**How the water got to the plains**

Posted on [July 9, 2001](http://dreamtime.net.au/water/) by [Dreamtime](http://dreamtime.net.au/author/admin/) (no audio)

[](http://dreamtime.net.au/water/)

Way, way back in the first time, when everything was new, there was a group of Aboriginal people living on a mountain. It was a lovely place, but everyone was worried. It had not rained for a long, long time and they were very short of water.

They had some wells but these, except for one, were empty. When it had rained before, the water had just run down the side of the mountain, into the sea, which was far, far away. Now, on the other side of the mountain, there were just some big, dry plains where nothing grew.

Weeri and Walawidbit were two greedy men. They decided to steal the last of the water for themselves and then run away.

In secret, they made a large water-carrier, which was called an eel-a-mun. When everyone was asleep, they stole the water from the last well and hurried off.

When the people woke up, there was no water for them. This was very bad, because there were little children and babies needing water and also the old people. And also, it was very hot.

The Elders called all the people together and it was then that they saw that two men were missing.

Looking around, they found the tracks of the two men. Quickly, the warriors followed these tracks, which led down the other side of the mountain to the big plains and they could see the men in the distance.

The water-carrier was very heavy and Weeri and Walawidbit were walking slowly. This was because they thought they were safe. However, when they saw the warriors coming they ran, too.

The best spearmen in the group ran to a cliff which jutted out and threw all the spears they had. One hit the eel-a-mun and dropped off. However, it did make a hole in the water-carrier. On and on across the plains ran the two men. They did not notice that the water was leaking out until the carrier was almost empty. This was why they had been able to run faster and by this time, the warriors had caught up.

Now, this was way back in the first time, when very strange things happened. So the warriors took the men back home and the Elders called a big meeting. It was decided that the two men had to be punished for stealing and also, for thinking of themselves first and not the community.

So, the Wonmutta, the clever man, made some very strong magic and Weeree was changed into the very first emu. He went running down the mountain, out onto the plains, in shame. Walawidbit was changed into the very first blue-tongued lizard and he crawled away to hide in the rocks.

But, a wonderful thing had happened. Wherever the water had leaked onto the plains, there were now beautiful billabongs, or waterholes. There was grass and flowers and lovely water lilies and then there were shrubs and trees. And soon, the birds came and everyone was happy because there was enough water for everyone.

And that is how the water got to the plains.

**I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr.  
August 28, 1963, Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.**

SoJust is an [**EdChange**](http://www.edchange.org/index.html) project © Paul C. Gorski, 2006-2018

URL title: Martin Luther King, Jr. I Have A Dream Speech

URL link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vDWWy4CMhE

**Please note: The following is an abridged version of the famous speech by Martin Luther King, Jr**

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification - one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi - from every mountainside.

Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring - when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children - black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics - will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

**‘The Australian Dream’ by Stan Grant (2016)**

[**The full speech: http://www.ethics.org.au/on-ethics/blog/january-2016/stan-grant-s-speech-on-racism-and-the-australian-d**](The%20full%20speech:%20http://www.ethics.org.au/on-ethics/blog/january-2016/stan-grant-s-speech-on-racism-and-the-australian-d)

**URL YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEOssW1rw0I**

In the winter of 2015, Australia turned to face itself. It looked into its soul and it had to ask this question. Who are we? What sort of country do we want to be? And this happened in a place that is most holy, most sacred to Australians. It happened in the sporting field, it happened on the football field. Suddenly the front page was on the back page, it was in the grandstands.   
  
Thousands of voices rose to hound an Indigenous man. A man who was told he wasn't Australian. A man who was told he wasn't Australian of the Year. And they hounded that man into submission.  
  
I can't speak for what lay in the hearts of the people who booed Adam Goodes. But I can tell you what we heard when we heard those boos. We heard a sound that was very familiar to us.  
  
We heard a howl. We heard a howl of humiliation that echoes across two centuries of dispossession, injustice, suffering and survival. We heard the howl of the Australian dream and it said to us again, you're not welcome.   
  
The Australian Dream.  
  
We sing of it, and we recite it in verse. *Australians all, let us rejoice for we are young and free.*  
  
My people die young in this country. We die ten years younger than average Australians and we are far from free. We are fewer than three percent of the Australian population and yet we are 25 percent, a quarter of those Australians locked up in our prisons and if you are a juvenile, it is worse, it is 50 percent. An Indigenous child is more likely to be locked up in prison than they are to finish high school.  
  
*I love a sunburned country, a land of sweeping plains, of rugged mountain ranges.*  
  
It reminds me that my people were killed on those plains. We were shot on those plains, disease ravaged us on those plains.  
  
