

VANISHING CULTURES

Objective:

Students will explore other cultures - investigate the pre-history and current situation of each culture. References to books, movies and available educational materials will be presented. Those attending class will be encouraged to ask questions and offer opinions. The class will be informative, stimulating and most of all, a fun learning experience.

Cultures to be studied:

1) Tarahumara Indians of Copper Canyon.

They are now on the edge of total extinction. For a quick preview of this course, see <http://www.lebaronsprimitives.com/> and select Tarahumara Indians and Personal Notes.

Hands on Museum Quality artifacts collected by the instructor will be made available. Most of the artifacts are from the 1980's.

The Material World of the Tarahumara: See

<http://www.lebaronsprimitives.com/LEBARONS/STATE%20OF%20THE%20ARIZONA.pdf>

- A. Answer questions immediately after each verbal presentation.
- B. Hands-on experience- Tarahumara
 1. Students will touch and feel the inside of Tarahumara ollas (pots).
 2. Students will hold authentic Tarahumara runner's rattles and dance rattles made of butterfly cocoons collected in 1984- (rare artifacts)
 3. Students will examine and try on an authentic Burden Basket made from wood and cowhide strips collected in 1984.
 4. Baskets of Agave and pine needle. (20-30)
 5. Deer hide rope (only one collected in 20 years.)
 6. Corn separator- flat basket (most of the above have been replaced because of cultural diffusion.)
 7. Burro saddle

2) The Tarahumara I

Additional Tarahumara Indian artifacts that will be available for students to view and handle:

1. Authentic bow with two-arrows- collected in 1984 by L.L. Baron.
2. Authentic Tarahumara metate and mano.
3. A red slip water olla.
4. An old hardwood batea.
5. A small Tarahumara pine needle basket not yet completed. This will give the students an idea about the process necessary in order to complete a small basket.
6. A hand-woven 26" X 8" bear grass basket.
7. A large elephant foot basket.
8. A museum quality hand-woven rawhide burden basket, very heavy, and collected in 1984 by L.L. Baron.
9. An Authentic Tarahumara wool blanket
10. Discussion

11. Wood spoon
12. White Agave old basket

3) The Tarahumara II

Brief verbal presentations about the Tarahumara culture

- A. Answer questions immediately after each verbal presentation.
- B. Ask- What is cultural diffusion?
- C. Is cultural diffusion taking place in our country?
- D. Brief discussion.
- E. Allow students to ask questions.
 - a. Encourage reading, library work, and computer research- investigate.
 1. Quote books- from memory, encourage students to build their own “mental” library- knowledge foundation.
 2. Mention and briefly quote information from the following books:
- F. Tarahumara- A Tribe of Northern Mexico.
- G. Tarahumara- Where Night is the Day of the Moon.
- H. Raramuri- A Tarahumara Chronicle
- I. The Material World of the Tarahumara.
- E. Ask why the Tarahumara are considered American Indians.

Discussion.

 - a. Linguistically.
 - b. Physiologically
 - c. Culturally.
 - d. Geographically.
 - e. Compare with other cultures that have been relocated.
- b. Ask how geography plays a role in cultural survival.
 1. Which are the most protected cultures? Why?
 - a. Discussion.
 - b. Locate several cultures on a world map (this will be continued throughout the entire discussion with emphases on world geography).
 - c. Mention the book- Guns, Germs, & Steel. By Diamond.
 - d. Briefly elaborate on this book.
 - e. Ask the students to give examples of the information and the ability of man to adapt to his environment, both positive and negative.
 2. Discuss how people worldwide make use of their natural environment. Differences in primitive cultures and modern world.
 3. Briefly discuss economics in primitive environments.
 - a. Focus on the Tarahumara.

2) The Yanomamo – The Fierce People

This will be a step back into the “Stone Age” while discussing a contemporary Indian culture that is virtually living like they did hundreds of years ago. The instructor has visited this area 3 different times from 1989 to 1991. The territory covered was a huge area from Manaus, the jungle capital of Roraima,

then to São Gabriel da Cachoeira, and finally aboard a 10-man work boat from Venzeula down the ancient Rio Negro to Manaus.

