

# Shoot The Women First: The Surprising History of Female Gunfighters

In the Wild West, where lawlessness prevailed and danger lurked around every corner, one would not expect to find women fearlessly wielding guns and confronting outlaws. Yet, the history of the American frontier is full of remarkable stories of women who defied societal norms and embraced a life of adventure and bravery. These daring women, known as gunfighters, played a significant role in shaping the history of the Old West.

One of the most intriguing and controversial aspects of this history is the concept of "Shoot The Women First". This phrase, initially coined by journalist Kurt Stone, refers to the unconventional tactic employed by some lawmen, who believed that in order to neutralize criminal activities, it was sometimes necessary to target female criminals first. The rationale behind this strategy was that by incapacitating a female outlaw, the male figures who often relied on their protection would be rendered powerless, thereby diminishing the overall threat.

## The Origins of Female Gunfighters

To truly understand the phenomenon of gunfighting women, one must delve into the socio-political landscape of the late 19th century. The frontier presented a unique opportunity for social experimentation and liberation, as the absence of established norms allowed for greater flexibility in gender roles. As a result, women were often forced to take matters into their own hands, resorting to unconventional means to survive and protect their families.

**Shoot The Women First: How I became an Intelligence agent** by Andrea Davison (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5



Language	: English
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Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
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Many gunfighting women were former prostitutes who traded the streets of bustling mining towns for a life on the frontier. With limited options and the constant threat of violence, these women became skilled shooters to ensure their safety. This transition from selling their bodies to protecting their lives gave rise to a new breed of gunfighters who refused to be relegated to the sidelines.

### **The Deadly Duo: Belle Starr and Poker Alice**

Two prominent female gunfighters who defied all expectations were Belle Starr and Poker Alice. Belle Starr, often referred to as the "Bandit Queen", was notorious for her connections to outlaws and her fierce determination. She navigated the criminal underworld with a boldness that was unmatched, wielding her gun with precision and instilling fear in the hearts of her enemies.

Poker Alice, on the other hand, was a professional gambler who mastered the art of card-playing and gun-slinging. Her quick wit and sharpshooting skills made her a force to be reckoned with at the poker table and on the streets. This combination of intelligence and marksmanship allowed Poker Alice to outsmart and outshoot many of her opponents.

### **The Controversial Lawman Tactic: Shoot The Women First**

While the majority of lawmen adhered to traditional methods of law enforcement, there were some who subscribed to the unconventional strategy of "Shoot The Women First". This tactic was primarily driven by practicality rather than any desire to specifically target women. The belief was that by neutralizing the female criminal, the males associated with her would be left vulnerable and more likely to surrender.

Critics argue that this tactic was unjust and perpetuated gender-based violence. It certainly reflects the harsh realities of the Old West, where survival often trumped societal notions of fairness and justice. However, defenders of this approach contend that the nature of law enforcement on the frontier necessitated unconventional methods, and "Shoot The Women First" was just one such method employed to maintain order.

## **Legacy and Cultural Impact**

While the era of the gunfighting woman may have faded alongside the settlement of the American frontier, their legacy endures in popular culture. Movie characters like Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane have immortalized the image of fiercely independent women who fearlessly faced their adversaries. These portrayals serve as a reminder of the incredible bravery and resilience of those women who defied societal expectations and paved the way for future generations.

In , the history of gunfighting women in the Wild West is a testament to the indomitable spirit and courage of those who refused to be silenced. While the controversial tactic of "Shoot The Women First" may spark debate, it cannot overshadow the larger story of these remarkable women who fearlessly confronted danger head-on. Their contribution to the shaping of the American frontier and their defiance of gender norms make them an integral part of our historical narrative.



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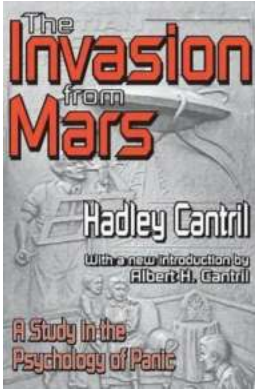
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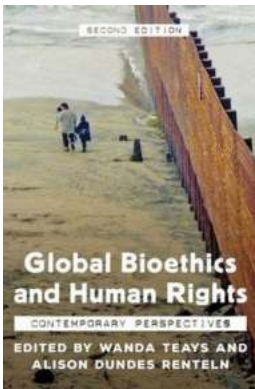
Shoot the Women First is the untold story of a secret global Intelligence Service

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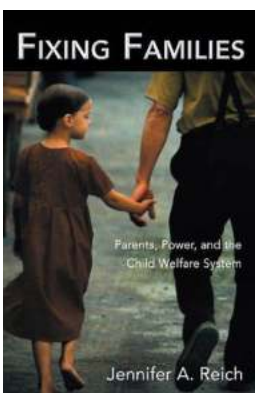
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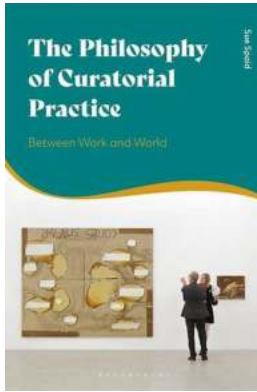
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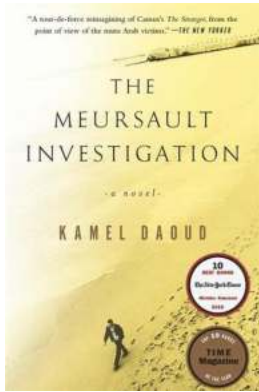
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