

Journal #3234 from sdc 10.31.14

Invasion

The Worst Slaughter Of Indian Peoples In United States History

How the Koch Bros. Cheated Natives and Made Billions

Reid Statement on Moapa Solar Project

Vernon Masayeva, Hopi Leader & Director of Black Mesa Water Trust Shares

The University of Nevada Reno Native American Alumni Chapter

7 countries where Americans can study at universities, in English, for free (or almost free)

Collaborating with Tribes on Climate Adaptation | Environment and Sustainability Portal

Native Market to be Held in Elko

Oscar (Jay) Johnson, Jr.

Invasion

150 years of Nevada has been a mixed blessing to original residents

By [Dennis Myers](#)

dennism@newsreview.com

[This article was published on 10.30.14.](#)

The first known white to enter the Great Basin, Jedediah Smith, arrived in 1826. Mountain men like him were not much of a threat to residents. Like the residents, they lived lightly on the land and brought

only the weaponry they used to feed themselves. But their arrival was a warning of things to come.

John C. Fremont was not as benign. He did bring weaponry. In fact, when some residents north of the present site of Nevada displeased him, he and his force attacked a local community, Dokdokwas, and wiped it off the face of the earth, akin to Hitler's destruction of Lidice. Fremont probably targeted the wrong community—Modoc instead of his intended Klamath—but war crimes were not prosecuted in those days.

If communications then had existed as they do now, Great Basin residents might have seen what was coming. Seven years after the massacre, U.S. Rep. Thomas Hart Benton—Fremont's father in law—penned a letter to his fellow Missourians calling for a highway from his state to California, cutting straight across Nevada:



“The Indian title should be extinguished where necessary, and the preemption system universally established. ... The Mormons”—what is now Nevada was then a part of Utah—“now settle where they please in the Utah and Pah-Utah country, without extinction of Indian title, and without objection from the Government; but I prefer to follow the old policy of buying from the Indians, as being more just in itself, and more for the peace and safety of the settlers.”

Native Westerners held land in common, no one member holding title. Of course, leaders could always be bribed, or killed, or—worst of all—ignored into impotence.

White rights

On May 7, 1860, white men at Williams Station on the Carson River kidnapped Native American girls, raped them, then imprisoned them in a dirt cellar. Tribal members rescued them, then burned the station to the ground. A ragtag white mob—led, sort of, by William Ormsby—then attacked the Pyramid Lake Paiutes, the nearest tribe. “In many cases, the 'soldiers' were simply overzealous young men, ready to steal horses and kidnap women,” historian James Hulse has written. White ignorance of the Great Basin in which the newly arrived lived is indicated by the fact that the mob probably attacked the wrong tribe, since the rescue party was likely Bannock, not Paiute. At Pyramid, the tribe let the group trap itself, then decimated it.

After that defeat, the whites were bailed out by regular U.S. Army troops, who followed the Powell Doctrine and used overwhelming force to put down the Paiutes, whose warriors held off the soldiers while elders, women, and children escaped, all of them possibly still wondering what it was all about.

Thus ended the battles to protect the right of white men to molest tribal children. But in another sense, it did not end there. As Hulse wrote, “The events of Pyramid Lake had decisively established the domination of the white man in the western Great Basin.”

Tribes had spent a millennium hunting, fishing, gathering around the Great Basin. In the mid-1800s they found themselves confined to reservations. Food became a problem. Whites settling the West believed in farming with an intensity that resembled an organized religion. Nevada was a desert state, but whites were not dissuaded. A pseudo-science invented by believers in desert reclamation (creating farmland by diverting water into the desert) claimed that “rain follows the plow”—that is, rainfall increased where agriculture was introduced. The director of the U.S. Geological and Geographic Survey of the Territories filed an 1871 report: “It is believed ... that the planting of 10 or 15 acres of forest-trees on each quarter section will have a most important effect on the climate, equalizing and increasing the moisture and adding greatly to the fertility of the soil.” It was silly, but whites were not inclined to listen to the experts—the tribes—about the land of the Great Basin. (White geologists also told reclamationists the water was inadequate, but people of faith and dogma did not listen to science about reclamation any better than they do now about climate change.)

