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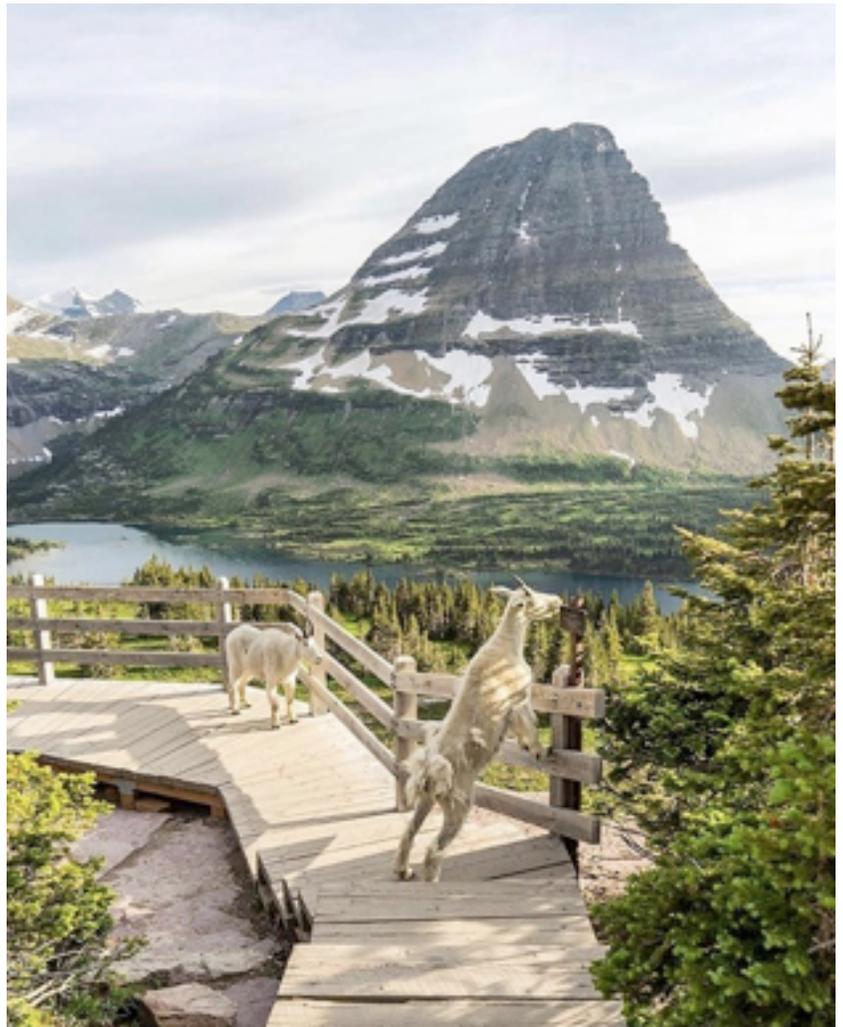
When Cottontail Killed the Sun

The Elephant In The Brain

At 112 years, Minnesota fish is the oldest freshwater fish ever verified

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**University of Nevada, Reno offers first-ever Paiute language course
Preserving and revitalizing the Great Basin indigenous language of Numu
8/8/2019 | By: Natalie Fry | [Print](#)**



University of Nevada, Reno President Marc Johnson and recent alumna Christina Thomas celebrate the American Indian & Alaska Native Graduate Celebration in May 2019. Thomas is instrumental in helping build the curriculum and promoting the first-ever Paiute language course at the University.

Ralph Burns takes on a number of titles, including Pyramid Lake Paiute elder, storyteller and native-language specialist. This fall, he will add University of Nevada, Reno lecturer to the list.

Related Academic Programs

- [Connect with the Paiute language director today!](#)
- [More about World Languages and Literatures](#)

Christina Thomas is a recent University graduate in music and biology, mom, former Washoe County School District teacher, experienced server, performing artist and most notably, a self-titled 'language warrior'. She began as a youth Paiute language instructor in 2015, replacing Burns as a language teacher at Reed High School in Sparks, and then later took an independent study course from Burns at the University.

Often singing and dancing at events together, their mentor/mentee relationship has deepened through the years, and this year, also together, they helped create and launch the first-ever Paiute language course to be taught at the University.

Thomas begins her master's of arts program in Native American Studies at the University of California, Davis this fall, with potential plans to return to the region and continue teaching and preserving the Paiute language and culture after graduate school.

"This course continues the opportunities for language learning for students who take Paiute in high school and introduces people who might not be familiar with Nevada indigenous languages to the culture and history of the land on which the University stands," Thomas said. "I am proud to be considered a 'language warrior' and hope, through this class, others will also become language warriors along the way."

