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DANGEROUS WOMEN AND MALE DOMINANCE:

TESTING A THEORY OF MENSTRUAL TABOOS

by

Janet M. Chater, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
April 12, 1988

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Janet M. Chater

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DANGEROUS WOMEN AND MALE DOMINANCE:
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submitted by Janet M. Chater, B.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements, for
the degree of Master of Arts

Thesis Supervisor

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April 29, 1988

Abstract

This thesis examines the literature on menstrual taboos to locate a theory which provides a viable explanation for this complex phenomenon. Such a theory must explain why they appear in some societies but not others and why there is such variation in form. An object relations theory which appears to meet the criteria is operationalized and applied to a cross-cultural sample. This theory hypothesizes that menstrual taboos will be most severe in societies with strong mother-child identification followed by radical separation of the child from the mother. The results of the test fail to support the hypothesis.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Menstrual taboos are a cultural phenomenon which have attracted the attention of theorists from a variety of perspectives. The variation in form, duration and intensity of menstrual taboos among various cultures has perplexed and intrigued social scientists for more than a century. Theorists ask why menstrual taboos exist, under what conditions they are found and what function they serve (Young & Bacdayan, 1967:95). They seek to discover why they are present in some societies but not others and why there is such variation in the characteristics of menstrual taboos from society to society.

Taboo is defined as: "forbidden to profane use or contact because of supposedly dangerous supernatural powers"; "banned as constituting a risk"; "a prohibition against touching, saying, or doing something for fear of immediate harm from a mysterious superhuman force"; "a prohibition imposed by social custom or as a protective measure" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1980:1176).

Young and Bacdayan define menstrual taboos as "those customs often found in tribal society that publicly restrict the behavior of women at the time of menstruation and apply

throughout most of a woman's life." (Young & Bacdayan, 1967: 95) Stephens refers to menstrual taboos as "beliefs or superstitions about dangers inherent in menstruation, and to avoidance customs which are rationalized by these beliefs" (Stephens, 1967:71) and notes that menstrual taboos differ from other taboos by placing little emphasis on the need to protect the taboo person yet heavily stressing the need to protect others from the taboo person (Stephens, 1967:75). Stephens also states that the predominant belief "appears to be that menstruating women are dangerous to men" and that "contamination as a result of touching either the woman, her blood, or things which she has touched" can lead to "sickness, injury, or loss of magical power". (Stephens, 1967:75)

Young and Bacdayan liken menstrual taboos to social separation and abasement (Young & Bacdayan, 1967:95) and in their restrictive nature, see them as a means of limiting women's access to "important aspects of the male world" (Young & Bacdayan, 1967:96). Marla Powers disagrees that menstrual taboos are symbols of women's defilement and attributes that perspective to Western a priori notions leading to bias of interpretation (Powers, 1980:119). She suggests that menstruation emphasizes women's reproductive role: among the North American Indians, a woman is believed to have supernatural powers at this time yet because this power is seen as different from men's power she is kept apart.

For the purposes of this study, I will define menstrual taboos as restrictions on the movements and/or actions of women during the period of their menstrual flow. I will discuss a number of theories which attempt to provide viable explanations for this complex phenomenon. The criteria for a comprehensive theory of menstrual taboos were elaborated by H. Clyde Wilson when he suggested that a universal explanation of menstrual taboos must explain; "1) why menstrual taboos were not formulated in some societies, 2) why they were formulated in other societies, and 3) why they vary in form from one society to another" (Wilson, 1964:624).

In the next section I will present a number of theories which attempt to explain menstrual taboos. Their limited success in meeting Wilson's criteria for a universal explanation will be examined and their salient features noted. In chapter two I will present an alternate theory which appears to meet the criteria more satisfactorily and to provide a more viable explanation of menstrual taboos.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section I will discuss the following six general explanations of menstrual taboos: 1) menstrual taboos serve as a form of birth control where population pressure on scarce resources is great; 2) menstrual taboos restrict the power of women under the domination of men and protect men's relations with other men; 3) menstrual taboos reflect male fear of women in societies where men marry women from enemy groups; 4) menstrual taboos are a function of the public/private dichotomy wherein women are restricted to the private sphere while men dominate the public sphere; 5) menstrual taboos are a function of the nature/culture dichotomy wherein women are associated with their reproductive and nurturance roles and thus nature while men are associated with the intellect and thereby culture; and 6) menstrual taboos are a function of men's unconscious fears of women.

Hypothesis 1: Birth Control

Shirley Lindenbaum (Lindenbaum, 1972) attempts to explain menstrual taboos as a form of birth control. Lindenbaum proposes that "the idea of female pollution is used as a cultural whip in societies where available resources are endangered by further population increase"

(Lindenbaum, 1972:247). For her, fear of female pollution and the concurrent menstrual taboos are "a form of ideological birth control" (Lindenbaum, 1972:248). In societies like the Mae Enga where land is scarce, women are seen as dangerous and polluting to men. Female pollution is at its strongest during menstruation and thus men must protect themselves from contact with women at this time: women are required to remain in seclusion and avoid all contact with men or men's possessions.

Lindenbaum sees this fear of women as a means of restricting sexual contact between fertile members of the group. The obvious problem with this theory is that menstrual taboos keep men away from women at their infertile times increasing the likelihood of intercourse during the most fertile days of their cycle and thus pregnancy.

Hypothesis 2: Male Control of Female Fertility to Maintain The Balance of Power Between Men

A comparatively recent study by Karen Erickson Paige and Jeffery M. Paige (The Politics of Reproductive Ritual, 1981) explores the purpose and diversity of menstrual taboos along with other variables which they label reproductive rituals; male circumcision, female puberty rites, birth practices, sex segregation practices. Their study started as "an analysis of women's pollution beliefs and menstruation

practices but evolved into an analysis of the mechanisms used by men to control reproduction" (Paige & Paige, 1981:xi). They view reproductive ritual as a political bargaining process in which control over reproductive ability (a sign of wealth and power) is manipulated by men to maintain optimal intratribal social relations.

During menstruation, a woman's continuing fertility is reaffirmed. Menstrual seclusion serves to emphasize this fact: the absence of the woman from her hearth and the generally prominent location of the menstrual hut alert all to her condition. This emphasizes the wife's reproductive ability and the fulfillment of the marriage contract by the bride's family. However, the wife's fertility makes possible a shift in power from the family of orientation to that of the family of procreation. As family size increases, the husband's power grows and begins to alter the balance of power within the community (Paige & Paige, 1981:214).

Paige and Paige explain the need for segregation thus: "segregation practices are a ritual response to the particularly acute dilemma of a wife's continuing fertility in unstable societies, in which a husband must simultaneously display his power in order to enhance and maintain it and disclaim his power in order to keep from alienating affines, consanguinal kin, and the community as a

whole." (Paige & Paige, 1981:238-239).

By placing his menstruating wife in a menstrual hut he simultaneously proclaims her continuing fertility through which he can increase his power, and his lack of interest in power through abstinence and leaving his rights to her fertility unguarded. The belief in the polluting aspects of menstruating women is explained as a means whereby the husband prevents other men from gaining access to his wife while she is unprotected in the menstrual hut. Thus, according to Paige and Paige, the variability in menstrual restrictions is a function of the instability of the resource base with the subsequent need for kin support and the absence of alternate political strategies.

Paige & Paige treat menarche and menstrual taboos as separate phenomena despite the apparent inter-relatedness of these events. They see women as subject to male domination and menstrual taboos as one manifestation of this condition as do the majority of the following theories including the theory used for the present study. Their theory does not deal effectively with the variability in menstrual taboos: for example they attempt to explain pollution beliefs in conjunction with segregation but they do not deal with societies in which there are beliefs in the danger or power of menstrual blood without segregation practices. Their theory does not cover the range of menstrual taboo practices.

Hypothesis 3: Male Fear of Women Whose Family of Orientation
are Clan Enemies.

M.J. Meggitt presents a theory of menstrual taboos based on cultural politics (Meggitt, 1964). A brief survey of New Guinea Highland societies led him to believe that the hostilities that exist between the sexes varies as a result of "the presence or absence of particular kinds of men's purificatory cults, with differences in the social status of women in everyday life, and with the degree of hostility existing between affinally related groups" (Meggitt, 1964:206)

Meggitt subsequently examined the Mae Enga society of the New Guinea Highlands and attributed the Mae Enga's view of women as dangerous and polluting to the fact that Mae Enga men marry their enemies. They practice clan exogamy and because of clan-rivalry over scarce resources, they are forced to marry women from hostile neighboring groups. This leads to deep-rooted antagonism between the sexes as men try to control their wives and limit contact with them. Copulation is feared by men because of the danger of pollution and the depletion of vitality through ejaculation. Thus sex is for procreation and requires magic to ensure the safety of the husband: not until a groom has learned the proper magic to use before intercourse and during his wife's menstruation can he consummate the marriage. Women are

controlled by a multitude of menstrual taboos limiting their movements and actions during their menses.

Meggitt also presents the case of the Kuma who are prohibited from marrying their clan enemies and who have no pollution beliefs despite antagonism between the sexes brought about by men's attempts to dominate the women. Their attempts are relatively unsuccessful and Kuma women retain a fairly high social status.

Meggitt thus proposes that we can expect "to find the notion of feminine pollution emphasized in societies where affinal groups are seen--for whatever reason--as inimical to one's own group, but absent or of little significance where marriages usually occur between friendly groups." (Meggitt, 1964:219) He does not extend this argument beyond the New Guinea Highlands nor attempt to explain more fully the ramifications of marriage with a woman from an enemy group. The effects on gender relations would appear to go much further than avoidance during menstruation and would influence the nature of the family and child-rearing as well. A more holistic view of gender relations will be discussed in the psychoanalytic literature.

Hypothesis 4: The Public/Private Dichotomy

Karen Sacks uses a materialist perspective to relate

menstrual taboos to the status of women (Sacks, 1974). She proposes that the status of women is related to the ownership of private property by men and the exclusion of women from the public sphere such that societies with no private property and relatively equal participation of the sexes in social and economic pursuits will have few menstrual taboos whereas societies with male ownership of private property and the restriction of women to the domestic sphere are likely to have greater restrictions on women's sexuality.

Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo takes this argument further and suggests that the oppression of women is related not only to the fact of women's exclusion from the public sphere but also to the concurrent absence of men from the domestic sphere (Rosaldo, 1974). The division of the sexes has a great affect on methods of child-rearing and the subsequent personality development of the child which in turn effects the individual's view of the world: this aspect is examined more fully in psychoanalytic (object relations) theories.

Frank W. Young and Albert A. Bacdayan suggest that menstrual taboos are "institutionalized ways in which males in primitive society discriminate against females" (Young & Bacdayan, 1967;100). As such, they are likely to be found in communities where strong male solidarity is evident in the form of men's houses or secret societies. The authors

see menstrual taboos as a means of restricting women's contact with 'important' aspects of the men's world thus enforcing internal social cleavage and a lack of inter-communication between the sexes.