It wasn't that tribal members didn't know how to farm. In 1872, wheat grown on the Pyramid Lake reservation had 7-inch-long heads, and there were plans to display them at the California State Fair. In 1883, a Paiute rancher named Naches harvested the wheat at his Lovelock ranch and had it milled at Kemler's mill, receiving 40 sacks of flour, which he distributed among his tribe's members who assisted him.

But except for pockets here and there, the Great Basin did not sustain farming. More than a century after it was created, the whites' vaunted desert reclamation showcase, the Newlands Project, has yet to reach half the acreage originally planned.

Other problems with food involved pine nuts and fish. In desert terrain, both were not just food sources but, after the whites came, tribal industries.

The pine nuts were essential to the tribal diet, and soon after the arrival of the whites, the sources were under attack. Mining consumed pine trees rapidly. "Cut down all pine nuts" was a complaint heard by whites in an angry September 1864 confrontation with armed and mounted men in the Reese River country. In 1880, a Grand Council of the Washo asked state and federal officials to stop the destruction of the pine nut trees. During a particularly hard winter in 1885, the New York Times reported, "Almost their sole means of subsistence has been pine nuts, fish from Pyramid Lake, and rabbits, latterly the only game on the reservation." Sarah Winnemucca told the Times, "My people are utterly destitute, and numbers of them are famishing in the snow."

White indifference did not deter the tribes, which kept plugging away and both fed their own people and marketed to whites. In 1883, tribal shipments of pine nuts from Carson City on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad reached 75,000 pounds, and the harvest was believed to be only half finished, with San Franciscans a big market. (The sale of pine nuts may have benefited from a report that they were good for lung trouble.) As late as 1931, a Depression year, Nevada tribes were expected to earn \$22,500 (\$340,209.34 in 2013 dollars) for the year's crop, shipping upwards of 1,500 sacks from Reno alone.



Numaga argued with his people to avoid war. The white mob wouldn't let that happen.

The trout and the prehistoric cui-ui (pronounced coo-ee oo-ee by tribal members, kwee-wee by whites) were another basic part of the tribe's diet. When Nevada boomed, tons of fish were shipped to mining camps around the state, creating jobs on the reservation. Tourism boomed—movie stars and other celebrities traveled to Pyramid to fish for the extraordinarily large Lahontan cutthroat trout. Then the whites destroyed the industry.

Still chasing the siren song of desert reclamation, Derby Dam was built in 1903-1905 to divert water into the desert and create the Newlands Project, impeding the upstream spawn. Though Pyramid trout even tried leaping the dam, the lake's fish population and the lake level both began dropping. By the 1940s, the trout died out entirely, and the lake had fallen dozens of feet. Winnemucca Lake, a shallower body of water parallel to Pyramid, dried up—not even personal attention from Franklin Roosevelt saved it.

Some whites later claimed that no one realized what the diversion would do to Pyramid. That's not true. Newspaper articles during the Derby Dam construction even predicted the total destruction of Pyramid.

A tribal hatchery in the 1950s used trout of the same species but a different variety brought from Sierra lakes to repopulate Pyramid, but they never reached the same size of the earlier population, nor did the celebrity trade return.

Backward culture

Tribal members not accustomed to staying within inked lines on a map kept on the move, often to the whites' towns. Their contact with whites was not especially beneficial, white culture being destructive to tribal ways. And white leaders didn't want race mixing.

Lovelock tribal members lost their land to gambling, the Walker Lake tribe lost the lake to encroachment, the Pyramid Lake tribe had squatters for a century. Then there was alcohol. Like whites who blame Chinese for the opium that was forced on them by the whites' Opium Wars, Native Americans were disparaged for falling victim to the booze whites brought. Washo leader Captain Jim wrote to the Reno Gazette in 1902, "Now on account of not having homes the Washoe Indians wander from place to place and learn these destructive habits which the white people have introduced. ... Some white men say that we have no business to drink whisky if we know it to be dangerous, but they do the very same thing yet they are supposed to be civilized men."