A list of books and physical artifacts to be presented may be found on the above mentioned site, including a 40 page personal diary of the instructors experiences with the Yanomamo.

<http://www.lebaronsprimitives.com/LEBARONS/Manuscript.pdf>

- A. Mention to students that I have traveled in the state of Amazonas on four separate occasions, 1987, 1989, 1990, and 1991. At this point also let them know I have self-published a 42 page report about the first contact that I made with this culture.
- B. Students will locate the state of Amazonas on a world map and the Amazon River, Manaus, and the Rio Negro.
- C. A verbal presentation based on the enclosed report will be given to the students.
 1. I will present this in short sections, stop talking after about 5 minutes or less and allow students to ask questions pertaining to that part of the lecture.
 2. Recommended reading assignments (depending on grade level).
 - a. the Yanomamo. The Fierce People by Napoleon A. Chagnon
 - b. Into the Heart by Good
 - c. The Last Days of Eden by Chagnon
 3. Recommended movie (depending on grade level).
 - a. "Fitzcarraldo"
 - b. "Medicine Man" with Sean Connery.
- D. Mention the fact that Manaus, the jungle capitol, was once the richest city in the world.
 1. Ask students why?
 2. Discuss Amazon economics and its effects on primitive cultures.
 3. Discuss the gold rush in the state of Amazonas and its effects on populations and the ecology of Amazonas.
 4. Ask students how they think the impact of encroaching "civilizations" will affect the Yanomamo.
 5. Ask students "What is a barter system? - which cultures still use this system?"
 6. Ask students how much time they think the Yanomamo have left.
- E. Artifacts will be presented and handled by the students (at the discretion of the administration).
 1. A 7' bow and arrow set collected in 1989 by L.L. Baron.
 2. Shaman's feather armband set collected in 1989 by L.L. Baron.
 3. Warriors feathered earplug set.
 4. Squirrel monkey necklace.
 5. Beaded Shaman's penis belt.
 6. Natural jungle cotton Shaman's penis belt.
 7. 19" X 17" Yanomamo woman burden basket.
 8. An assortment of gathering baskets collected during Baron's trips to the Amazon. (5-10)
 9. A child's burden basket.

- 10. A 26" Banawa basket from upper Rio Negro.
 - 11. A Yanomamo hammock made from jungle vines.
 - 12. Speaker will demonstrate how to soak and strip jungle vine for various uses.
 - 13. Tikuna Indian 7' long hand-pounded bark puberty rites suit.
 - 14. A 9' Amazon blow gun.
 - 15. A Yanomamo Indian warrior's backpack made from jungle fiber collected in 1989 by L.L. Baron.
 - 16. A Maku Indian bow and arrow set collected in 1989 by L.L. Baron.
 - 17. A 5' X 5' Amazon basket used for processing poisonous plants, and turning them into an edible product.
 - 18. Homemade wooden shotgun shell reloaders collected on the Rio Negro by L.L. Baron on the fourth trip to the Amazon. (1991)
 - 19. A Yanomamo head basher and spear collected in 1989 by L.L. Baron.
- F. Ask students what effects firearms that are now being introduced, into the Amazon will have on the Yanomamo.
 - G. Ask why the Yanomamo are being forced out of their forests.
 - H. Ask what effect cultural diffusion will have on the Yanomamo.
 - I. Ask what effect their movement from the forests to larger rivers will have on their culture, religion, and their concept for trade.
 - J. Ask why the Yanomamo are diametrically opposed to Christianity.
 - K. Suggest the movie about a similar culture, which is entitled, "The End of the Sear" – a true story. "An Enemy God"
 - 1. Suggest the movie, "At Play in the Fields of the Lord", and the book by the same title, (at administrators' desecration)
 - 2. The book Green Hell.
 - L. Ask students if the United States, their homeland, is being affected by cultural diffusion and the introduction of outside cultures.

