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Issue #1

The HOMESTEADER

Life With The Land

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SUB CULTURE *of* HOMESTEADING

“Captain John Smith told the English Colonists, he who shall not work shall not eat.”
(Bamberger, 2019)

Homesteading has been around for centuries. There was once a time when this way of life was almost everyone's means of life. For the American way of life, homesteading started with the birth of the colonies. An early characteristic of a homestead was to “acquire a patch of land, tend it, and live in harmony with nature, whether or not they choose to live in harmony with, or isolation from their fellow humans” (Bamberger, 2019). As time has gone on, the need to be a homesteader has vanished as we have grocery stores and farmers to supply them with food.

In recent years, millennials have started a movement of not wanting to rely on the government as a food source. The way food is grown has changed, adding more chemicals, such as GMOs, herbicides, and pesticides, to our food products.

Today, a Homestead is defined “as a place where Homesteaders grow a garden, raise chickens or other animals, and reduce their dependence upon the commercial food supply chain. Many Homesteaders do not depend on public utilities for water and

electricity”(Brownlee, 2020). With less abundance of land, modern homesteading may look a lot different. Instead of large areas to plant, modern homestead might look like a rooftop garden, live roof, “vertical gardening, container gardening, hydroponics, and aquaponics to grow food”(Thornbro, 2023). Traditional homesteading faced much isolation while modern homesteading “encourages individuals to strike a balance between self-sufficiency

and active participation in the modern world”(Thornbro, 2023). Thanks to the internet, this is also easier because of social media and access to find groups of people with the same ideas or beliefs. Homesteading today is not about survival, rather it is about thriving with minimal government support.



The HOMESTEADER VALUES & IDEALS



Self- Reliance

01

Not having to rely on grocery stores to provide for your family. Even though it requires some help becoming energy and water-efficient, it is another way to lessen costs and not rely on outside usage. (Wilsher, 2022) The ultimate goal is to provide for the whole family and be able to leave something so your family can survive. Not just land and money, but wisdom, a sense of responsibility, reverence, and preparation for the future. (Sitkowski, 2021)



Community

02

There are many ways to connect with other homesteaders through blogs, conferences, magazines, podcasts, and so much more. (Folk, 2022). This connection through modern technology has helped to change homesteading from an isolated, figure-it-out-on-your-own to an inclusive community. Homesteaders want to help one another by sharing what they have learned about living with the land in a way that can teach others how to be successful when doing the same. (Browlen, 2020)



Holistic View

03

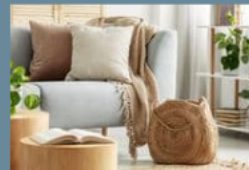
They are merging traditional practices with modern conveniences. Solar is an excellent example of combining preservation with modern technology that can help give a modern convenience while still preserving the land. (Hughes,n.d.) Connecting with heritage to honor cultural traditions and practices and connecting with the environment, land, and the food they consume rather than online and following along with the model of minimalism and sustainability. With access to other homesteading communities through technology, individuals view homesteading as easier than doing it independently for the first time. (Folk,2022).



Minimalism & Creativity

04

Creativity through minimalism simply states that we do not need all the excess stuff, whether it be in our food, trinkets, or clothing. Minimalism can seem maximalist at times depending on how you chooses to use patterns even adding an abundance of plants. It remains minimalist because of natural materials, the objects in the home were mindfully chosen, handmade items, decorating with simplicity, and bring the outdoors inside. (Lisa, 2024)



INFLUENCE

Values & Ideals

ON DRESS

The ideals that homesteaders hold for minimalism, community, preservation and adoption to new techniques, and self-reliance can be seen through the way they dress not only required, but enjoyed.



The Dress for the Homesteaders follows their **cultural ideal** of preservation, simplicity, and creativity. Following homesteaders' values, the cultural ideals can be represented through work ethics. When it comes to creativity, there are many different ways to arrange things, such as what livestock go in what barn, what is the best way to feed or water, and what resources are available based on the homestead location. Using community resources such as online, different ideas can be found to help solve problems. Working with the land and using the resources available to preserve the way of life on a homestead works with the holistic ideal.

Preserving the land and self-worth through **modesty** is critical in homestead culture and at its roots. Dressing in movable, comfortable clothing for the elements is key. When working outside, you need to have layers to block out the sun and protect you from environmental factors such as bugs, certain plants, and even dirt. This means that covering up your skin and being conservative with what you show is important.

Dress codes between men and women in the past follow strict **dress codes and roles**. Typically, in the past, women wore long dresses with multiple layers, such as petticoats and aprons.



The footwear would be a lace-up boot, sometimes with a slight heel. Womens hair would be put up neatly or pulled back, accessorizing with a bonnet of some kind. This was because women typically did not work with cattle or fieldwork. The role of women was to cook, clean, tend to the children, and do some more minor gardening. Men traditionally dressed in pants, button-down shirts, and a vest or jacket with a hat or bandana on their person to help with their sweat. Sometimes, men would wear overalls, but that could be an indication of societal standards whether men could afford pants and a shirt, not just pants. Men also wore more industrial boots for working in fields and tending to livestock. Pants were free, meaning they could ride horses and move around more freely.