Burns currently teaches language courses at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and will embark on a new journey this fall, teaching college students on campus. A written form of Northern Paiute was developed by Burns and Cathrine Fowler, a linguist at the University, years prior. They also produced learning materials for Northern Paiute, which will be incorporated in the new Paiute language course.

Related Links

- [Ralph Burns, Keeper of Paiute Culture](#)
- [Engaging the Native community](#)
- [University opens Great Basin Hall, Ralph Burns offers a blessing](#)
- [Reflections on Pyramid Lake exhibit](#)
- [Elder Ralph Burns participates in unique Hindu baccalaureate service](#)

The goal of the First Year Northern Paiute I course is to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the language, as well as to develop a deeper understanding of Numu cultural contexts.

The course is scheduled for the Fall 2019 semester from 5:30-7:20 p.m., Monday and Wednesday evenings.

"We are excited to offer Northern Paiute for the first time," World Languages and Literatures Chair Casilde Isabelli said. "Through the experiences and teaching from an elder of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, students will gain a better understanding and appreciation for the indigenous culture and history of our region."

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the Northern Paiute orthography and write basic sentences.
- Produce basic linguistic structures of Northern Paiute, including sentence structure, agreement, basic verb tenses, and basic prepositional phrases.
- Identify and describe the local Northern Paiute culture and its connection to the language, including connections to place and the Great Basin, traditional activities, kinship, and foods.
- Produce basic sentences in Northern Paiute, including introductions of self and others, describing their families and relationships.
- Comprehend spoken language in Northern Paiute and respond appropriately.
- Read and understand short traditional narratives.
- Compare U.S. and Northern Paiute cultures in regards to daily life, traditions, kinship, and foods.

[University offers first-ever Paiute language course](#)

Preserving and revitalizing the Great Basin indigenous language of Numu

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Learn the Northern Paiute (Numu) language at the University of Nevada, Reno

Native American Beadwork: a Rich History of Cultural Techniques

Posted By [PowWows.com](#) July 27th, 2019 Blog

One of the most common arts and crafts practiced by multiple Native American tribes included the decorative use of beads of various types. Generations before Europeans landed on the shores of the new world, Native American beadwork used primarily stone, shell, quills, and bone carved patiently with non-metal tools.^[i] As the decades went by and new materials like metal and glass were introduced by the new people arriving on the shores, the beadwork patterns used on clothing, jewelry, and decorations became much more intricate and stylized.

Many people now enjoy Native American beading designs mixed into their fashion sense or displayed on decorator items around their home. While the techniques and styles have changed quite a lot over the centuries, beadwork patterns remain an important part of native decorative artwork.

The Importance of Beadwork for Native Americans

Archeologists have found beads of varying materials, styles, and sizes in digs focused on various Native American settlements and tribes over the years. Originally, they may have been used as a type of currency for trades among tribes and individuals. Primarily, they simply decorated everything from buffalo hide belts to complex necklaces that featured story bead combinations.

^[ii] *Unlike European artwork designed to stay in place and decorate a room, the nomadic nature*



of the Native Americans necessitated a combination of design and functionality. Their bead-based art existed in clothing, everyday objects, and their tents and horse tack.[iii]

[Try watching this video on www.youtube.comView Profile](#)

One of the earliest forms includes porcupine quills stitched painstakingly onto moccasins and robes. These natural items were easy to gather from hunted animals, could be cut to any length that suited the design, and already had a natural hole through the middle. Then, Native American beadwork continued when the people used stone tools or abrasive sand to shape other materials and drill holes through them. Semi-precious stones like turquoise and jasper were quite popular, especially in the southwestern section of the country. Those early years of wood, shell, and stone gave way quickly to the more colorful and flashy glass, ceramic, or metal beads in silver and copper.

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[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](#)

After the Europeans came, beadwork changed somewhat in both practice and value. The initial rarity of the bright glass beads made their worth skyrocket. Wampum, or shell beads threaded on a cord, were frequently used by both settlers and indigenous people until it became so commonplace that its value plummeted. [iv]Native American beadwork patterns became a symbol of wealth, were used in marriage ceremonies, trade agreements, and treaties. Some involve ritualistic use and were often used in spiritual dances and celebrations.

In these modern days, Native American beading remains important for both the people themselves and as a cultural artifact that teaches all about an important part of history. From a purely decorative standpoint, many people from all cultures and traditions simply love the look of the unique woven beadwork designs associated with various native peoples. Visitors can view exceptional pieces at history museums across the country. Fans can purchase authentically crafted jewelry and other accessories from shops both online and off. Many non-native people and companies also use the techniques and styles of the North American indigenous population's beading artwork to create new, modern designs or mimic older ones.

