

Women Hunters and Gatherers

Anthropologist have studied pre-historic societies for decades and are finally reactive to what science has taught them regarding early communities and their means of survival. We've been systematically taught that the male species is generally the relied upon "hunter" and women function primarily as "gatherers." Though this is a seemingly natural trait of the female species, research and time as an educator(s) has proven that this preconceived notion of the sexiest divide became challenged during times of illness, early death, war, and modern day divorce. During times of necessity and crisis, women have continued to supplement the needs of the household(s) globally as the secondary parent and head of household. Caveman days, through science, shown proof and found no barriers toward supporting this stance.

The natural roles of early human society would lend for use of bows and arrows and other favorite weaponry. Research shows that 79% of the communities back then held women hunters. During early pre-historic times, those who died where buried with their choice things, this is inclusive especially of their tools. Remains identified as "female" or women, were found along with their choice weapons. This enabled adapting the reality of women as hunters from the days of caves and cavemen with family's. Some also hold an attachment to the biblical suggestion that women are mans helpers and keepers of all that is sensitive and dear unto him. As they must eat and thrive, she must take up the slack for his tasks, his responsibilities when he is unable to perform out of pure interest in survival.

Motherhood is the connectivity and inception of the family structure. Thus, she is the conduit for things he is incapable of or unwilling to do. It is not a "physical" attribute of the female sex to hunt and use brute force and dangerous tools to kill and prepare animals for use as even the men died attempting to do so for the family. Women, however, hunted smaller creatures, those she could handle, manipulate on her own. Again, this is found as later remains carefully researched and grave sites reveal use of tools signifying "shes" as master hunters as well. She too, gathered plant food and prepared it all for consumption. Hence, today dinner too is on the table after a days work for the family.



A study from June 2023 found that among 63 modern hunter-gatherer cultures, 73 percent of the women participated in hunting. Today's food industry holds a large percentage of women who have once again, taken on the traditional roll of cook or chef within a once male dominent field. Here we find preparation of meat, veggies, and other items can begin with women undertaking the task in proper hunting of game and it's preparation for an expected meal or dish.

To further the imagery of women and the extension of her roll of caretaker, in her memoir titled *"Give A Girl A Knife"*, chef Amy Thielen recounts her life's journey within the food industry from her hometown, momma's home & french frie fabulous experience onto a career focused chef's assistant staffer.

In this deeply rooted retale of life growing up in northern suburban Minnesota, our author shares her kindling of foods specific to her upbringing, familia cultural history, and local favorites. As this times, 1970'ish are formulating years, she is encapsulated inside the french frie devotion as a summertime item that gave it's oil laden stench into the surrounding environment. She too relates this their regional potato farmers who influenced their diets as did her heritage of picklers. Aunt Helen's jared delights with bottom cabbage excited her taste buds as a tart favorite. Any, without shame, butter had it's fashionable runway on the family dining table. As it was a readily used condiment and a consistent supplement to their daily diets. It coated meats, creamed potatos, was a vegetable spread and dressed pasta for the family meals as it was a prescribed "brain food" as well spread in use as a bottled lotion.

The text of her memories relish her traditions in food and food experiences and yet begs for acknowledgment of food gathering. She shares farming and crop use, a history of self pickling grown cucumbers and cabbage by her mother and aunt and the sense of fulfillment it offered. This is all captured outside the suggestion of a growing market place for meat and other food product purchasing. Modern day farming is about feeding healthy farmed foods without chemical contamination. It is efficiently overting seasonal deprivation of anykind. It is carefully raising and herding animals as sustainable meat resources without having to go into the wild and kill for the nights supper. Conventional evolutions, scientific determination(s) and technological advancements have eased processing and storage seasonal burdens onto refrigeration and preservation. We have observed the use and value in self-help bottling storing techniques and vegetable gardens that keep us healthy but attached to our past as women hunters and gatherers. Just as generational care-takers providing nourishment to our family's and others as intended. Spreading methodology food prep in aging as tradionally done extending as far back as the caveman days.

Historical traditions of hunting have today become a social activity for fraternizing and a education tool highlighting a food industry means of survival. Men participate, however women also became companions for such and for training as chefs and cooks honing in on her trade. Ground up knowledge based learned professionals are welcomed as game hunter and field farm gathering providers. Venison, rabbits, and geese are examples of food resources which are obtained at times through seasonal hunting ventures weighed against the fifty's through sixties when communities still relied upon such survival habits. Back then, even grandma gathered the rifle to go out and find and kill dinner. A good kill preserves the most usable parts of an animal prepared with fur and skin removal, cleansing of its innards, and for some bleeding the animal out in preparation for it to be cooked and eaten.

As a external note, often food preparers are faced with quality and cost issue which drive them onto farming some of their readily accessible vegetables and herbs for control of chemical use, contamination and savored freshness for meal preparation.

Thielen too in text reminds us of the days of old methods of mixing, before the electric mixers (pre-electric) were accessible and before kitchen relics counted their value (the mixers) in ease of minipulation. She declares the "fork" as the tool of choice outside side of knives that go dull quickly. The fork would cut fat and flour, whisk egg whites into fluff as well as become a mixing device along with spoons later designed with larger heads to gather greater portions. But that fork was a mulitipurpose "tool" of choice and a constant nag in trying to wein the older contented women from scared of the new and unwilling to risk a failed outcome of their food items.

This tale spirals onto life and how women are forced to make sacrifices and adjustments to worklife as their gathering ability and hunting skills are called into question when raising baby. History can not compete with the reduction in time spent finding food for dinner, running errands, and enjoying life. The marketplace has compromised quality and extended budgets as prices rise, yet, it eliminates venturing into the wild to shoot and kill and building a hen house out back for home grown chicken and eggs. Commercialization of farmed products, trade, and localized farming have enabled women to play the role of hunter and gatherer a lot different. It has given us choices that influence our health, feminism, and use of creativity. But most of all is the outcome of food "choice" and that sense of flexible "freedoms" that essential elements in life.

Animals farms with stock of hens, pigs, cows or other animal choices became common as people dependency grew for fresh cured meat. Meat was longer a means of accessibility, but, a recognized staple for dinner people depended upon. The local butcher was as famous as the market owner who granted extensions of credit for necessary items. These were family businesses often which employed the use of both the boys and the girls to make it run smoothly as it was the sole financial resource. These animals were feed, slaughtered, bleed, skinned and cut into specific meat products. The women contributed same as the men and in his early death, she took over such businesses for survival. This female chef, Amy Thielen, has excelled and exhaled over years of growing and gaining experience onto expertise. It's not about the hunt or hunting season but the kind of seasonings she uses beyond coarse salt and fresh pepper.

Now, she does what is best, what is easiest with having a larger family. Baby makes three and leaves little time for grinding red meat, her professional choice, for which she has wisely moved onto what is a time saver and available in pre-ground meat(s) purchases.



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