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Cultural Perspectives

Read the following excerpt from Kashaya Pomo cultural leader, Essie Parrish, as she describes the traditional way to process and prepare deer meat. Answer the questions that follow. This excerpt is taken from the chapter "Kashaya Pomo Memories of Food" in *Food in California Indian Culture* by Ira Jacknis.

Preparing Deer and Other Meat

September, 1958

They are said not to have let any meat go to waste; they ate all of the deer - only the crushed bones were thrown away.

The backbone they laid on a mortar stone and pounded lightly with some kind of pestle, then they crushed, crushed, crushed - that uncovers the flesh - and then they baked it on coals. They only discarded [the bits of bone] they picked out by chewing.

That's how Indians prepared meat - by baking it on coals. And by barbecuing - sticking [pieces of meat] up on sticks; heating them by radiation, they became cooked. It tastes delicious - I ate some that my grandmother prepared.

And as for the liver, they wrapped it in leaves and baked it under the ashes, and when it was cooked they ate it together with acorn mush. It tasted very good.

And the tripe they filled with deer blood, pinned closed with small sticks, wrapped in thimbleberry leaves, and then they pinned that together too. They baked it under the ashes. When it was cooked, they took it out and opened it up - it looked good. The blood turns into a dark load. But the leaves aren't burned, only scorched on top. They say it tastes good.

And they ate the deer's ears too. When they skinned the head, they would cut the ears off. In order to eat it, they would cook it until the tips of the ears were good and crisp.

Traditionally, Pomo people consumed all parts of an animal. How is this different from food culture in the United States today?

When parts of an animal or plant are not eaten, where do the excess parts go? What impact can this waste have on the environment?