Although support for Sacks', Rosaldo's, and Young and Bacdayan's theories can be found in the anthropological data, they do not provide a full explanation of menstrual taboos. They fail to explore the underlying motives which maintain and reproduce these restrictions on women.

Hypothesis 5: The Nature/Culture Dichotomy

Sherry B. Ortner sees women's universal secondary status as a product of the association of women with nature and of men with culture. This association of woman with nature arises from her involvement with the interpersonal and subjective as well as her frequent contact with infant feces and urine, and with blood during menstruation and childbirth. Man is equated with the intellect and thereby culture. Ortner views as universal man's attempt to control and devalue nature: women are thus subject to restrictions by males (menstrual taboos) as nature is restricted by culture. (Ortner, 1974)

Ortner's theory also fits the anthropological data yet fails to explain the variation in menstrual taboos: if women's involvement with childcare and thus feces and urine

is universal then menstrual taboos should be virtually identical in all societies yet this is not the case. Ortner also fails to explain why men feel the need to control women or for that matter nature. Her assumption of a relationship between male domination of women and menstrual taboos is present in the majority of menstrual taboo theories yet the psychological motivation for this phenomenon is not adequately examined. For this we must again look to the psychoanalytic theorists.

Peggy Reeves Sanday also looks at a culture's relationship to its environment to explain menstrual taboos (Sanday, 1974). An inner orientation to the environment is found in societies that see nature as a life-giving, nurturing force (feminine) whereas an outer orientation is associated with the masculine pursuits of hunting and warfare and therefore death. Sanday proposes that those societies with an inner orientation will tend to be more egalitarian, have more female deities, shared parenting and less segregation along sexual lines in work and daily life. These societies are likely to have fewer menstrual restrictions than societies with an outer orientation which tend to display greater inequality with the bulk of the power lying with the males, deities which are animals or supreme male beings, little involvement of the males with childcare, and greater segregation of the sexes in all

spheres emphasized by greater menstrual restrictions.

Sanday's analysis presents a more holistic view of the relations within a society: the emphasis on cultural differences in the relation between the sexes, in child-rearing and in world view are brought together yet her analysis falls short as she fails to explore the underlying motivations for these differences.

Mary Douglas also explores the nature/culture dichotomy: she sees culture as a means of giving order to the environment. In this view, menstrual blood (like all bodily fluids) is seen as matter out of place once it leaves the confines of the body (Douglas, 1966). Menstrual blood is seen as anomalous and therefore dangerous: its potential as a human life has been lost therefore it is equated with disorder and must be controlled through pollution beliefs and menstrual restrictions.

Douglas' theory again fails to adequately explain variation: some societies have no menstrual taboos whereas others have severe restrictions on menstruating women yet women universally experience periods during which the menstrual blood becomes matter out of place.

Elizabeth Faithorn's 1975 article on the Kafe of the Papua New Guinea Highlands presents a different view of bodily substances. Faithorn found that the Kafe considered menstrual blood and semen as equally dangerous and powerful

substances. They are both life-giving forces which could become dangerous if improperly controlled. This supports Douglas' matter out of place theory but sheds no further light on variation of menstrual taboos.

Audrey I. Richards', in her book 'Chisungu' (1931), suggests that individuals find menstrual blood disturbing because of the association of blood with death, murder, life and kinship. Menstruation is a sign of woman's procreative power and thus her importance to a society that greatly values fertility. The Bemba attribute magical powers to sex, blood and fire and require strict separation of these elements and the ritual purification of all who come in contact with them. Richards notes that the individuals considered most dangerous by the Bemba are those who have passed through an unusual or dangerous state as, for example, a murderer, a lion-killer or a young woman in menarche.

Marla N. Powers rejects the Western tendency to view menstrual taboos as symbols of women's defilement and to view menarche and menstrual taboos as separate rites. She views these customs as a whole and sees the emphasis as being on women's reproductivity, thus menarche is a time of celebration of the young woman's fertility and often she is considered to have access to supernatural powers during this period of her life (ex. Oglala). Powers feels that

menstrual taboos are a product of "the male-dominated system of social control" which women have learned to put up with out of necessity (Powers, 1980:119).

Ruby Rohrlich-Leavitt, Barbara Sykes, and Elizabeth Weatherford (1975) also reject the view of women as polluting. Alice Schlegel proposes that it is the blood and not the woman who is dangerous and that a menstruating woman is in a "state of spiritual tension" like a warrior (Schlegel, 1972:90).

Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove suggest that men fear women's menstrual blood as a symbol of women's power over life and death and seek to deny this power by keeping it hidden. They feel that menstrual seclusion may have originated with women's desire to become introspective at this time but later became enforced by men through fear and envy of women's procreative powers (Shuttle & Redgrove, 1978:63). Shuttle and Redgrove also note that in many societies men emulate menstruation by methods such as forced nose bleeding or sub-incision.

Paula Weideger comes to a similar conclusion and suggests that menstruation is not universally considered evil but rather is universally envied as a potent source of power and this envy led to man's need to subjugate women and obscure their source of power by constant undermining of women's self-esteem and identity (Weideger, 1975).

These last theories (especially from Richards on) all stress the importance of the female reproductive role and of menstrual blood as a powerful substance which elicits envy and perhaps fear from the male population. Recently, I attended an event which served to emphasize this view.

During my data collection period, I visited the Odawa Friendship Center and spoke with the native women there. The evening was set up as a women's circle in which native and non-native women could air their problems and feelings in a supportive environment. One of the young native women spoke at length about her feelings as a native woman learning the traditional ways and beliefs of her people. She spoke of a menarcheal ceremony she had recently attended, of sweat lodges and of dance celebrations. She and several of the other women present spoke of menstrual restrictions and of women's power.

In their view, women are very powerful because of their ability to bear children. Their power resides in their womb and becomes especially potent during menstruation at which time they observe a variety of taboos. The power of the menstruating women is much stronger than a man's power and will negate the man's magic and so women are careful to control their power and not let it harm others.

A menstruating woman will not participate in sacred ceremonies, enter a sweat lodge, dance or attend any events

where her power may overcome another's. She takes care not to step over a man or his possessions and tries to think happy thoughts and guard her actions during this potent time.

Menstruation is compared to the sweat lodges: a sweat lodge allows one to purify oneself by sweating out the impurities, menstruation does this naturally by cleansing the woman of impurities once monthly. Menarcheal ceremonies are seen as a celebration of womanhood and of woman's power. Native women who realize this power feel it is important to use it positively and to protect others from its force.

On another evening at the Odawa Friendship Center a video of some Fancy dancers was shown in which a young male dancer expressed the same sentiments the women had expressed about women's power and their need to control it during menstruation. This young man spoke of how women refrained from dancing during menstruation because their power would overpower that of the male dancers and drummers and would negate the power of the ceremonies.

The theories in this section stress the importance of the female reproductive role and of men's envy of this power. It is suggested that menstrual taboos are a form of male subjugation of women in an attempt to deny women's power. These aspects are developed further in the following psychoanalytic theories.

Hypothesis 6: Psychoanalytic Theory

The hypothesis that menstrual taboos are a result of men's unconscious fear of women has been approached in a variety of ways by psychoanalytically oriented theorists. George Devereux defines the menstruating woman as both dangerous and sacred (Devereux, 1950:252) and as such is neither good nor bad but supernaturally powerful. He suggests that segregation merely puts menstruating women apart and in some senses above other people, and that the very presence of segregation practices shows that the real power lies in women who can reproduce.

Devereux ascribes to the castration anxiety theory: he sees evidence in the Mohave data to support the theory that menstrual blood arouses castration anxiety in both sexes (Devereux, 1950:254-255). He links this to the Kleinian view that both father and sibling are envious of a newborn which absorbs the mother's attention and therefore they harbour unconscious desires to rob the maternal body of the foetus via copulation. The repression of these desires leads to castration anxiety which is evoked by vaginal bleeding leading to a need to deny menstruation.

Zilboorg takes psychoanalytic theory in another direction (Zilboorg, 1973). Zilboorg, using the work of Lester Ward, proposed that women by choosing bigger and stronger men as mates selectively produced males larger than

themselves. These men, fearing and envying women's power of procreation, turned on the mother in an act of primal rape and took over power of selection thus beginning the subjugation of women. Menstrual taboos serve to reinforce male superiority and power, and to undermine women's self-confidence.. Fear of rape prevents her from rebelling.

C.D. Daly relates menstrual taboos to the incest taboo (Daly, 1943). She suggests that woman's enhanced sexuality during menstruation posed a threat to the incest taboo: women became the source of blame for man's lust and man projected his anger and fear of the father onto the woman in the form of menstrual taboos.

Mary Chadwick's examination of the witch-cults led her to believe that witches were really menstruating women on whom were projected repressed sexual wishes and fear of the mother who may have power over death as well as life (in Weidger, 1978:119-120).

Freida Fromm-Reichmann and Virginia K. Gunst follow a similar line of thought: they propose that the devaluation of female sexuality is a result of male birth-envy and an unconscious fear of women's power over life and (potentially) over death. Women's dependence on men leads them to devalue and obscure their own sexuality in order to maintain male support (Fromm-Reichmann & Gunst, 1973).

Bruno Bettelheim views menstrual taboos as an extension

of the male envy of female reproductive powers which he considers to be the motivating psychological force behind male initiation ceremonies. Many of the ceremonial acts performed by men can be seen as emulating female menstrual bleeding and childbirth. He feels menstrual seclusion can be viewed in either of two ways; as the setting apart of women as powerful beings or conversely as men's attempts to assert their mastery over the women they envy (Bettelheim, 1962).

None of the above mentioned psychoanalytic theories have addressed the problem of variability in menstrual taboos. They have proposed explanations of the underlying motives but their attempts to explain this complex phenomenon using universal explanations leave untouched the problem of cultural diversity. For this we look to studies of child-rearing methods.

James Lewton Brain proposes that menstrual taboos are a result of human fears about sexuality and death (Brain, 1979). Brain suggests a link between sex, feces and death which has a strong influence on pollution rites. Menstruating women are seen as symbolic of all three aspects. There is the emphasis on fertility which is a reminder of sexuality, bodily emission which is likened to feces, and the association of blood with death and the smell of sex organs with decay and thereby death.

Brain also suggests that men resent women as a result of child-rearing (generally by mothers) which emphasizes rules rather than principles. Severity of toilet training and weaning will greatly influence later attitudes toward the mother and women. Restrictions on menstruating women may thus be seen as the adult male projection of infantile desires to overpower those more powerful (i.e. the mother whose authority they resented) and fear of women's sexuality.

