apart. If they're all like, wow, it turns out everything is too big a risk to be insured. Ask yourself if it all comes down. Yeah, yeah.

Kimberly Adams: Insurance agents are about to dictate, you know, where we live in the future.

Molly Wood: Absolutely. Which is so, which is such a nice segue into, before we get to the mailbag, just a reminder that my formerly secret but now not at all secret project, the podcast about solutions to the climate crisis How We Survive that I've been working on for all these last

months launches tomorrow. Oh my god, it's launch eve for How We Survive. So if you have not subscribed, please do get ready to listen to episode one, because it's coming out overnight. It'll be like right there waiting for you tomorrow morning Wednesday morning.

Kimberly Adams: So excited. Congratulations.

Molly Wood: Thank you.

Kimberly Adams: You're welcome.

Molly Wood: All right. Okay, mailbag.

Kimberly Adams: Let's do the mailbag.

Molly Wood: We just have a special, we have a special edition of the mailbag for you, because sometimes we throw a thing out there and it blossoms into something we cannot control. In this case, that thing we are calling birds of make me smart. Last week, we talked about doves versus hawks in terms of monetary policy, and then we were like, what should that third centrist bird be called because pigeons doesn't make any sense. That's just a dove relative. We got a lot of submissions. Shitra said that we should call it the fiscal flamingo, which seemed a little flashy for a centrist but okay. John, in Missouri wrote in in an email and said, instead of a dove, I have two and possibly a third suggestion. How about a chicken in the middle, afraid to commit? How about an ostrich, put your head in the sand. And then the third suggestion is an extinct bird. Its name is generally considered a derogatory term, the dodo. John does not have a high opinion of centrists, apparently. Yeah. And then a whole bunch of you called in. Here's a little montage.

Anne: I vote for the crow because they're smart, they use tools, and they're not quite as likely to rip all the flesh from your bones like hawks.

Greg: My third bird recommendation is owl. We need to be fiscal policy owls, be smart about it.

Bruce: I think your third bird instead of the pigeon should be the raven or the crow. Both are smart. Both make a living under every situation.

Laura: How about a magpie? Magpies are pretty skilled birds, but they're attracted to shiny objects. So maybe those who sit on the fence come off every once in a while when they see something great. Thanks for making me smart!

Kimberly Adams: That was Anne in Florida, Greg in Utah, Bruce in North Carolina, and Laura in South Carolina. Thank you to everyone who sent us their bird suggestions. Molly, you know where I'm gonna land on this one.

Molly Wood: Owl or magpie?

Kimberly Adams: No, crows, of course.

Molly Wood: Oh, crow. Yeah, that was a real slow burn. Kimberly is actually out there feeding the crows and they have not ripped the flesh from her bones. So yeah, good point. I'm sorry.

Kimberly Adams: They brought me that little blue stone, remember?

Molly Wood: They bring her presents. Exactly.

Kimberly Adams: Well, they also tear up my vegetable garden.

Molly Wood: That sounds kind of centrist. Yes, exactly. Yeah, they give and they take.

Kimberly Adams: They give and they take, so perfect centrist bird. Okay, and now we're gonna leave you with this week's answer to the make me smart question, which is what is something you thought you knew, but you later found out you were wrong about?

Carrie: Hi, this is Carrie calling from Bogota, Colombia. Something that I thought I knew, but later discovered I was wrong about, I used to think economics was about money. I now realize it is about behavior. Money and commerce only exist because people made them up. And the way people respond to their world is what shapes the economy. I thought Econ was a major in college for the Wall Street bound money hounds. Now I understand it is really a very subtle behavioral science. Thank you for making me smart and showing the creativity in the dismal science.

Molly Wood: The dismal science, that's amazing. Also, agreed. Totally agreed, same. Alright, before we go, I'm just going to make a plug. If you have put off emailing us or sending us a voice memo with your answer to the make me smart question, do it now. Call us, leave us a voice message at our new number, 508-82-SMART. What's something you thought you knew and you later found out we were wrong about, we do not care how big or small the topic of your answer is because it's always interesting. Call us up, let us know.

Kimberly Adams: Yeah. Even like the difference between a crow and a raven, right? Totally.

Molly Wood: It's the tail, right? One of them, one of them's a fan. The crow is a fan and the raven is a diamond.

Kimberly Adams: Sure, okay. Make Me Smart is produced and directed by Marissa Cabrera. Tony Wagner writes our newsletter. Our intern is Grace Rubin.

Molly Wood: Today's program is engineered by Lianna Squillace with mixing by Brian Allison. Ben Tolliday and Daniel Ramirez have composed our theme music. The senior producer is Bridget Bodnar. Sitara Nieves is the executive director of on demand. And we got a new guy! A big, warm welcome to Marketplace's new vice president and general manager, Neil Scarborough, in the cloud. Welcome, Neil.