3) The Kuna Indians of Panama

These, like the Tarahumara, are a beautiful people with a heart of love. They produce more albinos than any other culture in the world. Review questions, Shaman's curing information and a complete list of artifacts to be viewed and handled may be found at:

<http://www.lebaronsprimitives.com/LEBARONS/STATE%20OF%20THE%20ARIS.pdf>

- A. Location- The San Blas Islands and Kuna Yala.
- B. How did the Kuna establish their homeland in this location?
- C. What forces played an important part in helping them acquire this land?
- D. Why does geography play such an important part in this achievement?
- E. Provide a short time for students to discuss these questions and attempt to answer all of them. The speaker will spend time answering the above questions and then continue with the program.
- F. Mention the book, "The Art of being Kuna" by Salvador. Let the students see that this beautiful book is full of colorful photos revealing the life of the Kuna.
- G. Why do the Kuna produce more albinos than any other culture in the world?

- H. Define gene pools and make a cross culture comparison of other peoples throughout the world that suffer from genetically inherited diseases as a result of being born into a certain gene pool. (Sickle-cell anemia, pernicious anemia, etc.)
- I. The following Kuna Indian artifacts will be seen and handled by the students are as followed:
1. 12' Kuna canoe and paddle. Hand carved. Collected by L.L. Baron in 2006.
 2. 8" X 4" hand drilled gourd sieve.
 3. A well-used wooden bowl.
 4. A net bag used for gathering lobster and conk shells.
 5. A 35" X 16" wooden hand-carved Shaman's curing canoe.
 6. Hand-carved mast support for a sail.
 7. A hand-carved mortar and pestle.
 8. A small fire fan.
 9. Hand-made house broom.
 10. Several molas- internationally known- economic assets.
- J. Discuss the Kuna economy. What it is based on and what their value system consists of.
1. Ask students to provide input.
 2. Knowing what you know, what would you think about the economics and value system of the Kuna?
- K. Additional items for display:
1. Shaman's Nuchus. (Approximately 5-6)
 2. A Shaman's authority staff collected in 1998 by L.L. Baron.
 3. A woman's necklace.
 4. Pelican bone Shaman's Ina rites- puberty rites rattle- special artifact.
 5. A hand-made funeral urn.
- L. Discuss these artifacts with the students and emphasize the curing ceremonies, and what the Kuna believe about manipulating the spiritual world.
1. Have the students participate in a discussion concerning cross-cultural practices concerning religions
 2. Will the Kuna assimilate?
 3. How much time do they have?
 4. How much time do we have as an existing recognizable culture?
 5. How will demographics play a major role in the future of the history of the United States of America?
- M. In closing, a variety of Kuna artifacts will be available for the students to explore.
1. 9' long X 18.5" wide X 11.5" deep hand-carved canoe, well used with age.
- N. Ask students, what is the significance of the Darien gap? Geographical, political, and linguistic. Why is it positive for the country of Panama? Why is it negative for Panama?
1. Compare the geographical barrier of the Darien gap with the huge expanding dry Mexican plateau and make a comparison by using the discovery and distribution of corn throughout the United States. (Emphasize time) Compare the migration of man coming from Siberia to

the tip of South America. Ask students how long they think it took man to reach South America. (Refer to “Guns, Germs, & Steel. By Diamond)

- O. Suggest reading, Collapse By Diamond...how societies choose to fail or succeed.

4) **The Wounaan & the Embera Indians of Panama**

These are among the finest basket weavers of the world. See also www.lebaronsprimitives.com for a review of the course.

- A. Location- The Darien Jungle
- B. Both fall under the classification of Chocho- as referred to on many maps.
- C. What has affected these Indians?
- D. How dense is the Darien Jungle?
- E. Emphasize the fact that there are no roads connecting Panama and Columbia.
 - 1. Ask students why.
 - 2. What role does politics and geography play in this area?
- F. Baskets- Some of the very finest baskets in the world are made in this area. These are beautiful pieces of artwork. Some are sold for thousands of dollars today.
 - 1. Discuss the law of supply and demand.
 - 2. Ask students how the law of supply and demand affected the value of baskets from the Darien Jungle.
 - 3. What is the probability that the economic value will decrease?
 - 4. How and to what extent are the Indians benefiting from these products?
 - a. What role will these baskets play in the eventual assimilation and acculturation of these Indians?
 - b. How will their exposure eventually affect their entire belief and economics system?
 - c. Emphasize how and why the Darien Jungle is a very dangerous place to travel and that, they should not attempt to go in this area.
 - d. Ask the students exactly how long they think the Indians will be able to maintain their culture. Ask them to research National Geographic articles and find one by the title, “Vanishing Cultures”. This will include a world map of all of the cultures that will disappear in the next 10 years.
 - e. PowerPoint presentation

5) **The Zulu of South Africa**

Briefly discuss the rise and fall of the Zulu nation.