Native American Beading Styles

Most people understand beading as either something that includes stringing beads on threads to make necklaces or similar pieces or stitching beads directly onto a material backing. While both of these methods were used in Native American beadwork, they also have their one unique techniques that were worked in different ways than expected. Some of the most impressive create large, flexible sheets or strips of beads tightly arranged in patterns or pictures.

Explore some of the most common beadwork style techniques and stitches to learn more about how they are done and what they are used for.[\[v\]](#)

Lane or Lazy Stitch [makaearthterradesigns](#) [View Profile](#)

This Native American beadwork method works almost the same as the overlay stitch above, except the artist works in short lengths of beads and affixes them to the fabric only at the ends. [\[vi\]](#) This was frequently used for large patterns such as on moccasins or cradles that had large areas of one color. For example, to fill the yoke of a dress, the craftswoman would repeatedly stitch rows of six to eight beads in tight, neat lines until they got to the next color. Different tribes used different numbers of beads. The Sioux, for one, used eight or nine in each small row.

[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](#)

[\[vii\]](#)

<https://www.powwows.com/native-american-beadwork-a-rich-history-of-cultural-techniques/>

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Historian Timothy C. Winegard's 'The Mosquito' a fascinating history of a small but mighty menace

If your summertime activity includes slapping away noisy insects while enjoying a book, you might relate to Timothy C. Winegard's entertainingly educational new opus, "The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator."

Keep Reno Local Dave Asher

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Heidi Barlese: Love the stories!!

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II

When Cottontail killed the sun the whole world grew dark. Mallard Duck said he would doctor the sun, so that he would be able to rise again. He asked the other people for enough white beads to go around his neck; these the people gave him. Duck began to cure the sun, singing and walking around and around a fire. He said to the people, "Toward morning, if you hear me commence to laugh, you will know the sun is going to rise." Then he told them to go to sleep.

In the early morning everybody awoke. Just before sunrise Duck commenced laughing, just like a duck laughs in the water. Everybody felt happy because the sun was going to come up.

Today mallard ducks have this white ring of beads around their necks.



Record catch: At 112 years, Minnesota fish is the oldest freshwater fish ever verified

A graduate student took the fish in Crystal Lake in Otter Tail County. Radiocarbon dating verified the fish's age, making it the oldest age-validated freshwater fish ever taken. <http://strib.mn/2YNPMFf>

Today's selection -- from *The Elephant In The Brain* by Kevin Simler and Robin Hanson.

The impact of extrinsic factors on what we consider to be valuable:

"Consider the lobster -- as David Foster Wallace invites us to do in an essay of the same name. 'Up until sometime in the 1800s,' writes Wallace, lobster was literally low-class food, eaten only by the poor and institutionalized. Even in the harsh penal environment of early America, some colonies had laws against feeding lobsters to inmates more than once a week because it was thought to be cruel and unusual, like making people eat rats. One reason for their low status was how plentiful lobsters were in old New England. 'Unbelievable abundance' is how one source describes the situation.

"Today, of course, lobster is far less plentiful and much more expensive, and now it's considered a delicacy, 'only a step or two down from caviar.'

"A similar aesthetic shift occurred with skin color in Europe. When most people worked outdoors, suntanned skin was disdained as the mark of a low-status laborer. Light skin, in contrast, was prized as a mark of wealth; only the rich could afford to protect their skin by remaining indoors or else carrying parasols. Later, when jobs migrated to factories and offices, lighter skin became common and vulgar, and only the wealthy could afford to lay around soaking in the sun.

"Now, lobster and suntans may not be 'art' exactly, but we nevertheless experience them aesthetically, and they illustrate how profoundly our tastes can change in response to changes in extrinsic factors. Here, things that were once cheap and easy became precious and difficult, and there-fore more valued. Typically, however, the extrinsic factors change in ways that make things *easier* rather than more difficult.

"Prior to the Industrial Revolution, when most items were made by hand, consumers unequivocally valued *technical perfection* in their art objects. Paintings and sculptures, for example, were prized for their realism, that is, how accurately they depicted their subject matter. Realism did two things for the viewer: it provided a rare and enjoyable sensory experience (intrinsic properties), *and* it demonstrated the artist's virtuosity (extrinsic properties). There was no conflict between these two agendas. This was true across a variety of art forms and (especially) crafts. Symmetry, smooth lines and surfaces, the perfect repetition of geometrical forms --- these were the marks of a skilled artisan, and they were valued as such.