Newspapers ownerships and managers came and went, sometimes having humane editorial policies toward the tribes, other times hostile, but nearly always disdainful. Throughout white society for decades there was an undercurrent of condescension toward the native residents of the Great Basin, and it was frequently voiced most strongly—but not exclusively—in the press.

1870: The Sacramento Reporter observed of the Fourteenth Amendment, "[I]t makes every Digger in California and every Pi-ute in Nevada a citizen, beyond all question; and now comes the Fifteenth Amendment and gives them the right to vote. Indian Jim ... has as much right to vote at the next election as [Sacramento Bee editor] James McClatchy. ... And that he will vote at the next election, we have not the slightest doubt."

1883: The Nevada State Journal carried an optimistic report on the 4-year-old Carlisle school for Native Americans in Pennsylvania, though it was full of patronizing language: "It is evident that some Indians can become thoroughly civilized."

1911: Native American Jack Macini was hit by the Overland Limited, mangled, decapitated, and killed—all of which was a source of amusement to the Reno Evening Gazette, which published a long supercilious story filled with racism and a white person's version of tribal lore—and elsewhere in the same edition there was a one-inch death notice on a second, apparently less interesting "buck Indian."

1919: Native Americans installing a pipeline for the Winnemucca Water and Light Company struck for 50 cents a day or more, and the contractor D.O. Church agreed to the raise for fear the ground would freeze. Other details of the strike are lacking because the Silver State's report was mostly devoted to trivializing the incident and belittling the tribal members—"Heap Big Indian Union. No. 1," etc.

Month after month, decade after decade, a drumbeat of this kind of dialogue conditioned white thinking, creating a mindset of scorn for Native Americans throughout the Great Basin.

Tolerance was exhibited toward criminals who victimized Native Americans. William Ormsby, who died defending the right of white sexual predators to rape Native American girls, had a Nevada county named for him from 1861 to 1969. Chief Numaga, who tried to prevent the Pyramid battles—“I love my people. Let them live,” he told warriors who wanted war—and then led the tribe when battle was forced on them, has only recently begun to receive honors in the white world.

Whites could be prosecuted for consorting with Native Americans. In 1914, for instance, a Victor Catrini was convicted in Reno Police Court and ordered to leave the city. Gardnerville was a sundown town, Native Americans required to leave town when a whistle blew at the end of the day, a procedure also used against blacks in the South.

Sarah Winnemucca gave her people a public identity, writing and lecturing about them across the nation.

Changing times

Being legally in the right was of little value to the tribes, because local law enforcement—when given a choice of supporting their fellow whites or enforcing tribal rights—seldom chose law. Occasionally, tribes could count on federal assistance when national officials became aware of problems, but this could not be counted on in an era of limited federal authority and resources.

The Walker Lake tribe agreed to let the Carson and Colorado Railroad—an arm of the Virginia and Truckee—build its line through the reservation in exchange for free rides for tribal members and their products to market. After the line was built, a nervous U.S. Indian Commissioner filed a frank report: “The Indians can ride only on top of the cars and are charged freight, but the [federal] agent has forced the company to refund a part of the freight charges. The railroad company covet [sic] these lands and also desire to free themselves from the obligations imposed by their charter. Senator [William] Stewart is said to be the paid attorney of this company.” The railroad encouraged white settlement in the area in hope of breaking up the reservation, and in fact the tribe ended up losing Walker Lake. There were repeated calls to break up either reservation—Walker or Pyramid—and move all the tribal members onto one.

A longer running injustice unfolded at Pyramid Lake. “The town of Wadsworth is entirely within the Indian reservation, and white settlers, or squatters as they are termed, have gradually extended their ranches down the river toward Pyramid Lake, till now they have all the available tillable land for many miles,” wrote an Indian commissioner in 1895.

Far from aiding the tribe, Congress eventually required the squatters to buy the land from the tribe. The squatters were unwilling even to do this and defaulted on the debt, but would not leave, law enforcement would not evict them, and newspapers rarely covered the dispute. The whites were relatively prominent local families. So the land remained in tribal hands but held by whites. The tribe was ignored into impotence.



U.S. Senators Key Pittman and Patrick McCarran sponsored legislation granting the land to the squatters, which failed to pass. McCarran was particularly vigorous, sponsoring at least nine measures over the years. Incredibly, decades passed—even Cliven Bundy was tolerated for only 20 years—without anyone evicting the squatters.