- A. Recommend the book, “The Washing of the Spears”
- B. Recommend the VCR (not the new DVD) entitled, “The Shaka” (New DVD Mini Series is OK)
- C. Discuss my first backpack trip through South Africa and Southwest Africa to the border of Angola in 1986.

- D. Do the Zulu still exist today?
- E. Ask the students to locate South Africa on a world map, Johannesburg, Durbin, etc.
 - 1. Let the students know that the director of two major museums, where major battles took place between the Zulu, the British, and Dutch was murdered, on January 26, 2007.
 - 2. Emphasize the fact that the Zulus produce one of the top three military war machines in the world by the time the British decided to conquer their culture.
 - 3. Show examples of a Zulu short jabbing spear.
 - 4. Show examples and let the students handle world-class baskets.
 - 5. Why was Shaka one of the great leaders of the world?
 - 6. Why was Shaka assassinated by his own people?
 - 7. What does it mean by the phrase “power corrupts?”
 - 8. Why as Americans should we watch what is happening in our own personal political arena? (Political science studies)
 - 9. Discuss the political term- apartheid.
 - 10. Do a cross cultural comparison with the USA in 1896 – then mention the most important Supreme Court case in US history.
 - 11. Exhibit and let students handle historical artifacts from Zulu Land.

Not required but recommended reading and movies may be found on lebaronsprimitives web site. Museum quality artifacts collected in 1986 and in 2007 will be available.

Recommended movies: Shaka (mini-series) and see the emergence of one of the most famous rulers in the world. In 1879, the Zulu army was among the top 3 military organizations in the world. To understand how powerful they were, with just spears and shields, also see: “Zulu Dawn” and “Zulu”. These movies are historically correct and excellent background material.

6) The High Civilizations of the Americas

- A. The long road from primitive to “civilized cultures”
- B. Students will locate on the world map major Mesoamerican civilizations.
 - 1. Palenque.
 - 2. Chichen Itza.
 - 3. Uxmal.
 - 4. Teotihuacán.
 - 5. Tres Zapotes.
 - 6. Labna.
 - 7. San Lorenzo.
 - 8. Laveventa.
 - 9. Strictly up to the discretion of the administrator, the new film, “Apocalypto” directed by Mel Gibson. This is an excellent film showing the very bloody post-classic period in Meso America when slaves were offered to the gods.
- C. In 1969, I was a student at the University of Americas in Cholula, Mexico. At that time it was legal to collect artifacts in Mexico that

were classified as pre-Columbia and transport them back to the United States. The following will be available for the students to see and handle. All items found by L.L. Baron in 1969 at the great pyramid of Cholula. The age of these artifacts are post classic- 900 A.D. to 1519.

1. Several clay heads.
2. Clay ear plugs.
3. Three large spindle whorls (cotton was domesticated in Mexico – 3200 BC oldest in the world).
4. What is an energy source from high civilization?
5. Ask the students what is the main energy source, which gave, rise to high civilizations in Mexico.
6. The civilizations of the Americas.
 - a. Ask students who discovered the oldest corn in Mexico.
 - b. Ask students what age they think this corn might be.
 - c. Ask students what the age of the oldest corn found in the United States.
 - d. Where was it discovered, and how long did it take corn, which was developed in Mexico to reach the United States.
 - e. Why did it take so long for the corn to get here?
7. Which culture in Mexico was the only culture to independently, create, its own alphabet system? (What was the 1st culture?)
 - a. What do we call this form of writing?
 - b. Why was the writing language not diffused as in Peru?
 - c. Again, reemphasize the Darien gap barrier- geography.
8. The speaker will attempt to summarize the high civilization in order to give students an idea of how immense and how effective these cultures were at their pinnacle.
 - a. Why did these high civilizations disappear?
 - b. What is the average length of time for any country to exist as a nation?
 - c. How much time do we have left before we are unrecognizable as a nation- culture?
 - d. What did the Spaniards do to speed up the process of assimilations and acculturation?
 - e. Technological advances, both positive and negative for the individual. (Mini-political science discussions)
 - i. Ask the students to list the changes that they are aware of, and how these changes have affected their lives.
 - ii. Ask the students to question their parents and grandparents about the changes that they have seen in the United States during their lifetimes. (Oral history recordings by the students) Ask for stories from their childhoods.
 - iii. Legal system. Discussion – Animal farm +1896
 - iv. Freedom. Compare differences in culture and time.
9. Ask the students to research on their computers and in the libraries, about the civilizations that have disappeared from the face of the earth. (Atlantic, Celts, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans. Etc.)