In this theory, menstrual restrictions are seen as a form of male domination resulting from men's fear and envy of women as a result of the mode of child-rearing. This form of explanation begins to address the problems of variability and of underlying motivations but needs to be greatly expanded. This form of explanation is developed further in the following psychoanalytic theory.

William N. Stephens hypothesized that "the extensiveness of menstrual taboos observed in a primitive society is determined (to a significant extent) by the average intensity of castration anxiety felt by the men in that society." (Stephens, 1967:69) He noted that the dominant belief inherent in menstrual taboos was that menstruating women are dangerous to men which suggests that "something about the sight or thought of a menstruating woman frightens men, and that menstrual taboos are motivated by this fear" (Stephens, 1967:75).

Stephens focuses on the Oedipus Complex and the combined effects of the long post-partum sex taboo, polygynous households, and separate residences for co-wives. He notes that mother-child contact is intensified in polygynous societies with one-room huts, breastfeeding for two or more years, and mother and child sharing the same bed (Stephens, 1967:80). Stephens, following Freudian theory, suggests that in societies where the mother-child relationship is close, the child will have strong sexual interest in his mother. This will be heightened in societies with long post-partum sex taboos during which the mother's sexual interest is redirected to her child.

Menstrual taboos are thus seen as a result of the Oedipus Complex in which a young boy's desire for his mother brings about feelings of rivalry with his father and a subsequent fear of castration by the father. Man's fear of menstruating women is seen as a reflection of the unconscious fear of genital injury which is elicited by the sight or thought of a person who bleeds from the genital region. Stephens suggests that conditions of child-rearing will influence the degree of sexual interest a child displays toward his mother and the degree to which the mother returns the interest. This in turn will influence the intensity of the Oedipal Complex leading to castration anxiety felt by the men of the society and the severity of the menstrual taboos placed on the women they fear.

The strength of this study lies in its proposal of a theory which can account for cultural variation in menstrual taboos through variation in child-rearing methods. There are several weaknesses in this study however which negate its value as an explanation for menstrual taboos; there is the problem with testing measures such as castration anxiety which must be tested indirectly; and the fact that the theory neglects to note that in many societies the child is not rivaled by the father as the father generally has access to other wives and so avoids sexual contact with his lactating wife (this was shown in a study by Whiting in 1961). Another problem with this hypothesis is that it doesn't explain why women accept the taboos nor the belief in women's power that is found in many societies.

Several features stand out in this review: the belief that menstrual taboos are a form of male domination; the apparently contradictory views of women as alternately dangerous and powerful; and the importance of the parent-child relationship through which is introduced a means of answering the problem of cultural differences in menstrual taboos (ie. variation in child-rearing methods).

The theories covered in this review all fail in some way to meet the criteria for an adequate explanation of menstrual taboos. They must explain; "1) why menstrual

taboos were not formulated in some societies, 2) why they were formulated in other societies, and 3) why they vary in form from one society to another" (Wilson, 1964:624).

Stephens' theory which focuses on the Oedipus Complex and the parent-child relationship comes close to providing an adequate explanation however his father-centered theory is shown to be inadequate once applied to the ethnographic data.

The importance of the parent-child relationship is explored in object relations theory which focuses on the early relationship between the mother and her child.

The mother is the one with whom the child first identifies (primary love object) as it has universally been the mother who is responsible for childcare, especially during the breastfeeding period. Object relations theory cites the quality of the mother-child relationship at this time as a major force in shaping the personality of the child. A child's early attitude to the mother will affect its later perceptions of the world and of the people around it. The variation in quality of this early relationship could thus be seen as a clue to the variation in later male-female relations and to menstrual taboos as a projection of the feelings thus generated.

These factors are all treated in an interesting psychoanalytic theory which appears to present a viable

solution to the puzzle of menstrual taboos. This theory appears to answer the problem of variation between societies by examining a trait which is present in all societies yet can vary greatly in form from one society to the next. The effects in this variation are then examined in the society's gender relations and the concomitant menstrual taboos. It presents a viable explanation for the presence of menstrual taboos in some societies but not in others by looking at the psychological motivations which are the product of the early mother-child relationship. It also examines the perplexing question of why women submit to menstrual taboos and provides a potential model for change.

This theory will be the subject of the following chapters. I will present a cross-cultural application of the theory to the anthropological data to test its potential as a theory of menstrual taboos which meets the criteria for adequate explanation of this complex phenomenon.

CHAPTER TWO

A COMPOSITE THEORY OF MENSTRUAL TABOOS

Isaac D. Balbus presents a theory of domination based upon the works of Nancy Chodorow, Norman O. Brown and Dorothy Dinnerstein (Balbus, 1982). With the aid of these theories, Balbus proposes an explanation of the nature of male domination of women, political domination and domination over nature. Balbus sees a particular mode of childrearing as a precipitator of male domination of women in the form of restrictions such as menstrual taboos (Balbus, 1982:320). It is this aspect of Balbus' extensive theory that is the focus of this chapter.

Balbus, like Chodorow and Dinnerstein, focuses on the primary relationship between the mother and child. Different societies have different modes of child-rearing which affect the intensity of identification between the mother and child and, later, the severity of separation. It is these factors which form the basis of Balbus' theory.

These authors note that Freud's psychoanalytic theory was restricted by his patricentricity: he focused on the importance of the father-child relationship and failed to explore the tremendous effects of the early mother-child bond. The mother is the child's first experience of the

world and it is on her that the infant is dependent for care and nurturance: primary identification for both the male and female infant is with the mother. The mother is life itself to the infant, she fulfills her/his needs for comfort and sustenance yet inevitably she must frustrate these needs at times. Thus the infant experiences feelings of love and hate for the mother. The fact that mothers universally are responsible for early child-care leads to a universal ambivalence to mothers and women. Cross-cultural variations in the projection of this ambivalence may be seen as resulting from differences in the nature of the mother-child relationship.

Dinnerstein sees patriarchy as a "reaction-formation to the power exercised by the mother over the child" (in Balbus, 1982:306). She also sees the universal fact of mother-reared infants as the cause of male hatred of women and the subsequent male-dominant practices it creates and encourages. Thus we can view menstrual taboos as a form of restriction placed on women by men who wish to control and undermine the power of the mother.

The child's move toward separation and individuation entails a struggle against the power of the mother. The frustration of the child's needs by the mother, while inevitable, is also a necessity if the child is to draw away from the mother and form a sense of self. The child resents

the mother that it wants to own but cannot control and so begins the process of individuation (Balbus, 1982:307). This process is less severe for the girl as she is able to identify more fully with mother as a woman. The separation-individuation stage is less severe and her ambivalence to the mother is muted. The boy is experienced by the mother as more separate and the boy cannot identify as closely with the mother for he must repress his femininity and develop his masculinity. Separation-individuation is thus more extreme for the boy and the fear of separation intensifies his hostility toward his mother.

The boy turns to the father for identification and dependence. Male solidarity and bonding allows the male to feel less dependent on women and to exclude them from areas of power in the public sphere. The father is a more distant figure and so the boy's relationship to him is less personal than his relationship to his mother and represents the male position 'in the world'. The boy retains his ambivalence to his mother and this is expressed as an attitude toward women which is worshipful and derogatory at the same time.

Chodorow sees the boy's rejection of the female occurring on two levels; psychological rejection in which the boy represses his attachment, dependence and early identification with the mother, and cultural rejection in which all that is female in the external world is devalued (Chodorow, 1978:50).

The girl turns her positive feelings and her dependence onto her father and in turn onto all men. Having transferred her needs for dependence onto men, she over-idealizes them and submits to their domination. Her hostility toward the mother is projected onto other women thus preventing female solidarity which would enable her to revolt against male domination.

Dinnerstein notes that men's fear of women, derived from the fact that women universally mother, and men's subsequent efforts to secure their subordination are culturally determined and therefore are transcendable (in Balbus, 1982: 311). Patriarchy can be eliminated through shared parenting: if men and women share responsibility for early child-care then the ambivalent feelings of the child would be shared by men and women (Chodorow, 1978: 215). Women would no longer serve as scapegoats and individuals would be able to develop both their interpersonal and worldly talents leading to intimacy and autonomy for all and a liberation of the relations between the sexes.

Balbus adopts these theories and proposes a method of operationalizing them through application to a cross-cultural study of mother-monopolized child-rearing practices by looking at two groupings of variables; intensity of identification and severity of separation. He presents his hypothesis as follows:

Insofar as hostility toward women results from the loss of the being with whom one has achieved identification, we should expect that the specific nature of this hostility will be a function both of the abruptness or completeness of that loss and the intensity and duration of this identification. A prolonged and intense identification with the mother followed by a radical more-or-less total break with her is likely to engender far more pain, and thus far more hostility, than an identification that is briefer or less profound and/or a separation that is less clear-cut or dramatic. It follows that cultures with modes of mother-monopolized child-rearing that engender both intense identification with, and radical separation from, the mother should be more intensely misogynist than cultures whose mode of child-rearing produces either less extreme identification or less extreme separation, or both. (Balbus, 1982:315)

Balbus sees the intensity of identification as a product of the degree of indulgence of the mothers' child-rearing practices. Those cultures that encourage the fulfillment of the infant's oral, anal and genital demands are likely to have stronger mother-child identification. To determine this one must look at such factors as frequency of breastfeeding, severity of toilet training, tolerance of genital play, generalized need for touching (fondling, carrying and sleeping proximity), as well as post-partum sex taboos and separate residences for men which discourage contact between the father and child thereby reinforcing the intensity of identification with the mother. (Balbus, 1982:315-317)

The radicalness of separation is strongly affected by the fecundity of women in a particular society. Birth-spacing will influence weaning, the amount of physical contact (again fondling, carrying and sleeping proximity), diffusion of nurturance and the mother's emotional investment in the child. Generally, societies in which births are relatively close together will have earlier, more radical separation than those societies in which the mother is able to devote more time and attention to each individual child. (Balbus, 1982:318-319)

Balbus proposes that hostility toward women is related to the extent these factors are present in a society. Thus a society with child-rearing methods that engender strong initial mother-child identification followed by radical separation is likely to display hostility toward women in the form of severe menstrual restrictions.

A weakness in Balbus' presentation lies in his tendency to place societies into a dichotomy with 'primitive' societies on one side and Western societies on the other. He feels that child-rearing methods in 'primitive' societies produce more intense early identification and more radical separation and thus show more hostility toward women and a greater need for separation from the power of women. This is seen in the presence of male initiation ceremonies and of bachelor houses which serve to affirm the young boy's

masculinity and to remove him from the influence of women. He also notes that "societies with exclusive mother-child households, extended post-partum sex taboos, and male initiation rites are also likely to be characterized by extensive menstrual taboos and other restrictions on women that indicate the danger they are thought to pose to men" (Balbus, 1982:320).