In 1955, author A.J. Liebling—who came to Nevada for a divorce—discovered the dispute and wrote a carefully documented, witty four-part series about it for the *New Yorker* magazine. It was more attention than the matter ever got from local newspapers. (The Liebling articles are now available as the University of Nevada Press book *A Reporter at Large*.)

One reason Native Americans were treated thus was that tribes had little political power. Then in the postwar period things began to change. The opening of the death camps posed awful parallels between U.S. extermination of Native Americans and German genocide of the Jews. Congress established an Indian Claims Commission to hear and settle old grievances—though poorly. The Commission gained a reputation for paying off at the original price, not the inflation-adjusted price.

The influence of New Dealers, the advent of the civil rights movement, and the activism of baby boomers led to cultural changes, as with the portrayal of tribes in film. Tribes found themselves with new allies, such as the U.S. Department of Justice.

In the 1940s, some of the squatters were finally moved off the Pyramid reservation. The displaced whites then cut off the irrigation ditches into the reservation, prompting a court fight, with McCarran interfering by trying to remove the tribe's attorney.

In 1950, the Washo filed a claim of \$43,811,985.84 before the Claims Commission, based on the 1862 value of Washoe land, mineral, timber, fish and game rights, plus interest as a result of findings by professional assessors. Twenty-one *years* later, the U.S. settled the case by paying \$5 million to the Washo.

Also in 1950, McCarran's Republican opponent in the election, George Marshall, said he opposed white settlers on tribal land. Rarely before had white candidates even mentioned tribal rights.

Not until 1999 was the last squatter family removed from the Pyramid reservation, as part of U.S. Sen. Harry Reid's Truckee River water settlement. All it had taken was a century-plus.

Legacy

Over the course of white history in the Great Basin, Native Americans had often aided whites or been used to make white commerce more interesting. Tribal guides had been brought to the Donner Party in 1846. Nevada was represented at the 1873 California State Fair by 20 Nevada tribal members, men, women and children. They told Jim Butler a good place to camp where he found gold and silver in 1900, helping set off Nevada's second great mining boom (whites concocted a story of a burro telling Butler where to look—"a burro over an Indian in playing a role in the discovery," as historian Guy Louis Rocha put it). Native swimmers searched the fast Truckee River near Laughton's in 1904 looking for missing white swimmers. Churchill County Sheriff Mark Wilson's alleged killer was shot and killed by Native tracker Dan Paschal in 1918.

A Native American died fighting a wildfire in Kings Canyon west of Carson City in 1926. At parades and festivals, Native Americans performed.

But the more common experience of Nevada tribal members was an audience member at a 1932 public meeting asking a question of attorney George Thatcher about the failure of the Wingfield banks. Thatcher answered in part, “If that happens, we might as well give the country back to the Indians”—only to learn then that his questioner was a tribal member.

Changing cultural attitudes in the second half of the 20th century slowly gave the tribes influence to add to their indominability. If there were still struggles—as when a grand jury in 1956 proposed breaking up Las Vegas Indian Village and selling off the land—they had more power to fight with. There were even white allies who came on the scene, as when a U.S. Senate seat changed from Paul Laxalt to Harry Reid, offering a sharply different view of how to settle Truckee River water law.

And while journalism still covers Native American conflicts while giving short shrift to tribal accomplishments, the tribes now were players with power of their own.

Tribes today are stronger than they once were, often through their own efforts. The Pyramid tribe cut a deal in the Truckee River Settlement that has strengthened their legal position and given them resources for economic development.

But Fremont’s name is the one on the main street of downtown Las Vegas, and the name of his confederate in the destruction of Dokdokwas, Kit Carson, is all over western Nevada. Carson City was once located in Ormsby County.

Perhaps the best symbol of the conflict in the state’s history was the March 9, 2005, unveiling in the U.S. Capitol’s National Statuary Hall of a statue of author and Native American leader Sarah Winnemucca as one of Nevada’s two statues. In spite of the call of some Nevada leaders for its removal, the other statue is of Patrick McCarran.