"Then, starting in the mid-18th century, the Industrial Revolution ushered in a new suite of manufacturing techniques. Objects that had previously been made only by hand -- a process intensive in both labor and skill -- could now be made with the help of machines. This gave artists and artisans unprecedented control over the manufacturing process. Walter Benjamin, a German cultural critic writing in the 1920s and 1930s, called this the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, and it led to an upheaval in aesthetic sensibilities. No longer was intrinsic perfection prized for its own sake. A vase, for example, could now be made smoother and more symmetric than ever before -- but that very perfection became the mark of cheap, mass-produced goods. In response, those consumers who could afford handmade goods learned to prefer them, not only in spite of, but because of their imperfections.

"In *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Thorstein Veblen invites us to consider the case of two spoons: an expensive, handmade silver spoon and a factory-made spoon cast from cheap aluminum. As utensils, the two spoons are equally serviceable; both convey food to the mouth, no problem. And yet consumers vastly prefer the silver spoon to the aluminum spoon. Is it because silver is more beautiful than aluminum? Many consumers would say so. But imagine showing the spoons to an untrained forager from the Amazonian forests, someone who knows nothing of modern manufacturing or the scarcity of different metals. Both spoons, being polished and shiny, will catch and please the forager's eye; the slight differences in grain and color won't matter much. The silver spoon may be heavier, but the forager may just as well prefer the lighter spoon. Perhaps the most salient difference will be the fact that the aluminum spoon is made to a more exacting standard, with nary an imperfection on its surface, whereas the silver spoon will have minor defects from the silver-smith's hammer. After attending to all the perceptual qualities of the two spoons, the forager might easily prefer the aluminum one.

"What's 'missing' from the forager's experience is nowhere to be found in the spoons themselves, as physical objects. The key facts, so relevant to modern consumers, are entirely extrinsic to the spoons. We know that aluminum is common and cheap, while silver is rare and precious. And we know that factory-made goods are available to everyone, while only the wealthy can afford one-of-a-kind goods handcrafted by loving artisans. Once these key facts

are known, savvy consumers -- those with refinement and taste -- quickly learn to value everything about the silver spoon that differentiates it from its more vulgar counterpart, imperfections and all.

"The advent of photography wreaked similar havoc on the realist aesthetic in painting. Painters could no longer hope to impress viewers by depicting scenes as accurately as possible, as they had strived to do for millennia. 'In response,' writes Miller, 'painters invented new genres based on new, non-representational aesthetics: impressionism, cubism, expressionism, surrealism, abstraction. Signs of handmade authenticity became more important than representational skill. The brush-stroke became an end in itself.'

"These technological and aesthetic trends continue well into the present day. Every year, new technology forces artists and consumers to choose between the difficult 'old-fashioned' techniques and the easier, but more precise, new techniques." [Sign Up Here](#)

The Elephant In The Brain

Author: Kevin Simler and Robin Hanson

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allthatsinteresting.com

[Ancient Ruins Older Than The Pyramids Discovered In Canada](#)

A researcher at the site said, "I remember when we got the dates back,..."

[Antoinette Cavanaugh](#)

Sending up prayers for the Modocs. Their history is heart wrenching-yet there are survivors. According to data on Modoc population counts there were only 249 Modoc individuals left in 1881. "Modoc people remain today because their ancestors resisted the seven campaigns sent against them between 1851 and 1873. In the 2010 census, over 2100 U.S. citizens self-identified as Modoc or part Modoc." "They are the descendants of genocide survivors, although historians have described their ancestors as belligerents in a series of wars" sponsored by state and federal dollars. (P.117 **Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America**).

[John Crum](#) I watched the DVD, "The last of the Mohegans" recently . I don't know if the story was based on fact, but it is horrifying to grasp that an entire population could cease to exist. That was the intent of the Nazi "Final solution" in the 1940's, to eliminate the Jewish people entirely.

[Winnemem Chief Asks Delta Tunnel Amendment Negotiators: When Will Tribal Water Rights Be Discussed?](#)

By Daily Kos, 8/6/19

Despite the fact that new Delta Tunnel project supported by Governor Gavin Newsom has not been approved, the Department of Water Resources is proceeding forward with negotiations with its water contractors over the State Water Contract Amendment for the Delta Conveyance. DWR held two meetings, the first on July 24 and the second on July 31. Most of the meeting time on July 24 was not open to the public. DWR was caucusing in its room as the State Water Contractors were caucusing in their room — and those sessions were not open to the public. Bob Wright, Senior Counsel for Friends of the River, estimated that about 75 people were present at the start of the public session.