A brief scan of the ethnographic literature will serve to show that societies do not fit neatly into a dichotomy: child-rearing practices are subject to a number of influences such as demography and ecological adaptation. The other variables under consideration are also subject to extraneous variables. Menstrual taboos are not always found in societies with male initiations and/or men's houses. The variation in cultural aspects is great: the question remains is there a significant positive correlation between the mode of child-rearing and the severity of menstrual restrictions. More specifically, does the intensity of the child's primary identification with the mother and the radicalness of the subsequent separation of the child from the mother predict the severity of a society's menstrual taboos as evidence of men's need to dominate the women whose power they fear.

Related Studies

The results of a number of cross-cultural studies of

child-rearing practices suggest that such a correlation does exist.

Whiting and Child (1953) did a cross-cultural study that suggested that there are certain universal systems of behavior that are subject to socialization in all societies. These behaviors (oral, anal, sexual, dependence and aggression) are very similar to the child-rearing variables Balbus proposes for testing. Whiting and Child looked at adult control and discipline of these behaviors and found that about half of 'primitive' societies sampled were high in initial indulgence especially for oral and dependence behavior: the most severe subsequent socialization was related to dependence and aggressive behavior. This study suggests that a test of Balbus' theory of child-rearing may be supported by the ethnographic data.

Whiting, Kluckhohn and Anthony's cross-cultural study of male initiation ceremonies (1958) supports Balbus' theory that mother-monopolized child rearing will be found in conjunction with social systems that remove the young boy from under the power of the mother and immerse him in the world of the men. (Balbus, 1982:320) The authors propose that male initiation will be found in societies where sons are very dependent on their mothers and hostile toward their fathers and these ceremonies serve to prevent revolt against parental authority by breaking the strong dependence on the

mother while ensuring identification with men and the adoption of the male role. This strong maternal identification is hypothesized to occur in "societies which have sleeping arrangements in which the mother and baby share the same bed for at least a year to the exclusion of the father and societies which have a taboo restricting the mother's sexual behavior for at least a year after childbirth". (Whiting, Kluckhohn & Anthony, 1958:364)

Although these authors initially favoured the Oedipus hypothesis, they later refute the father-son rivalry hypothesis on the grounds that the father in polygynous societies does not replace the child in the mother's affections as he has access to his other wives and rarely spends a night in her hut. Whiting later proposes that the one most likely to be the object of the child's resentment is the mother herself as she is the one that withholds that which is desired by the child (ie. her breasts and her comforting). (Whiting, 1961:362). The child will thus see the mother and women as all powerful and come to identify with her (status-envy) leading to cross-sex identity in boys which must later be broken (Whiting, 1961:362).

Whiting presents evidence of the status-envy hypothesis as follows; male initiation rites are often referred to as the death of a woman-child and the rebirth of an adult male, suggesting an initial identification with the mother; the

couvade is also associated with the exclusive mother-child sleeping arrangement and with matrilocal societies suggesting that it is a way of allowing the acting out of cross-sex identity (it should be noted that initiation ceremonies and couvade rarely occur in the same society suggestive of the interpretation that they serve similar functions with regard to cross-sex identity whereby matrilocal societies allow its expression and patrilocal societies counteract it); totemism, found to be associated with the exclusive mother-child sleeping arrangement, may be a method of establishing the male's link to his male-forefathers in a situation where his early life fails to do so; the high rate of personal crime such as rape, assault, suicide, murder and sorcery in societies with exclusive mother-child sleeping arrangements may be seen as an attempt in part to express masculinity and deny the initial feminine identification (Whiting, 1961; 362-363).

Whiting's hypotheses are supportive of Balbus' theory of the power of the mother and the male child's need to withdraw from this early identification in order to assume his masculine role. The ambivalence to the mother that this process evidently evokes may then be projected onto women in the form of menstrual taboos and other social systems that place restrictions on women.

Whiting's 1961 study also shows the link between

child-training techniques and projective systems. Although not directly related to Balbus' theory, his study does suggest that "personality is an intervening hypothetical variable determined by childrearing which is in turn determined by maintenance systems and which finally is reflected in projective systems" (Whiting, 1961:356). This is an important element in Balbus' theory.

William N. Stephens' study (Stephens, 1962) centers on the Oedipus Complex and the combined effects of long post-partum sex taboo, polygynous households and separate residences for co-wives. The problem with the Oedipus Complex hypothesis has already been discussed however his finding of a correlation between long post-partum sex taboo and presence of initiation ceremonies for boys and girls is again suggestive of the need to break the strong primary identification between the mother and child (male and female) in societies with exclusive mother-child sleeping arrangements. Stephens also found change of residence for boys at puberty to correlate with these factors. These factors appear to reflect a concern over the boy's masculinity and a need to remove him from the world of women.

Judith K. Brown's article (1963) also supports Balbus' theory. She sees female initiation ceremonies as a social statement of the girl's break from her mother; when the girl

doesn't move away to marry, the ceremony serves to announce her attainment of adulthood and to emphasize her breaking of the mother-child bond. Brown's study also suggests that societies with mother-reared children and conditions that foster sex role conflicts find it necessary to force both young males and females to accept their appropriate adult roles (Brown, 1963:847).

Frank W. Young's article (Young, 1962) serves to tie male initiation ceremonies to male solidarity. He defines solidarity as "the co-operation of the men in maintaining a definition of their situation as one which is not only different from that of women, but which involves organized activities requiring the loyalty of all males." (Young, 1962: 381). Young feels that the role of initiation ceremonies is to stabilize the adolescent boy's sex role as the time approaches for him to begin to assume the status of an adult male in a sex differentiated society.

In looking at the relationship between ~~child-rear~~ variables and initiation ceremonies, Young found that a correlation existed only in societies where there was evidence of male solidarity. When this was controlled for, the relationship appeared to dissolve. The problem with this study is that it is possible that initiation ceremonies are a feature of male solidarity and not a separate variable.

To the extent that male solidarity is found in

conjunction with exclusive mother-child households it supports Balbus' theory that strong mother-child identification must be broken so that the young boy can assume his masculine role and fit into the male world: male solidarity allows the male to withdraw from the power of the women and to gain control over them by forming a strong male group and enforcing restrictions on the women's movements (ex. menstrual taboos).

Young in collaboration with Albert Bacdayan (1967) presents a further theory of male solidarity which they relate to menstrual taboos. These authors see menstrual taboos as institutionalized means of male discrimination against women (Young & Bacdayan, 1967:100). Thus they see male solidarity and dominance in conjunction with men's houses and ceremonies as a precursor to menstrual taboos. They note that menstrual taboos, despite their wide variations, are generally of a restrictive nature: they often restrict women from contact with 'important' aspects of the male world (Young & Bacdayan, 1967:96). These factors can be seen to divide the male world from the female world and to restrict women's influence over men.

Exempligratia

The above studies tend to support certain aspects of Balbus' theory; however to attain a complete view of the

theory one must look to the ethnographic records.

Gilbert H. Herdt's book 'Guardians of the Flutes' (Herdt, 1981), presents a dramatic example of a culture embodying all the salient points of Balbus' theory.

Herdt details the lives of the Sambia (a pseudonym), a group of warring horticulturalists of the New Guinea highlands. The Sambia practice a complex initiation cycle designed to turn boys into warriors: this masculinization process involves the ingestion of semen by young boys through fellatio with older youths. Sambia males believe that women are born with the innate ability to grow into, completely feminized beings capable of fulfilling their reproductive functions: males are not self-sufficient in this respect and thus need the help of other males to reach their reproductive potential. Boys are believed to be born with penises but no innate ability to produce semen. In order to become strong men and warriors, boys must ingest the semen of other men, thus the system of ritualized, secret homosexual interaction between boys and older youths.

Boys are removed from the influence of their mothers between the ages of seven and ten and are prohibited from seeing any women until the time of their marriage (16-25 years old). During this time they experience ten to fifteen years of secret homosexual activity, first as fellator then, following puberty, as fellated. The boys are taught to see

women as dangerous 'polluters' who are to be avoided: any contact with women must be followed by ritual cleansing.

The removal of the boy from his mother is traumatic. It follows years of primary dependence upon and daily contact with the mother. The rituals surrounding this separation are severe, involving thrashing and verbal abuse. Herdt refers to this as a system of brainwashing which turns the boy away from his youthful dependence upon his mother and instills the masculine ideals of male superiority and female inferiority (Herdt, 1981:307).

Sambia women are subject to restrictive taboos during menarche and menstruation: men fear intercourse with women at all times, not only because of the polluting contact but also because a woman may become empowered and strong with semen if intercourse is too frequent.

Herdt's book illustrates a culture where a young boy is completely under the mother's care and influence for an extended period then is forced to assume his masculine role under the domination of older males who inflict a series of ordeals on the youth as they emulate a process of birth in which the youth is reborn under the power of the ritual father. The boy is left with a feeling of ambivalence to the mother which is fostered by the negative attitude of the other men toward women and the replacement of the mother as primary caretaker and authority by the 'father'. The Sambia

see a need for strong male warriors to protect themselves from enemy attacks and thus seek to turn boys into warriors through "abrupt maternal detachment, separation-individuation, and routinized masculinization" (Herdt, 1981: 305). The Sambia illustrate the combination of intense mother-child identification, radical separation and severe menstrual taboos elucidated in Balvus' theory.

The !Kung of the Kalahari Desert are a hunting and gathering people with a lifestyle that is radically different from that of the Sambia. Marjorie Shostak's book on Nisa, a !Kung woman, portrays a society with considerably more contact between the sexes (Shostak, 1981). Although women are responsible for the majority of childcare, men are generally loving fathers who enjoy spending time with their children. Early childcare is indulgent with almost constant contact between mother and child and demand breast-feeding for several years. The child sleeps beside the mother at night and is carried in a sling during the day.

Weaning takes place by age five or with the occurrence of a subsequent pregnancy (generally when the child is about three years old). The child will begin to spend more and more time away from the mother as it plays with its father or other close relatives: the mother however always remains close by. Father, mother and child sleep in close proximity with the infant in the mother's arms and the older child

nearby. An older child is expected to give up its place in mother's sling and walk once a new child arrives.

Separation from the mother is eased by the presence of the father and boys especially begin to spend more time in his company.

!Kung women have few restrictions during menstruation. Women are not segregated and couples continue to sleep together though sex is expected to stop for the first few days of the flow. Conception is believed to occur during the end of the menstrual flow by the joining of semen and menstrual blood so sex is often resumed at this time (Shostak, 1981:68). Puberty rituals occur for both boys and girls. These ceremonies appear to mark the end of adolescence. Girls retire to a special hut at menarche while village women dance and sing in celebration: at the cessation of the flow the girl is washed, rubbed with herbs and brought out to resume her daily activities. Male initiation ceremonies are more rigorous involving several weeks of separation filled with ritual dancing and the passing of ritual knowledge from one generation to the next. (Shostak, 1981:239) The !Kung appear to have no fear for a boy's masculinity and do not see women as a threat to male identities or functions.