[The Worst Slaughter Of Indian Peoples In United States History ~ Indians in California](#)

[The towns of Marysville and Honey Lake paid bounties for Indian scalps. Shasta City offered five dollars for every Indian head brought to city hall. And Cali... youtube.com](#)

[How the Koch Bros. Cheated Natives and Made Billions](#)

Some of the Koch fortune came from cheating American Indian tribes.

[indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com](#)



If you can't fly with the big Girls..



www.facebook.com/ShortLipsStillFlying

Stay off the broom



Season's Greetings

[Rebecca Charlie](#)

PLEASE, Please watch this presentation by Vernon Masayesva!! It starts out little rough but I was in tears listening to his words since they speak the truth! He was an awesome Presenter at the 2014 Tribal/EPA I Conference. It will change your life and your perception of our water!

[Vernon Masayesva, Hopi Leader & Director of Black Mesa Water Trust Shares | Tribal EPA Conference](#)

Vernon Masayesva is the Executive Director of Black Mesa Water Trust, a Hopi Leader of the Coyote... [youtube.com](#)

[The University of Nevada Reno Native American Alumni Chapter](#)

The Native Alumni Chapter and Nevada Wolf Pack Athletics is looking for students 4th-8th grade to participate in a 3 point shoot out on Friday November 28th @ the Nevada Women's Basketball N7 game during Native Heritage Month. Please email swyatt1031@gmail.com for details. First 10 interested students will be picked.

[7 countries where Americans can study at universities, in English, for free \(or almost free\)](#)

Finland will finance your free education, but not your coffee break. [washingtonpost.com](#)

[Collaborating with Tribes on Climate Adaptation | Environment and Sustainability Portal](#)

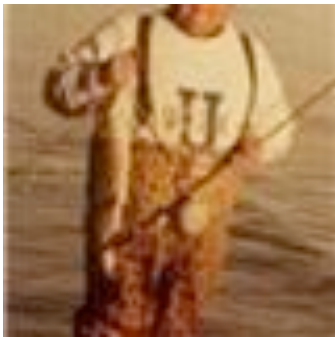
The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe has deep cultural, physical, and spiritual connections to Pyramid Lake, a terminal desert lake fed by the Truckee River in... portal.environment.arizona.edu



A Great Basin Native Market will be held Oct. 31 through Nov. 2, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the California Trail Interpretive Center, 8 miles east of Elko on Interstate 80 (Hunter exit 292).

Oscar Johnson, Jr.
Aug. 2, 1947-Oct. 23, 2014

Oscar "Jay" Johnson Jr., 67, died October 23, 2014 at Renown Medical Hospital. A Washoe-Paiute native of Reno, he was born on August 2, 1947 to Katherine and Oscar Johnson, Sr. Living in Reno most of his life, he moved to Hungry Valley in 1996 with his wife of 45 years,



Linda M. Johnson. Oscar lived a full life as an artist, athlete, silversmith, Tribal Council Member, member of the US Navy, Washoe County Sheriff's Deputy, Reno-Sparks Tribal Reserve Officer, Stage Technician Manager for MGM's Hello Hollywood Hello review, graphic artist, hunter, fisher, storyteller, sports fan of Ronnie & Shawna, SF 49ers, SF Giants, Wolf Pack football and bull riding. Oscar designed the official Logo of his tribe, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. The Tribe will begin flying all tribal flags at half-mast from October 27, 2014 and for 7 days thereafter.

Surviving are widow, Linda M. Johnson, daughter, Shawna Kirsten, son-in-law, Todd, grandkids; Alexia, Justina and Blake, all of Hungry Valley, grandson, Tristian "Pepper" Pete of Las Vegas, siblings; Sam, Leland and Edna, all of Reno, and numerous nieces, nephews & extended family members in Nevada, California & Montana.

A private service will be held to honor Oscar. Cremation under the direction of O'Brien, Rogers & Crosby Funeral Home. Oscar will be laid to rest in Pyramid Lake and the Pinenut Mountain Range. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/rgj/obituary.aspx?n=oscar-johnson&pid=172974422&fhid=15281#sthash.V3wfWJKG.dpuf>