



Blood, Bread, and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World

Judy Grahn, Charlene Spretnak (Foreword)

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"Blood, Bread, and Roses" reclaims women's myths and stories, chronicling the ways in which women's actions and the teaching of myth have interacted over the millenia. Grahn argues that culture has been a weaving between the genders, a sharing of wisdom derived from menstruation. Her rich interpretations of ancient menstrual rites give us a new and hopeful story of culture's beginnings based on the integration of body, mind, and spirit found in women's traditions. "Blood, Bread, and Roses" offers all of us a way back to understanding the true meaning of women's menstrual power.

Foreword by Charlene Spretnak

"[Grahn's] intriguing excursion through folklore, myth, religion, anthropology and history bespeaks a feminist conviction that male origin stories must be balanced by a recognition of women's central role in shaping civilization."

-Publishers Weekly

Blood, Bread, and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World Details

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From Reader Review Blood, Bread, and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World for online ebook

Tia says

A painfully boring read, punctuated by random intervals where I would snort-laugh with disgust at this compendium of utter heiffer dust. Drivel.

J.M. says

Recommended for me by Amazon based on my previous purchases.

Carmen K says

So far, I've gotten through chapter 1. I've read sections of the chapter more than once because I wanted to make sure I wasn't getting the wrong impression. The thing that stands out most (to me) from chapter one is the statement that some of the more extreme seclusion rites of menstruation were probably in large part created by women. I've got no problem with this premise at all. What I have a problem with is the fact that is presented as a GOOD thing. Making a woman lie in one spot for days on end or go without sleep or stay in forced isolation that in some cultures lasted months should not be any less disturbing just because women might have thought it up.

An honest effort will be made on my part to read the rest of the book. My main reservation is that the book will be in large part a justification of the shame and self-loathing many mothers have passed on to their daughters.

I gave up on reading the rest. It just does not hold my interest at this time.

Mary-Marcia says

It's been too long, re-reading this book so much awakened belonging to womanhood.

Beth says

I read this book back in high school and I remember it as a seminal work in my awakening to the world. I recommend this book to both women and men, as a wonderful tool for understanding history ("her story") and humanity.

Vanessa Reed says

An academic read with a personal flare. Judy's on to somethin here: moon cycles...women's cycles...early forms of a calendar...early mathematics...and on and on.

Molly says

A lot of the content feels like too far of a reach or stretch in logic. Some interesting content.

Renee Alberts says

This book changed my entire worldview. Anyone who's ever felt left out of history class by the prevalence of masculine pronouns has been waiting for Blood, Bread, and Roses. Grahn, celebrated feminist poet and writer, approaches anthropology from humanity's very inception with the perspective that menstruation was the mother of invention. She argues that menstrual seclusion rituals, widespread among early societies, established human understanding of separation and synchronicity, and that they conveyed that understanding through metaform, behavior that communicates social mores and shared belief. Scholarly, but readable and stimulating, Grahn draws from prehistoric and modern cultural comparison, etymology, and poetic inference to detail the roots of religion, law, mythology, mathematics, science, clothing and eating. While readers may not agree with all her theories, the book is indispensable for anyone who has wondered about the other half of the (pre)historical gender bias, and longed for more balanced alternate theories.

Eric says

This book is a page-turner. It draws in the reader immediately by asking a fundamental question: where does humanity come from--intellectually, culturally, socially? In the process of answering this question, the author challenges the reader to view common social and cultural practices in a new light, making odd taboos seem normal and everyday practices appear odd. More importantly, she tries to get inside the heads of those who may have introduced such practices, while chronicling humanity's changing relationship with the world and itself. If one wants an overview of how humanity arrived at its current status as the dominant species on Earth, this book provides one.

Annette says

Absolutely excellent alternative analysis and theory of how culture evolved. Its fascinating.

Eden says

Largely speculation, unbacked by evidence.

Peggy Petersen says

I had the good fortune to study Metaformic Theory under Judy Grahn and this book was, of course, required reading. In addition, I was a teaching assistant for two additional semesters of the class. I had initially struggled with Metaformic Theory and it wasn't until the third time through that I finally had an "ah ha" moment and really "got" what Judy was proposing. I highly recommend this foundational work.

Charlotte says

Title is an accurate description of the book.

THIS BOOK BLEW MY MIND. It was really hard to even believe at times that there was once a time where the crazy was contained, culturally managed, and either reviled or revered. Marriage rites and current customs derived from menstrual ceremony.

It's really hard, in a society that basically considers menstruation a disgusting problem to avoid talking about, to never use as an excuse, and to justify stupid jokes about how women can't be in charge, to consider that it hasn't always been this way. Sometimes it was far better. Sometimes it was far worse. But throughout history, culture has always had something to say and regulated women's private matters. And for better or for worse, the remnant metaphors are everywhere.