The !Kung lifestyle differs greatly from that of the Sambia. Fathers are more involved in child-rearing

lessening the intensity of identification with the mother, there appears to be less concern over the masculinization of boys as is apparent in the lack of radical separation from the mother, and women experience fewer menstrual restrictions. All these factors conform to Balbus' prediction.

These two cultural examples appear to provide supporting evidence for Balbus' theory; however, they do not provide an adequate test of his hypothesis. The testing of his hypothesis requires a much larger cross-cultural sample drawn from a wide distribution of societies. It is to this task that I will direct my attention in the following chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

To test Balbus' theory it was necessary to select a sample of societies and to operationalize the variables specified in the hypothesis. The independent variable groups (intensity of identification and radicalness of separation) were broken down into component indicators and measures for each indicator were either developed for this study or taken from the literature. The procedures used in selecting the sample and measuring the variables will be discussed below.

The Sample

For this study, I have chosen a sample of 50 societies from a widely dispersed geographical range. This sample, when compared to the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (Murdock & White, 1969), presents a fair representation of the six major regions of the world although my sample contains a slightly larger percentage of Insular Pacific societies and slightly less from South and Central America (see Appendix

B, Table B.2). The difference in actual numbers is negligible. By choosing societies from such a wide geographical range, Galton's problem should be avoided.

The sample is also comparable to the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (SCCS) with regard to the percentage of societies within each of the subsistence economy categories (see Table B.3, Appendix B). There is a slightly lower percentage of societies in the fishing and semi-intensive agriculture categories in the sample and a greater number of advanced agricultural societies. Two of the societies (Taiwan and Vaupe) were coded as agricultural but could clearly have been coded as fishing societies as both means of subsistence are very important in these societies. The percentage of societies within the three agricultural categories is reasonably close to that of the SCCS (74% vs 68%). If the two above mentioned societies were coded as fishing groups then the difference would be reduced to 5%. The agricultural codes are closely inter-related and in some societies the descriptions made it difficult to determine which of the three agricultural modes were used. Overall, the sample seems to adequately meet the standards set by the SCCS.

The societies I have chosen for my sample were selected following one major criterion; the main ethnographic source for each society must have been written by a woman or by a

team of anthropologists including a woman. The reason for this criterion relates to the type of data I am looking for and also to the history of the ethnographic enterprise.

Early ethnographies, written primarily by male anthropologists, tended to look at the male world of 'primitive' societies and to ignore the female. As Rosaldo and Lamphere note, "anthropologists in writing about human culture have followed our own culture's ideological bias in treating women as relatively invisible and describing what are largely the activities and interests of men" (Rosaldo & Lamphere, 1974:2). Rohrlich-Leavitt, Sykes and Weatherford relate similar findings: "Male ethnographers use male informants, whether by inclination or because of cultural requirements, and observe the activities of males or those involving both sexes, but rarely those in which women alone participate. A partial ethnography is already a distorted picture, but that it is further distorted by the androcentric theory and methodology of many male ethnographers is only now being dealt with, chiefly by women anthropologists." (in Reiter, 1975:110)

Women anthropologists such as Phyllis Kaberry present a view of society which focuses on the women but not to the exclusion of the men (Kaberry, 1939). Kaberry explains her approach thus; "If my theme is women, it is one that has involved a contrast and comparison of their activities with

those) of men, with due recognition of the co-operation that exists between the sexes, the beliefs they share in common, and the laws to which they both conform. The women have been seen in relation to their environment and to the tribal culture in all aspects." (Kaberry, 1939:xii-xiii)

The advantage female anthropologists have is being able to go behind the scenes with women where men are often prohibited. This enables them to reside within the world of women and observe their secret ceremonies as Diane Bell did for her recent ethnography 'Daughters Of The Dreaming' (Bell, 1983). Male anthropologists have generally been excluded from this world and often appear to be unaware of its existence.

The advantage of using a sample composed of ethnographic data collected by women anthropologists becomes apparent when one considers the variables being studied. These variables are primarily concerned with the world of women and children and with their relation to the larger society. The data on child-rearing and menstrual taboos should be more adequately covered by women ethnographers who can gain access to this world more readily than the men. The need for this approach is emphasized in studies such as that of Peggy Reeves Sanday: in her study of gender relations, Sanday was missing menstrual taboo data for nearly a third of her study sample (Sanday, 1981:105) which she compiled using the Ethnographic Atlas.

By using this method I was able to obtain a good quantity of data on fifty societies. The Human Relations Area Files were used for several cases in which the major female ethnographer was listed in the files and/or supplementary sources listed therein enabled the coding of indicators not covered by the major source. In such cases data were used if seen to be compatible with the major source for data already coded.

For additional details on the breakdown of the societies in my sample and for distribution maps refer to Appendix B.

The Variables

The dependent variable in Balbus' hypothesis is menstrual taboos. Menstrual taboos have been defined as restrictions on the movements and/or actions of a woman during her menstrual flow.

The independent variables are culled from Balbus' work: these include factors effecting the intensity of the child's identification with the mother and the radicalness of the subsequent separation from the mother. (See Appendix A for a copy of the coding manual)

Menstrual Taboos

The measure of the dependent variable (variable 19) is based on the method used by William N. Stephens in his 1967 article on menstrual taboos: Stephens uses a Guttman-type scale to measure variation in menstrual taboos. (Stephens, 1967:71-72) Stephens noted that although menstrual customs varied considerably from one society to the next, there did appear to be a cumulative pattern such that the higher items on the scale (ex. menstrual hut) always occurred in conjunction with the lesser items on the scale thus each item on the coding scale is inclusive of the items below it (ie. if menstrual hut is coded present, all the other items (1 to 4) are also considered to be present.

The menstrual taboos measurement scale is as follows:

- 0 refers to the absence of menstrual taboos in a society;
- 1 refers to the avoidance of sex during the menstrual flow;
- 2 refers to the belief that menstrual blood is somehow dangerous to men;
- 3 cooking, domestic and personal taboos refer to restrictions on what the woman may wear, touch and do during her flow;
- 4 structural segregation refers to the isolation of menstruating women in a special room, hammock or section of the house apart from men while social segregation pertains to women's avoidance of other members of the community during their menstrual flow;
- 5 refers to the restriction of menstruating women to a specially constructed seclusion hut or camp. (see Table 3.1)

Table 3.i. Measure Of Menstrual Taboos

Indicator 19. Form Of Menstrual Taboo *

0 None

1 Sex avoidance only

2 Belief in danger to men

3 Cooking, domestic, personal taboos

4 Structural segregation (structural and social)

5 Menstrual hut

* adapted from Stephens, 1967:71-72 & Paige & Paige, 1981:232).

Intensity of Identification

The intensity of identification indicators are those that relate to the infant's oral, anal, and genital demands. (See Table 3.2) Mother-child identification is likely to be strongest where the mother gratifies the child with demand breast-feeding for a prolonged period, where toilet training is undertaken gradually when the child is older and is less likely to be traumatized by the experience, where there is tolerance of genital play, and where the infant's need for physical contact is gratified by frequent touching through carrying, fondling and close sleeping proximity.

I included several indicators which, although not specified by Balbus, tend to strengthen the test for intensity of identification: these are response to child's cries, diffusion of nurturance, mother's productive labour, and general indulgence. The speed with which a mother responds to an infant's cries and the level of general indulgence will affect the amount of gratification the child receives.

The breastfeeding indicator (indicator 1) refers to the gratification of the infant's oral needs: "breastfeeding that is prolonged and/or "on demand" will engender closer identification than breast feeding that is abbreviated and/or "by schedule"." (Balbus, 1982:316) This refers to the average speed of response by a mother to her child.

The elimination control indicator (indicator 2) relates to the gratification of the infant's anal needs: "later and less severe toilet training will produce greater identification than training that begins earlier and is more severe" (Balbus, 1982:316). The elimination control indicator follows the guidelines set by Barry and Paxson (1971:471): "this refers to the initiation of training the child to refrain from urination and defecation except for specified places and times. Both forms of elimination were taken into account, with more weight given to reports on control of defecation, because this is a more universal necessity for cultural control."

The genital play indicator (indicator 3) relates to the genital needs of the infant: "tolerance of the infant's genital play will result in more intense identification than the repression thereof" (Balbus, 1982:316). The genital play indicator refers to attitudes toward masturbation and the average age at which control of this behavior is initiated.

The bodily contact and sleeping proximity indicators (indicators 4 & 5) refer to the satisfaction of the infant's need for cutaneous contact. Bodily contact refers to the amount of time the infant spends in close bodily contact with the mother during the average day and sleeping proximity refers to nightly contact between the mother and child, and the proximity of the father. "Everything else

being equal, we should expect that mothers who consistently carry, caress, and sleep in the same bed ~~with~~ their children will produce children who are more mother-identified than mothers who establish greater physical distance between themselves and their children." (Balbus, 1982:316)

Crying (indicator 6) relates to the speed with which the mother responds to and gratifies the child's needs: "the identification of the child with a mother that consistently and warmly responds to its needs will be deeper and more complete than the identification of the child with a mother who frustrates its needs by ignoring them and/or responding to them irregularly or inadequately" (Balbus, 1982:316). Crying relates to the average speed of response of the mother to the infant's cries.

Diffusion of nurturance (indicator 7) and mother's productive labour are factors which Balbus discusses in relation to severity of separation but which also affect the intensity of identification of the infant if these factors remove the mother at an earlier stage, so these factors have been included in both the pre- and post-weaning stages (see indicators 14 & 15, Table 3.3).

The diffusion of nurturance indicator refers to the assumption of childcare responsibilities by individuals other than the mother. In infancy, a child whose mother is responsible for the majority of childcare is likely to be

more closely identified with her than a child who is cared for by others for part of the time. This will also be reflected in the proximity of the mother to the child while she engages in productive labour: the child who is carried by the mother during productive labour will be more mother-identified than the child that is left at home or in the care of others nearby. Thus diffusion of nurturance relates to "the importance of caretakers and companions other than the mother" (Balbus, 1982:471) and mother's productive labour refers to the average proximity between mother and child while the mother works.

Indulgence (indicator 9) refers to the overall level of indulgence shown to a child: "the more indulgent the child-rearing practices of the mother, the more intense the identification between infant and mother should be" (Balbus, 1982:315). Thus general indulgence "takes into account all the relevant aspects of treatment and care, in particular expressions of affection and permissiveness, and the consistency and effectiveness of nurturance and care." (Balbus, 1982:472)

Post-partum sex taboo (indicator 10) refers to "the duration of abstinence from sexual intercourse by the mother after birth, described as the cultural norm." (Barry & Paxson, 1971:469): "cultures with post-partum sexual taboos, separate residences for fathers, and other

customs and institutions that discourage contact between the mother and her husband and between father and child are likely to encourage bonds of identification between mothers and children that are more intense than cultures that lack such institutions and customs." (Balbus, 1982:316)

This factor is also present in the role of father indicator (indicator 11) which refers to the average daily proximity of the father to the infant, and in the sleeping proximity indicator (indicator 5) which, as previously mentioned, specifies the sleeping proximity of the father to the child as well as the mother's proximity to the child.