10. Open for questions and discussion over any topic that we have discussed.
11. Open anthropology lab in order for students to be able to handle over 100 different artifacts. (30 minutes)

The instructor's junior year in college was a complete Anthropology curriculum spent at the University of the Americas in Choulu, Mexico. This program will be condensed in order to cover a very complex series in Mesoamerica studies. See "State of the Arts Multicultural Impact Presentation" on the web.

If time allows, a graduate level slide program from 1969-1970 may be available. The purpose of this program is to review connections with our own South West. (41 year old slides of ruins not reconstructed) 138 slides

7) The Anasazi of Chaco Canyon

In our own State of New Mexico, is one of the most interesting and debated archaeological sites in North America. For a quick review of this culture, read "Collapse" by Diamond, Chapter 4. We will research Mesoamerican art and religion to discoveries right in our own back door...Three Rivers, etc. For a review of this section, please see website – Tarahumara/Anasazi Connection. The Anasazi notes are on the final pages of these notes. (film "Chaco Canyon" – 20 minutes)

8) The Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, etc.

PowerPoint presentation plus pictures of the complete "Material World of the Bushmen"

El Paso Museum of International Arts – extensive exhibit collected by Larry Baron in Johannesburg, Africa in 1986.

9) The Mestizo/Mexican American

- A. Brief verbal presentation describing the Mestizo culture and its relation to the Tarahumara culture.
- B. Introduce social stratification in third world countries.
 1. What is social status?
 2. How is social status achieved in primitive and contemporary societies?
 3. What is conspicuous consumption? (Thorsten Veblen)
- C. Artifacts to be viewed and handled by students.
 1. An old Mestizo wooden bowl – 51" x 21" x 6.5" deep
 2. Old tortilla press and Mexican Matate and Mand.
- D. Briefly mention the conquest of Mexico and the impact that it had on the advanced cultures in the country which we now know as Mexico.

10) Mata Ortiz

Location- Four and one half hours southwest of El Paso, Texas.

- A. Population- Mestizo.
- B. Famous for its very fine grain and beautiful hand-coiled pots.
- C. The method for making this pottery was rediscovered by Juan Quezda, over one half century ago.

- D. Over 80 families now produce variations in this pottery, which is all pre-Columbian style with the flexibility of adding creativity- innovated art to the ancient style.
- E. This cottage industry is recognized world wide, and economically the pottery supports most of the population of Mata Ortiz.
- F. This pre-Columbian style technique used by the Mestizo is presently surpassing the American Indian and their ability to produce hand-coiled pottery.
- G. Some discussion will be provided here about the connection of the American Indian in North America, Mata Ortiz, and the Tarahumara of Copper Canyon.
- H. A number of variations in the Mata Ortiz pottery will be provided for display and students will be allowed to physically handle the ollas.
- I. How to market the Mata Ortiz pottery.
 - 1. E-Bay.
 - 2. Private shows.
 - 3. A short 60 second discussion demonstration will be given by the speaker which will help students understand how easy it is to present a great deal of information in a short time and sell this pottery.
- J. Question- Is this industry considered a rebirth and a continuation of a culture? (Discussion) Discuss Fisher's book entitled, The Puzzle of Oasis America.