I come from those plains. I come from a people west of the Blue Mountains, the Wiradjuri people, where in the 1820's, the soldiers and settlers waged a war of extermination against my people. Yes, a war of extermination! That was the language used at the time. Go to the *Sydney Gazette* and look it up and read about it. Martial law was declared and my people could be shot on sight. Those rugged mountain ranges, my people, women and children were herded over those ranges to their deaths.  
  
The Australian Dream.  
  
The Australian Dream is rooted in racism. It is the very foundation of the dream. It is there at the birth of the nation. It is there in *terra nullius.*An empty land. A land for the taking. Sixty thousand years of occupation. A people who made the first seafaring journey in the history of mankind. A people of law, a people of lore, a people of music and art and dance and politics. None of it mattered because our rights were extinguished because we were not here according to British law.   
  
And when British people looked at us, they saw something sub-human, and if we were human at all, we occupied the lowest rung on civilisation's ladder. We were fly-blown, stone age savages and that was the language that was used. Charles Dickens, the great writer of the age, when referring to the noble savage of which we were counted among, said "it would be better that they be wiped off the face of the earth." Captain Arthur Phillip, a man of enlightenment, a man who was instructed to make peace with the so called natives in a matter of years, was sending out raiding parties with the instruction, "Bring back the severed heads of the black troublemakers."   
  
They were smoothing the dying pillow.  
  
My people were rounded up and put on missions from where if you escaped, you were hunted down, you were roped and tied and dragged back, and it happened here. It happened on the mission that my grandmother and my great grandmother are from, the Warrengesda on the Darling Point of the Murrumbidgee River.  
  
Read about it. It happened.  
  
By 1901 when we became a nation, when we federated the colonies, we were nowhere. We're not in the Constitution, save for 'race provisions' which allowed for laws to be made that would take our children, that would invade our privacy, that would tell us who we could marry and tell us where we could live.  
  
The Australian Dream.   
  
By 1963, the year of my birth, the dispossession was continuing. Police came at gunpoint under cover of darkness to Mapoon, an aboriginal community in Queensland, and they ordered people from their homes and they burned those homes to the ground and they gave the land to a bauxite mining company. And today those people remember that as the 'Night of the Burning'.  
  
In 1963 when I was born, I was counted among the flora and fauna, not among the citizens of this country.  
  
Now, you will hear things tonight. You will hear people say, "But you've done well." Yes, I have and I'm proud of it and why have I done well? I've done well because of who has come before me. My father who lost the tips of three fingers working in saw mills to put food on our table because he was denied an education. My grandfather who served to fight wars for this country when he was not yet a citizen and came back to a segregated land where he couldn't even share a drink with his digger mates in the pub because he was black.  
  
My great grandfather, who was jailed for speaking his language to his grandson (my father). Jailed for it! My grandfather on my mother's side who married a white woman who reached out to Australia, lived on the fringes of town until the police came, put a gun to his head, bulldozed his tin humpy and ran over the graves of the three children he buried there.  
  
That's the Australian Dream. I have succeeded in spite of the Australian Dream, not because of it, and I've succeeded because of those people.  
  
You might hear tonight, "But you have white blood in you". And if the white blood in me was here tonight, my grandmother, she would tell you of how she was turned away from a hospital giving birth to her first child because she was giving birth to the child of a black person.  
  
The Australian Dream.  
  
We're better than this. I have seen the worst of the world as a reporter. I spent a decade in war zones from Iraq to Afghanistan, and Pakistan. We are an extraordinary country. We are in so many respects the envy of the world. If I was sitting here where my friends are tonight, I would be arguing passionately for this country. But I stand here with my ancestors, and the view looks very different from where I stand.  
  
The Australian Dream.  
  
We have our heroes. Albert Namatjira painted the soul of this nation. Vincent Lingiari put his hand out for Gough Whitlam to pour the sand of his country through his fingers and say, "This is my country." Cathy Freeman lit the torch of the Olympic Games. But every time we are lured into the light, we are mugged by the darkness of this country's history. Of course, racism is killing the Australian Dream. It is self-evident that it's killing the Australian dream. But we are better than that.   
  
The people who stood up and supported Adam Goodes and said, "No more," they are better than that. The people who marched across the bridge for reconciliation, they are better than that. The people who supported Kevin Rudd when he said sorry to the Stolen Generations, they are better than that. My children and their non-Indigenous friends are better than that. My wife who is not Indigenous is better than that.  
  
And one day, I want to stand here and be able to say as proudly and sing as loudly as anyone else in this room, Australians *all*, let us rejoice.

