

Primitive Wisdom. Savage or Salvation?

By Chris White

In the 1930's a Dentist named Weston A. Price traveled the world studying the effects of white man's food (white flour, sugar, processed milk, salt, and heat-treated meats) on the health and vitality of indigenous societies and compared them to those living on their native diets (characteristics of traditional diets can be found at the end of this document). His sample group was by no means small, as he traveled the world over in search of numerous isolated groups. The world truly became his laboratory.

He traveled to villages in Switzerland, Gaelic communities in the Outer Hebrides, Eskimos and Indians of North America, Melanesian and Polynesian South Sea Islanders, African tribes, Australian Aborigines, New Zealand Maori and the Indians of South America. Wherever he went, Dr. Price found that beautiful straight teeth, freedom from decay, stalwart bodies, resistance to disease and fine characters were typical of primitives on their traditional diets, rich in essential food factors.

When possible Price tried to find members of the same family that had been divided. One member remained on their native diet, while the other adopted a more modernized diet. What he found was a stark contrast in dental health, susceptibility to disease, and the health of their offspring.

Though his initial research focused strictly on the relationship between diet and dental caries he began to discover something far more troubling. Price recognized that wherever primitive societies were exposed to "modern" convenience foods that health drastically declined. Everything from altered craniofacial structure and lower birth rates to decreased immunity, poor posture, and loss of vitality. Dr. Price's data revealed an average increase in susceptibility of primitive societies to disease of thirty-five fold. He also discovered that primitive diets contain at least four times the calcium and other minerals and TEN times the fat-soluble vitamins from animal fats (vitamin A, vitamin D and the Price Factor--now believed to be vitamin K2) as the average American diet. Keep in mind this was in the early 1930's when food quality was significantly better than it is today.

Dr. Price took several photos of what healthy people looked like and the changes that occurred when a member of their group was exposed to a

modern diet of refined, processed foods. Many of these amazing photos can be found in his book *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*.

For the first time people could actually see the visual differences between native populations living in accordance with the Laws of Mother Nature and those affixed to modern convenience foods. Unfortunately, according to Dr. Price, much of the ancient wisdom has been rejected because of prejudice against so-called savages. Our way of life today is so different from that of our primitive ancestors that we label their ways and traditions as “unorthodox” against the backdrop of what we believe to be ‘normal’. Indeed, many of you would consider eating raw meat barbarian or favoring organs meats and glands over muscle meat unthinkable. While this was common practice among many primitive societies, your response to this data will be to call these methods and practices savage as you filter it through your modern lens of orthodoxy. But since our orthodox theories have not saved us from the chronic diseases and illnesses we so frequently experience we may have to readjust them to bring us into harmony with Nature’s Law. Nature above all must be obeyed, not orthodoxy.



A Navajo. Many early explorers and settlers commented on the superb bone structure of the native Americans.



Chief Sitting Bull. Note the high cheek bones and the width of the jaw.



Photo © Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation
www.price-pottenger.org



Photo © Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation
www.price-pottenger.org

The "primitive" Seminole girl (left) has a wide, handsome face with plenty of room for the dental arches. The "modernized" Seminole girl (right) born to parents who had abandoned their traditional diets, has a narrowed face, crowded teeth, and a reduced immunity to disease.



Photo © Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation
www.price-pottenger.org



Photo © Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation
www.price-pottenger.org

Good dental health begins with the diet of the parents. The Samoan boy on the left was born to parents who ate nutrient-rich native foods. The Samoan boy on the right was born to parents who had abandoned their traditional diet. He has crowded dental arches, and will be more susceptible to dental decay.

As part of an ongoing series that chronicles the traditions of pre-20th Century, primitive, isolated societies and their unmatched achievement of health and vitality, Go Primal Fitness will do an article each month detailing the characteristics of various primitive diets and their native traditions. It is our hope that through education and understanding we can begin to see the error of our ‘modern’ ways and adopt a lifestyle more in harmony with the Laws of Mother Nature so that future generations can grow stronger and more resilient.

Characteristics of Traditional Diets

Foods from fertile soil
Organ meats preferred over muscle meats
Natural animal fats
Animals on pasture
Dairy products raw and/or fermented
Grains and legumes soaked
Soy foods given long fermentation
Soy foods consumed in small amounts
Bone broths
Unrefined sweeteners
Lacto-fermented vegetables
Lacto-fermented beverages
Unrefined salt
Natural vitamins occurring in foods
Traditional cooking
Tradition seeds, open pollination

References

1. Price, Weston A, DDS, Nutrition and Physical Degeneration, The Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation, San Diego, CA
2. Fallon, Sally, Nourishing Traditions
3. The Weston A. Price Foundation, San Diego, CA