Table 3.2 Measures of Intensity Of Identification

Indicators

1. Breastfeeding **

- 1 Wet nurse or substitute for absent mother used
- 2 Breastfed infrequently, mother often absent
- 3 Breastfed at regular intervals (schedule)
- 4 Breastfed on demand, to feed and pacify
- 5 Breastfed frequently, even when not hungry

2. Elimination Control *

- 1 Very early, before six months
- 2 Early, after six months or onset of crawling
- 3 Intermediate, after one year or first steps
- 4 Late, after eighteen months or walking
- 5 Very late, three to five years

3. Genital Play **

- 1 Discouraged in all individuals
- 2 Accepted till eighteen months or walking
- 3 Accepted till toddlers, three to five years
- 4 Accepted till puberty
- 5 Encouraged, infants masturbated to sooth them

4. Bodily Contact (with mother) *

- 1 Limited to, routine and precautionary care
- 2 Only occasionally
- 3 Up to half the time
- 4 More than half the time
- 5 Almost constant

5. Sleeping Proximity *

- 1 Mother and father sleep together, child apart
- 2 Father and child sleep together, mother apart
- 3 Mother, father and child sleep in close proximity
- 4 Mother and child sleep together, father close by
- 5 Mother and child sleep together, father apart

6. Crying *

- 1 Indifferent or slow response to child's cries
- 2 Slow or perfunctory response
- 3 Inconsistency in speed of response
- 4 Generally quick and nurturant response
- 5 Always quick and nurturant response

7. Diffusion Of Nurturance *

- 1 Practically all care, including nursing, is by others
- 2 Most care except for nursing is by others
- 3 Principally mother, others have important roles
- 4 Principally mother, others have minor roles
- 5 Care almost exclusively by mother

8. Mother's Productive Labour **

- 1 Mother is absent for extended periods while child remains with relatives
- 2 Mother regularly leaves child with relatives
- 3 Mother generally takes child but sometimes leaves it with others when work demands
- 4 Mother takes child but others mind it nearby
- 5 Mother carries child with her when she works

9. General Indulgence *

- 1 Severe or neglectful treatment
- 2 Moderate degree of severity and deprivation
- 3 Usually affectionate, occasional harshness/deprivation
- 4 Greater degree of indulgence
- 5 Highly affectionate/nurturant with consistent immediate response to demands

10. Post-partum Sex Taboo *

- 1 Less than one month
- 2 One to six months
- 3 Six months to one year
- 4 One to two years
- 5 Lasting two years or more

11. Role Of Father *

- 1 Regular close relationship
- 2 Frequent close proximity
- 3 Occasional or irregular close proximity
- 4 Rare instances of close proximity
- 5 No close proximity

* adapted from Barry & Paxson, 1967:467-472

** developed for this study

Radicalness of Separation

The Radicalness of Separation variable refers to child-rearing practices in the post-weaning period in which the abruptness of withdrawal of the mother's attention from the child leads to intense separation anxiety in the child. The factors under consideration are those which affect the intensity of the separation of the child from the mother (ie. the abruptness and completeness). Balbus notes that separation is likely to be most severe in societies where women typically have closely spaced births curtailing the gratification of one child in order to meet the needs of a newborn (Balbus, 1981:318).

The indicators used to measure radicalness of separation are weaning, change in sleeping arrangements, diffusion of nurturance and mother's productive labour. (See Table 3.3, p. 60). Loss of proximity to the mother generally occurs when the mother becomes pregnant and must wean the older child to make room at her breast, in her arms and in her bed for the newborn. Often female relatives take over the care of the older child to free up the mother's time and energy for the newborn. A mother may also leave the older child in the care of relatives while she works whether she has a new child or not. Even if the child is not usurped by a newborn, circumstances may dictate the withdrawal of the previous level of gratification by the mother.

Weaning (indicator 12) refers to the age at which the child is weaned from the breast, sleeping proximity (indicator 13) refers to change in sleeping arrangements following weaning, diffusion of nurturance (indicator 14) refers to the assumption of childcare responsibilities by others , and mother's productive labour (indicator 15) refers to the proximity of the mother to the weaned child during periods of productive labour:"in those high-frequency childbearing societies in which "diffusion of nurturance" is high , i.e., where siblings and other kin are available to assume post-weaning child-care responsibilities, the loss of the mother's breast and bodily contact with her during the night is likely to be magnified by a dramatic decline in her physical presence during the day." (Balbus, 1982:318)

Table 3.3 Measures of Radicalness Of Separation

Indicators

12. Weaning *

- 1 Completion of weaning is late, after two years
- 2 Intermediate, between one and two years
- 3 Early, between six months and one year
- 4 Very early, before six months

13. Sleeping Proximity *

- 1 Child remains in close proximity to mother
- 2 Child has own bed near mother
- 3 Child sleeps separate from mother
- 4 Child sleeps with father in his quarters
- 5 Child sleeps in different house from parents

14. Diffusion Of Nurturance *

- 1 Care almost exclusively by mother
- 2 Principally mother, others have important roles
- 3 Child spends half or less time with mother
- 4 Majority of time spent away from mother
- 5 Practically all time spent away from mother

15. Mother's Productive Labour **

- 1 Mother carries child with her when she works
- 2 Mother takes child but others mind it nearby
- 3 Mother generally takes child but sometimes leaves it with others when work demands
- 4 Mother regularly leaves child with relatives
- 5 Mother is absent for extended periods while child remains with relatives

* adapted from Barry & Paxson, 1967:467-472

** developed for this study

Enforced Separation

Several additional indicators were included under the heading Enforced Separation. Two of these indicators (16 Occurrence & 17 Time of Initiation) were included as an additional test of Balbus' theory that intense early identification of the boy with his mother followed by radical separation will produce great hostility toward the mother (and thereby all women) which is magnified by the pressure placed on the boy to renounce his femininity.

In some societies, this pressure is intensified by the presence of bachelor huts and severe initiation rites. Balbus suggests that societies characterized by exclusive mother-child households, long post-partum sex taboos and forms of male segregation are likely to be characterized by severe menstrual taboos which he sees as evidence of the danger men see in women (Balbus, 1982:320).

Male initiation (indicator 16) refers to a transition ceremony marking a boy's change in status from child to adult occurring at or around puberty (generally between ages 8 and 18). Time of initiation (indicator 17) pinpoints this more closely.

Societies that enforce the separation between the mother and father are likely to have stronger mother-identified children (Balbus, 1982:316). This factor is encoded in

indicator 18 (Male Segregation). Male segregation refers to practices of social separation of men and/or of male objects from women. Paige and Paige describe the elements of male segregation as follows: men's house refers to "communal men's house prohibited to wives and used primarily by married men (not bachelor or warrior houses)" (1981:232); sex-segregated living units refers to "sleeping and living arrangements of entire community arranged by sex rather than uterine or family units" (1981:232) and I have also included societies which practice daily spouse avoidance or separate dwellings for wives as a result of polygyny; male clubs refers to "male associations, sweatshouses, sex-segregated fraternities, or other secret societies prohibiting women in absence of communal men's houses or segregated living units" (Paige & Paige, 1981:232); sacred objects refers to objects such as flutes and bullroarers which are kept hidden from women; and minor refers to general beliefs about women's inferiority, segregated ceremonies and/or 'male' structures which are accessible to women. (see Table 3.4)

Table 3.4 Enforced Separation

Male Initiation

16 Occurrence of male Initiation *

0 Absence 1 Presence

17 Time Of Initiation *

0 No specific age

1 Past puberty

2 Shortly after maturation

3 At genital maturation

4 At first signs of genital maturation

5 Before genital maturation

18 Male Segregation **

1 Minor

2 Sacred objects

3 Male clubs

4 Sex-segregated living units

5 Men's houses

* adapted from Schlegel & Barry, 1980:279

** adapted from Paige & Paige, 1981:232

Coding

The indicator scores for each society were obtained through perusal of the ethnographic data. For some societies, one ethnographic source provided all the necessary details on child-rearing, menstrual taboos and the subsidiary codes. Other societies required more than one source: where more than six indicators were uncoded supplementary sources were sought. A number of societies were discarded for lack of data; either more than six uncoded indicators or the lack of menstrual taboo data. These included 18 societies for which coding was begun and an additional 10 for which a scanning of the ethnographic data revealed a paucity of the necessary information.

The process of coding entailed reading the ethnography, extracting the relevant data on child-rearing, menstrual taboos and segregation of the sexes, then coding the data according to the values in the indicator lists. Societies were also coded according to form of subsistence economy and geographical region. (See Appendix B)

The reading, data collection and coding was all carried out by myself. All societies were treated in the same manner. Where the indicator value of a society covered a wide range encompassing two or more of the values of a particular measure, the stated average was used for coding.

For example, if weaning was stated to occur at approximately one and a half years of age but could continue to three or four, then it was coded as occurring between one and two years as this included the majority of cases. If breastfeeding was cited as lasting till one year and seldom over two years, then it was coded as one to two years as the six month to one year code would underestimate the case.

If the method of breastfeeding changed after the first few weeks of life, the longer period of breastfeeding was used as the average, in general this was the later period.

Two additional coding procedures were followed. Each society was coded for geographical region (code 20) and for mode of subsistence economy (code 21) following the criteria set by the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (see Appendix B).

Reliability and Validity

There are several sources of potential error within a study: there is random error through inadvertently writing down the wrong number or figure, and there is systematic error introduced through the procedures of data collection and processing. Random error can be controlled through double-checking all figures and careful transcribing however systematic error is more difficult to control.

Systematic error can be introduced from the ethnographic data in the quantity and quality of the data. By choosing ethnographies written by female anthropologists or a team of female and male anthropologists I have attempted to control the quantity of the data and also the quality. As previously mentioned a female anthropologist should have greater access to the world of women allowing first-hand observation of the lives of women and children. By focusing on female anthropologists who immersed themselves in the lives of the women and children of a particular society, I was able to obtain data of both good quality and quantity.