Maintaining a farm with gardens, livestock, and families means a **routine** is necessary for keeping order. This is fluent throughout Homesteading, waking up to dress for the weather and tasks. The roles of male and female are now fluid, so daily rituals of tending to livestock, mending the gardens or fields, and fixing what is broken around the homestead can be done by both parties. Rituals can also be seasonal, changing with harvest time and then moving into replanting for the next season. This change also happens with livestock as hens lay fewer eggs in the winter, and the reproduction of animals is seasonal. Rituals can also vary depending on the family, whether or not they homeschool or attend a public school. Sitting down and getting schoolwork done at a particular time is a ritual for homeschooling. If children go to public school, the family has to decide when the children's chores will be done, before or after school.





MODERN DRESS *and* FASHION

When discussing cultural ideals of homesteading, we learned more dress codes and roles as well as why modesty is important.

Building on past dress we can examine how it has changed and what was once a way of life is now a fashion statement.

Over time, fashion has changed, women have strayed away from petticoats, lace up boots, bonnets, and long sleeves that there dress code roles once required. Moving into **anticipatory socialization** women adapted to new roles and took on more responsibility which is reflected in their dress. Now active in work that was once considered the man's job, women have thrived at adapting new skills, role norms, and behaviors. Values change based on the woman, but it is no longer to please the husband, clean the house and cook. Although some enjoy doing such things, there is a shift in sharing these roles with men. As times have changed, the acceptance of women wearing pants and overalls is not only acceptable but encouraged.



Socialization theory does a great job at explaining the change in dress roles and cultural norms that women faced in the homesteading community. The change and expectations not only in dress, but the roles women took on did not happen overnight. First, before it was accepted by all individuals, there had to be the dissemination of the previous customs, ideologies and norms that were held for the roles of women before. Some were more accepting than others. Even in different religions, wearing pants has become accepted. For men, dress has changed, and roles were added but nothing as drastic as what women experienced. Men still wear long pants, long shirts, a vest or a button-down that can be taken off, with accessories such as hats, suspenders, and bandanas. Over time there has been plenty of change in the durability of fabrics facial hair, and types of work shoes.

With all this change, homesteading is about getting back to the original roots of being self sufficient to support your family. Modern ideals and technological advances makes this easier,

but some women choose to dress in stereotypical older fashions. These **style tribes** choose to show their fashions of homesteading in a way that is undeniably recognizable as homesteading. They do traditional roles, but add some modern advances. This means that instead of a full length petticoat and dress, they might choose a long skirt and t-shirt. Aprons are optional and can be full body or around the waist. Hair styles can be accented with headbands, effortlessly in a messy bun, or even down the bonnets have faded out of style and ball-caps have become the new trend.

The modern homestead fashion for men and women are pants of some kind, a closed toed shoe, such as boots or tennis shoes, overalls, and a long sleeve or short sleeve t-shirt. Both genders also tend to layer outfits with a flannel or button down that can be easily removed. Other things that both genders will wear are hats with a bill or brim to block out the sun, sunglasses for protection, and work or gardening gloves. In the winter with jackets, sweatshirts, hoodies, insulated overalls, and beanies tend to be a more

extensive wardrobe than women with long skirts or dresses, sometimes adding an apron that can start at the waist or be full length. Sweaters or cardigans add another layer that can be easily removed. Instead of hats, women will put their hair up in various ways, maybe accenting it with a headband. The way that homesteaders dress could arguably be religious, following the religion of Christianity. However, most will say that it is about comfort and protection from the elements, meaning the clothing needs to be durable. (Greer, n.d.)(Seebregts, 2022)

THE



TAKE AWAY



After learning about cultural beliefs, historical trends, and modern fashion, we must now consider why this particular way of dressing is so popular.

When homesteading becomes your lifestyle, your wardrobe needs to be able to keep up. Following along with **symbolic interactions** the way that homesteaders dress changes with the elements. If it is a hot day and there are less bugs, maybe a short sleeve shirt can be worn with longer pants to protect from possible snakes. If you were working closer to the house on the same day and staying out of the fields maybe a pair of shorts is acceptable. Say you must go to town to pick up feed or make a sale, homesteaders might dress a bit nicer for presentation purposes. This shows how individuals who follow the homestead life respond to the elements of their environment and change based on the environment they are in.



Clothing back in the day, as well as today help us to define social situations. **Clothing in context** for what we are doing is very important. As a homesteader daily dress is meant to survive the elements and is not always something that you would wear out and about. If a homesteader was to throw a party or is attending a religious service where a community of friends is, the idea of how to dress would change. If they were going out into town, clothes would be cleaner and matching. Women might do there make up, putting time and effort into appearance rather than effortlessly getting ready to work the homestead. Men might shave their face or wear nicer pants, changing from boots to a loafer, or nicer shoe showing out for the occasion. Having a few nicer things for what is considered a out of the ordinary or special occasion is a must for everyone including homesteaders.

Homesteaders tend to try and buy brands that are of sustainable quality so that the clothes will last if they get dirty or picked at. **Slow fashion** prefers quality over quantity and so do homesteaders, that is why this lifestyle change became so important to individuals and families in the first place. Just like clothing choices and brand preferences, homesteading is about minimalism in wardrobe, reliance

on others, and the home environment. That is why the quality of clothing is so important because it is meant to last. Carhartt is a great brand that makes farm/work clothing that is made to last. Focusing on their jackets and overalls they are made from a durable material that is thick

and hard to rip. It almost feels like canvas but tougher. Carhart makes many different things such as hats, gloves, overalls, jackets, sweatshirts, shirts, and pants. Even still, the brand focuses on quality and durability, believing that what they make should last.



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