The following is an abridged version from the full transcript of Shirley Chisholm's Equal Rights for Women speech, delivered at Washington D.C. - May 21, 1969.

https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/equal-rights-for-women-may-21-1969/  
There is no audio available.  
http://www.emersonkent.com/images/speech_bar.jpg

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| --- | --- |
| Shirley Chisholm - Speech | Mr. Speaker, |

When a young woman graduates from college and starts looking for a job, she is likely to have a frustrating and even demeaning experience ahead of her. If she walks into an office for an interview, the first question she will be asked is, "Do you type?''  
  
There is a calculated system of prejudice that lies unspoken behind that question. Why is it acceptable for women to be secretaries, librarians, and teachers, but totally unacceptable for them to be managers, administrators, doctors, lawyers, and Members of Congress.  
  
The unspoken assumption is that women are different. They do not have executive ability orderly minds, stability, leadership skills, and they are too emotional.  
  
It has been observed before, that society for a long time, discriminated against another minority, the blacks, on the same basis - that they were different and inferior. The happy little homemaker and the contented "old darkey" on the plantation were both produced by prejudice.  
  
As a black person, I am no stranger to race prejudice. But the truth is that in the political world I have been far oftener discriminated against because I am a woman than because I am black.   
  
Prejudice against blacks is becoming unacceptable although it will take years to eliminate it. But it is doomed because, slowly, white America is beginning to admit that it exists. Prejudice against women is still acceptable. There is very little understanding yet of the immorality involved in double pay scales and the classification of most of the better jobs as "for men only." …  
  
Considering that there are about 3 1/2 million more women in the United States than men, this situation is outrageous.  
  
It is true that part of the problem has been that women have not been aggressive in demanding their rights. This was also true of the black population for many years. They submitted to oppression and even cooperated with it. Women have done the same thing. But now there is an awareness of this situation particularly among the younger segment of the population…  
  
Let me note and try to refute two of the commonest arguments that are offered against this amendment. One is that women are already protected under the law and do not need legislation. Existing laws are not adequate to secure equal rights for women. Sufficient proof of this is the concentration of women in lower paying, menial, unrewarding jobs, and their incredible scarcity in the upper level jobs. If women are already equal, why is it such an event whenever one happens to be elected to Congress?  
  
It is obvious that discrimination exists. Women do not have the opportunities that men do. And women that do not conform to the system, who try to break with the accepted patterns, are stigmatized as odd and unfeminine. The fact is that a woman who aspires to be chairman of the board, or a Member of the House, does so for exactly the same reasons as any man. Basically, these are that she thinks she can do the job and she wants to try.  
  
A second argument often heard against the Equal Rights Amendment is that is would eliminate legislation that many States and the Federal Government have enacted giving special protection to women and that it would throw the marriage and divorce laws into chaos.  
  
As for the marriage laws, they are due for a sweeping reform, and an excellent beginning would be to wipe the existing ones off the books. Regarding special protection for working women, I cannot understand why it should be needed. Women need no protection that men do not need. What we need are laws to protect working people, to guarantee them fair pay, safe working conditions, protection against sickness and layoffs, and provision for dignified, comfortable retirement.

Men and women need these things equally. That one sex needs protection more than the other is a male supremacist myth as ridiculous and unworthy of respect as the white supremacist myths that society is trying to cure itself of at this time.

# Blues-ing on the Brown Vibe By [Esther Belin](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/esther-belin)

I.

And Coyote struts down East 14th

feeling good

looking good

feeling the brown

melting into the brown that loiters

rapping with the brown in front of the Native American Health Center

talking that talk

of relocation from tribal nation

of recent immigration to the place some call the United States

home to many dislocated funky brown

ironic immigration

more accurate tribal nation to tribal nation

and Coyote sprinkles corn pollen in the four directions

to thank the tribal people

indigenous to what some call the state of California

the city of Oakland

for allowing use of their land.

II.

And Coyote travels by Greyhound from Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA thru

Dinétah

to Oakland, California, USA, laughing

Interstate 40 is cluttered with RVs from as far away as Maine

traveling and traveling

to perpetuate the myth

Coyote kicks back for most of the ride

amused by the constant herd of tourists

amazed by the mythic Indian they create

at a pit stop in Winslow

Coyote trades a worn beaded cigarette lighter for roasted corn

from a middle-aged Navajo woman squatting

in front of a store

and Coyote squats alongside the woman

talking that talk

of bordertown blues

of reservation discrimination

blues-ing on the brown vibe

a bilagáana snaps a photo

the Navajo woman stands

holding out her hand

requesting some of her soul back

instead

she replaces her soul with a worn picture of George Washington on a dollar bill

and Coyote starts on another ear of corn

climbing onto the Greyhound

the woman

still squatting

waiting

tired of learning not to want

waits there for the return of all her pieces.