A source of potential error for which I was unable to control was that of coding. All coding was carried out by myself so no coder reliability check was obtainable. If more time and resources were available I would assess the reliability of the coding procedure through the use of a second coder and a coder agreement check.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Results

The data were subjected to a series of tests using the Statistical Package For The Social Sciences (SPSS) and a significance level of .05. Initially, a Pearson Correlation between the dependent variable menstrual taboos and the independent variables from breast feeding to subsistence economy was run. This test revealed two significant correlations: there was a positive correlation between male segregation and menstrual taboos (.26, $p=.042$) and a negative correlation between male initiation and menstrual taboos ($-.26, p=.034$). The correlation between menstrual taboos and diffusion of nurturance post-weaning was approaching significance with a negative correlation ($-.24, p=.052$).

Pearson correlations between the independent variables revealed a substantial number of significant correlations. Male segregation was correlated with post-partum sex taboo (.49, $p=.001$) and with sleeping proximity pre-weaning (.52, $p=.000$). Other highly significant correlations include; breastfeeding with indulgence (.41, $p=.004$); breastfeeding

with sleeping proximity post-weaning ($-.53, p=.001$); crying with indulgence ($.58, p=.000$); diffusion of nurturance pre-weaning with bodily contact ($.44, p=.001$), with productive labour pre-weaning ($.78, p=.000$) and post-weaning ($-.46, p=.000$), with diffusion of nurturance post-weaning ($-.48, p=.000$) and with sleeping proximity post-weaning ($-.40, p=.006$); productive labour pre-weaning with diffusion of nurturance post-weaning ($-.49, p=.000$), and with productive labour post-weaning ($-.48, p=.000$).

A large number of additional correlations were found, significant at the .05 level of significance (see table 4.1).

To control for the effects of multicollinearity, composite scales for the intensity of identification and for the radicalness of separation variables for each society were tabulated: this process was facilitated by the composition of the individual variables which conformed with the Likert scaling method. Another scale was produced by multiplying the two new composite measures to produce a measure of the interaction effect for each society.

Pearson correlations run on these composite measures revealed a correlation between menstrual taboos and factor two (radicalness of separation: $-.26, p=.034$) but not for factor one (intensity of identification) or factor three (interaction effect). Factors one and two were negatively

correlated ($-.40, p=.002$) and factors two and three were positively correlated ($.82, p=.000$). Factors one and three were not significantly correlated ($.16, p=.133$)

A Multiple Regression was run on the data to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and the set of independent variables. A Stepwise regression was used with an option to include missing data so that all fifty cases would be considered. Role of father was entered on step number one explaining the variation of the dependent variable with an adjusted R square of .77 (obtained $F = 24.74$, tabled F at $.05 = 1.94$, significant $F = .0025$). Step two brought in mother's productive labour pre-weaning with a cumulative adjusted R square of .90 (obtained $F = 33.12$, tabled $F = 1.94$, significant $F = .0013$). When this test was run with the independent variables breast feeding to male segregation the multiple regression stopped at this point. An earlier run with independent variables breastfeeding to subsistence economy showed contamination of variables as it continued on to include subsistence economy (adj. R sq. .98), mother's productive labour post-weaning (adj. R sq. .998), and elimination control (adj. R sq. .999). These last variables are highly inter-correlated so I have excluded consideration of subsistence economy and geographical region in the data runs to control for contamination.

A crosstabulation was run to determine whether the

menstrual taboo measure was statistically independent from the measures for subsistence economy and geographical region. The results of both tests recommended the acceptance of the null hypothesis of relationship as the relationships were weak and non-significant (for subsistence economy chi-square = 23.20, the significance of this measure is .81 ; for geographic region chi-square = 20.49, the significance = .72). Because of this non-significant relationship and the possibility of contamination with the other independent variables these variables were not included in the remainder of the computer runs.

A multiple regression (enter method) run with the composite variable scores failed to bring out any significant relationship. The F score for the regression is 1.31, the critical F at the .05 level is 2.81. The obtained F is smaller than the critical F therefore the regression is not significantly different from zero. The adjusted R square (.02) also shows this lack of relationship.

A scatterplot was generated to see if the data were curvilinear however this was not the case. The plot of menstrual taboos by factor one appeared to show a slightly positive linear relationship; with factor two a slightly negative linear relationship; and with factor three no clear relationship could be seen.

A factor analysis was run on the data to see if the

factors loaded according to the hypothesized groupings of intensity of identification variables and radicalness of separation variables. The principal factoring without iteration factoring method (PA1) was used with a varimax orthogonal rotation. This method produced five factors; factor one loaded heavily on bodily contact (.86), diffusion of nurturance pre-weaning (.91) and productive labour pre-weaning (.80); factor two loaded on role of father (.91), weaning (.84) and productive labour post-weaning (-.78; factor three loaded on genital play (.77), sleeping proximity pre-weaning (.83) and post-partum sex taboo (.74); factor four loaded most heavily on breastfeeding (-.82) and sleeping proximity post-weaning (.86); and factor five on elimination (.67), crying (.95) and indulgence (.62). Diffusion of nurturance post-weaning loaded moderately on each of the first four factors.

A subsequent factor analysis (PA2-with iteration) produced a correlation matrix which revealed a number of variables which were highly correlated with other variables. The variables which correlated most frequently with other variables were the two diffusion of nurturance measures and the role of father measure. A factor analysis was run omitting these variables and forcing the remaining variables into two factors. Factor one loaded heavily on post-partum sex taboo (.90) and indulgence (.88), moderately on bodily

contact (.63), sleeping proximity pre-weaning (-.62), and crying (.46), and weakly on the remaining variables. Factor two loaded heavily on productive labour pre-weaning (-.80) and breastfeeding (-.68), moderately on genital play (.64), sleeping proximity pre-weaning (.53), weaning (-.57) and productive labour post-weaning (.61). Post-partum sex taboo, which loaded heavily on factor one, also loaded on factor two (.42). Productive labour post-weaning which loaded moderately on factor two also loaded on factor one (.37) and elimination control failed to load on either one.

A final factor analysis was run using all of the intensity of separation variables, the radicalness of separation variables, and the male initiation and segregation variables: this factor analysis was a PA2 forced into three factors. Factor one loadings were bodily contact (.79), indulgence (.89), post-partum sex taboo (.88), diffusion of nurturance pre-weaning (.69), sleeping proximity post-weaning (-.73), and crying (.41). Factor two loadings included breastfeeding (-.83), genital play (.54), productive labour pre-weaning (-.68), diffusion of nurturance post-weaning (.89) and productive labour post-weaning (.59). Factor three loadings included genital play (.44), sleeping proximity pre-weaning (.67), role of father (.66), weaning (.74), male initiation (.81) and male segregation (.72).

TABLE 4.1

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Among Indicators*

	BRF	ELIM	GEN	BC	SL1	CRY	DN1
BRF	1.0000 p=.000						
ELIM	-.3781 p=.022	1.0000 p=.000					
GEN	-.3126 p=.096	.0411 p=.440	1.0000 p=.000				
BC	.2684 p=.047	-.0692 p=.361	-.1657 p=.243	1.0000 p=.000			
SL1	.0624 p=.355	.0851 p=.330	-.0139 p=.476	.3469 p=.012	1.0000 p=.000		
CRY	.1000 p=.281	.0265 p=.448	.046 p=.350	.0527 p=.380	-.2257 p=.100	1.0000 p=.000	
DN1	.3427 p=.012	.1642 p=.181	-.3120 p=.079	.4373 p=.001	.1063 p=.244	.2587 p=.058	1.0000 p=.000
PL1	.3508 p=.011	-.0442 p=.405	-.2585 p=.136	.3246 p=.017	.0864 p=.291	.1558 p=.179	.7844 p=.000
IND	.4099 p=.004	-.2428 p=.094	.1539 p=.247	.2974 p=.028	-.0123 p=.469	.5876 p=.000	.2464 p=.047
PPST	-.0992 p=.285	.2382 p=.121	.2720 p=.137	-.1612 p=.181	.3075 p=.038	-.0046 p=.490	-.0434 p=.397
DAD	.284 p=.034	.0409 p=.411	.0310 p=.446	-.0610 p=.348	.1856 p=.114	-.1625 p=.168	.0874 p=.276
WEAN	-.1372 p=.196	.0231 p=.449	-.1086 p=.324	-.1157 p=.233	-.2992 p=.026	-.0327 p=.424	-.2300 p=.058
SL2	-.5318 p=.001	.1711 p=.202	.0000 p=.500	-.1545 p=.184	-.0312 p=.425	-.0344 p=.430	-.3979 p=.006
DN2	-.3389 p=.014	-.3357 p=.030	.4019 p=.032	-.3254 p=.017	-.2737 p=.036	.1267 p=.227	-.4883 p=.000
PL2	-.1615 p=.156	-.2394 p=.101	-.1378 p=.281	.1973 p=.108	.0448 p=.390	-.1402 p=.211	-.4596 p=.001

* For explanation of abbreviated indicator names see note
p.76

TABLE 4.1 (continued)

	BRF	ELIM	GEN	BC	SL1	CRY	DN1
MI	-.1557 p=.159	.3611 p=.019	.0513 p=.410	.0685 p=.229	.0000 p=.500	.1072 p=.261	.1212 p=.201
TIME	-.1659 p=.144	.2107 p=.120	-.0293 p=.448	-.0063 p=.484	.0193 p=.450	.0045 p=.489	-.0541 p=.355
SEG	.0141 p=.467	.3920 p=.020	-.2774 p=.112	.3552 p=.012	.5204 p=.000	.0669 p=.356	.1860 p=.111
MT	.2084 p=.090	.1165 p=.259	-.1419 p=.264	-.1146 p=.229	.0380 p=.402	.0074 p=.482	.2167 p=.065
GR	-.0305 p=.423	.0869 p=.315	.0887 p=.347	-.0655 p=.336	-.0109 p=.472	.0898 p=.296	.3035 p=.016
SE	.1214 p=.219	-.3079 p=.041	-.2778 p=.105	.0907 p=.279	.0972 p=.263	-.1381 p=.204	-.2122 p=.070
	PL1	IND	PPST	DAD	WEAN	SL2	DN2
PL1	1.0000 p=.000						
IND	.2686 p=.037	1.0000 p=.000					
PPST	-.0951 p=.285	-.0402 p=.408	1.0000 p=.000				
DAD	.1838 p=.108	-.2267 p=.065	.0284 p=.433	1.0000 p=.000			
WEAN	-.2150 p=.073	-.1727 p=.128	-.1745 p=.147	.1780 p=.116	1.0000 p=.000		
SL2	-.3698 p=.011	-.3865 p=.010	.1924 p=.159	.1939 p=.122	.4296 p=.004	1.0000 p=.000	
DN2	-.4881 p=.000	.0432 p=.388	.0892 p=.297	-.0481 p=.373	.1917 p=.098	.3585 p=.013	1.0000 p=.000
PL2	-.4837 p=.000	-.1841 p=.106	.1982 p=.120	-.0538 p=.363	.1128 p=.233	.3830 p=.011	.5267 p=.000
MI	.1109 p=.227	.1073 p=.236	-.0110 p=.473	-.2111 p=.073	-.0540 p=.358	-.1291 p=.217	.0554 p=.353