III.

And Coyote wanders

right into a Ponca sitting at the Fruitvale Bart station

next to the Ponca is a Seminole

Coyote struts up to the two

“Where ya’all from?”

the Ponca replies

“Oooklahooma”

pause

the Seminole silent watches a rush of people climb in and out of the train

headed for Fremont

the Seminole stretches his arms up and back stiff from the wooden benches

pause

he pushes his lips out toward the Ponca slowly gesturing that he too is from Oklahoma

Coyote wanders

“where ’bouts?”

the Ponca replies

“Ponnca City”

pause

the Seminole replies

“Seminoole”

Coyote gestures to the Ponca

“You Ponca?”

the Ponca nods his head in affirmation

Coyote nods his head in content

to the Seminole

Coyote asks

“You Seminole?”

pause

the Seminole now watching some kids eating frozen fruit bars

nods his head

and Coyote shares his smokes with the two

and ten minutes later

they travel together on the Richmond train

headed for Wednesday night dinner at the Intertribal Friendship House.

IV.

And Coyote blues-ing on the urban brown funk vibe

wanders

in and out of existence

tasting the brown

rusty at times

worn bitter from relocation.

**Redfern Speech (Year for the World's Indigenous People)**

**Delivered in Redfern Park**

**by Prime Minister Paul Keating, 10 December 1992.**

**Written by his speech writer, Don Watson.**

**This is an abridged version of the full speech.**

**https://antar.org.au/sites/default/files/paul\_keating\_speech\_transcript.pdf**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1S4F1euzTw

**(Time code start 5mins 40secs)**

…And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts

with us non-Aboriginal Australians. It begins, I think, with that act of recognition.

Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing.

We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life.

We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

We committed the murders.

We took the children from their mothers.

We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice.

And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response

and enter into their hearts and minds.

We failed to ask - how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us… **(Timecode end 6mins 57secs)**

**(Timecode in 9mins 20secs)**

…By doing away with the bizarre conceit that this continent had no owners prior to

the settlement of Europeans, Mabo establishes a fundamental truth and lays the

basis for justice. It will be much easier to work from that basis than has ever been the case in the

past. For that reason alone, we should ignore the isolated outbreaks of hysteria and

hostility of the past few months.

Mabo is an historic decision - we can make it an historic turning point, the basis of a new relationship between indigenous and non-Aboriginal Australians.

The message should be that there is nothing to fear or to lose in the recognition

of historical truth, or the extension of social justice, or the deepening of Australian social democracy to include indigenous Australians.

There is everything to gain. Even the unhappy past speaks for this.

Where Aboriginal Australians have been included in the life of Australia they have

made remarkable contributions. Economic contributions, particularly in the pastoral and agricultural industry.

They are there in the frontier and exploration history of Australia.

They are there in the wars.

In sport to an extraordinary degree.

In literature and art and music.

In all these things they have shaped our knowledge of this continent and of

ourselves. They have shaped our identity.

They are there in the Australian legend.

We should never forget - they have helped build this nation.

And if we have a sense of justice, as well as common sense, we will forge a new partnership.

As I said, it might help us if we non-Aboriginal Australians imagined ourselves dispossessed of land we had lived on for fifty thousand years - and then imagined ourselves told that it had never been

ours.

Imagine if ours was the oldest culture in the world and we were told that it was

worthless.

Imagine if we had resisted this settlement, suffered and died in the defence of

our land, and then were told in history books that we had given up without a fight.

Imagine if non-Aboriginal Australians had served their country in peace and war

and were then ignored in history books.

Imagine if our feats on sporting fields had inspired admiration and patriotism and

yet did nothing to diminish prejudice.

Imagine if our spiritual life was denied and ridiculed.

Imagine if we had suffered the injustice and then were blamed for it.

It seems to me that if we can imagine the injustice we can imagine its opposite.

And we can have justice.

I say we can have justice for two reasons:

I say it because I believe that the great things about Australian social democracy

reflect a fundamental belief in justice.

And I say it because in so many other areas we have proved our capacity over

the years to go on extending the realms of participation, opportunity and care.

Just as Australians living in the relatively narrow and insular Australia of the

1960s imagined a culturally diverse, worldly and open Australia, and in a

generation turned this into reality, so we can turn the goals of reconciliation

into reality. **(End timecode 13mins 29 secs)**