	PL1	IND	PPST	DAD	WEAN	SL2	DN2
TIME	.0460 p=.378	.0692 p=.322	.0746 p=.326	-.1960 p=.089	-.0411 p=.391	-.0325 p=.422	.0545 p=.355
SEG	.1295 p=.204	-.1032 p=.258	.4886 p=.001	.2385 p=.060	-.1002 p=.261	.2108 p=.109	-.2844 p=.031
MT	.2120 p=.074	.0148 p=.461	.2083 p=.102	.1734 p=.117	-.2250 p=.062	-.1614 p=.163	-.2351 p=.052
GR	.2985 p=.020	.0608 p=.342	.0880 p=.297	.0645 p=.330	-.1129 p=.222	-.3391 p=.017	-.1056 p=.235
SE	-.3309 p=.011	-.0493 p=.371	.1347 p=.207	.1683 p=.124	.2996 p=.019	.4194 p=.004	.0782 p=.297

	PL2	MI	TIME	SEG	MT	GR	SE
PL2	1.0000 p=.000						
MI	-.0510 p=.368	1.0000 p=.000					
TIME	.0420 p=.391	.7437 p=.000	1.0000 p=.000				
SEG	-.0411 p=.399	.1753 p=.125	.1994 p=.095	1.0000 p=.000			
MT	-.1360 p=.184	-.2594 p=.034	-.1310 p=.182	.2601 p=.042	1.0000 p=.000		
GR	-.2766 p=.031	-.1277 p=.188	-.0577 p=.345	-.1451 p=.384	.1906 p=.093	1.0000 p=.000	
SE	.3182 p=.016	-.3509 p=.006	-.3334 p=.009	.1390 p=.181	-.1055 p=.223	-.2770 p=.026	1.000 p=.000

TABLE 4.2

Factor Analysis Of Independent Variables: Three Factors

Variable	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3
1. BRF	.27575	-.83406	-.03018
2. ELIM	.16397	.09329	.44214
3. GEN	-.05176	.54373	-.03254
4. BC	.78813	.01809	.16302
5. SL1	.25861	.46934	.66866
6. CRY	.41396	-.06384	.14532
7. DN1	.68564	-.42215	.21686
8. PL1	.30064	-.67906	.32148
9. IND	.89141	-.18372	.11916
10. PPST	.87995	.38316	.24499
11. DAD	-.42953	.25082	.65820
12. WEAN	-.09166	-.39504	.74433
13. SL2	-.72794	.38806	.32523
14. DN2	-.05959	.88974	-.13506
15. PL2	.44012	.59360	-.14418
16. MI	.27196	-.22029	.81367
18. SEG	.44575	-.27440	.72254

*Note: abbreviated variable labels are as follows;

BRF = Variable 1. Breastfeeding
 ELIM = Variable 2. Elimination Control
 GEN = Variable 3. Genital Play
 BC = Variable 4. Bodily Contact
 SL1 = Variable 5. Sleeping Proximity (pre-weaning)
 CRY = Variable 6. Crying
 DN1 = Variable 7. Diffusion Of Nurturance (pre-weaning)
 PL1 = Variable 8. Mother's Productive Labour (pre)
 IND = Variable 9. General Indulgence
 PPST = Variable 10. Post-Partum Sex Taboo
 DAD = Variable 11. Role Of Father
 WEAN = Variable 12. Weaning
 SL2 = Variable 13. Sleeping Proximity (post-weaning)
 DN2 = Variable 14. Diffusion Of Nurturance (post)
 PL2 = Variable 15. Mother's Productive Labour (post)
 MI = Variable 16. Occurrence Of Male Initiation
 TIME = Variable 17. Time Of Male Initiation
 SEG = Variable 18. Male Segregation
 MT = Variable 19. Menstrual Taboos

Conclusion

The test results do not support Balbus' hypothesis. The indicators for intensity of identification and severity of separation do not clearly predict the degree of elaboration of menstrual taboos. Although the composite scale of radicalness of separation showed a small correlation with the dependent variable ($-.26, p=.034$), it is in the wrong direction suggesting that a less radical separation of the child from the mother is associated with more extensive menstrual taboos. The intensity of identification composite score was also negatively correlated with the radicalness of separation composite scores ($-.40, p=.002$). This suggests that a significant number of the societies in the sample do not terminate the closeness of the mother-child relationship following weaning.

The results of the multiple regression tests failed to reveal a significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The composite measures were non-significantly correlated and of the indices for the independent variables only the role of father and mother's productive labour pre-weaning entered the equation.

The factor analysis run with all the independent variable indicators and the male initiation and segregation

indicators seemed to suggest most strongly the indicator groupings suggested by Balbus. Factor one showed loadings on many of the intensity of identification indicators (bodily contact, indulgence, post-partum sex taboo, diffusion of nurturance pre-weaning and crying) and a negative loading on sleeping proximity post-weaning. Factor two showed positive loadings on two radicalness of separation indicators (diffusion of nurturance and productive labour post-weaning) and negatively on two identification indicators (breastfeeding and productive labour pre-weaning). Factor three loaded heavily on male initiation, male segregation, role of father and sleeping proximity pre-weaning along with weaning and genital play.

Although the results do not clearly support Balbus' hypothesis, several of the correlations between indicators are similar to those found in other studies. The indicators which did correlate significantly with menstrual taboos (male initiation and male segregation) are suggestive of Young and Bacdayan's study (1967) in which they proposed that menstrual taboos were an institutionalized means of male discrimination against women. However, although they did correlate significantly with menstrual taboos, they did not appear in the multiple regression equation as predictors suggesting that while male segregation is generally found in conjunction with menstrual taboos and male initiation is

found in the absence of menstrual taboos, these indicators are not precursors of menstrual taboos as suggested by Young and Bacdayan (1967:100).

Whiting, Kluckhohn and Anthony (1958) hypothesized a correlation between male initiation and strong maternal identification in societies with mother-child sleeping proximity in the first year and post-partum sex taboo. The results of this study fail to show a correlation of male initiation with these mother-identification indicators however male segregation correlates at highly significant levels with both measures ($p=.001$).

This is suggestive of the Paige and Paige study (1982: 245): they found that male initiation was significantly negatively associated with menstrual taboos, a finding repeated in this study. However, a significant negative correlation between male initiation and male segregation was not duplicated. In this study, 31% of the societies for which data was available ($N=45$) had neither male initiation nor male segregation, 36% had male segregation but no male initiation, 24% had both and only 9% had male initiation without male segregation.

Although Balbus' theory appears to present a viable explanation of menstrual taboos, the application of the operationalized hypothesis to a cross-cultural sample failed to show significant support for his theory.

The failure of the test could be attributed to several factors. In cross-cultural studies there are several potential sources of bias: sample bias, source bias and coding bias. In this study, the sample and the ethnographic sources were chosen with consideration to problems of potential bias, however, control for coding bias through duplicate coding was unobtainable. This potential source of error could affect the results and throws doubt on the reliability of the study.

Whiting notes (1954:704) that a sample of this size may be too small to obtain a stable estimate of interaction given the number of indicators. He suggests the use of a world sample in conjunction with controlled comparison samples to correct for potential error (1954:708).

In studies testing psychodynamic mechanisms there is the problem of indirect measurement. There are no direct measures of the intensity of the child's identification with its mother nor for the radicalness of the subsequent separation. It is possible that the indicators suggested by Balbus do not adequately measure the hypothesized independent variables.

Cross-cultural studies are based on societal measures which focus on the average or norm: it is possible that such measures are inadequate for measuring the complexity of the mother-child relationship. The societal norm or standard of

behavior may vary greatly from actual practice. Each infant is different and each mother's response to her infant will vary with her situation and the infant's temperament.

Child-rearing methods often vary from one generation to the next thus it is difficult to determine if the child-rearing methods in practice now are the same as the ones which may have potentially precipitated the development of cultural characteristics such as menstrual taboos. To determine a true correlation between child-rearing practices and systems of culture, it may be necessary to do longitudinal studies in a large number of societies. By this method one may be able to obtain a stronger measure of the effects of early child-rearing on the projective systems of a culture.

APPENDIX A: CODE MANUAL

Intensity Of Identification (pre-weaning)

1 Breastfeeding

- 1 Wet nurse or substitute for absent mother used
- 2 Breastfed infrequently, mother often absent
- 3 Breastfed at regular intervals (schedule)
- 4 Breastfed on demand, to feed and pacify
- 5 Breastfed frequently, even when not hungry

2 Elimination Control

- 1 Very early, before six months
- 2 Early, after six months or onset of crawling
- 3 Intermediate, after one year or first steps
- 4 Late, after eighteen months or walking
- 5 Very late, three to five years

3 Genital Play

- 1 Discouraged in all individuals
- 2 Accepted till eighteen months or walking
- 3 Accepted till toddlers, three to five years
- 4 Accepted till puberty
- 5 Encouraged, infants masturbated to sooth them

4 Bodily Contact (with mother)

- 1 Limited to routine and precautionary care
- 2 Only occasionally
- 3 Up to half the time
- 4 More than half the time
- 5 Almost constant

5 Sleeping Proximity

- 1 Mother and father sleep together, child apart
- 2 Father and child sleep together, mother apart
- 3 Mother, father and child sleep in close proximity
- 4 Mother and child sleep together, father close by
- 5 Mother and child sleep together, father apart

6 Crying

- 1 Indifferent or slow response to child's cries
- 2 Slow or perfunctory response
- 3 Inconsistency in speed of response
- 4 Generally quick and nurturant response
- 5 Always quick and nurturant response

7 Diffusion Of Nurturance

- 1 Practically all care, including nursing, is by others
- 2 Most care except for nursing is by others
- 3 Principally mother, others have important roles
- 4 Principally mother, others have minor roles
- 5 Care almost exclusively by mother

8 Mother's Productive Labour

- 1 Mother is absent for extended periods while child remains with relatives
- 2 Mother regularly leaves child with relatives
- 3 Mother generally takes child but sometimes leaves it with others when work demands
- 4 Mother takes child but others mind it nearby
- 5 Mother carries child with her when she works

9 General Indulgence

- 1 Severe or neglectful treatment
- 2 Moderate degree of severity and deprivation
- 3 Usually affectionate; occasional harshness/deprivation
- 4 Greater degree of indulgence
- 5 Highly affectionate/nurturant with consistent immediate response to demands

10 Post-partum Sex Taboo

- 1 Less than one month
- 2 One to six months
- 3 Six months to one year
- 4 One to two years
- 5 Lasting two years or more

11 Role Of Father

- 1 Regular close relationship
- 2 Frequent close proximity
- 3 Occasional or irregular close proximity
- 4 Rare instances of close proximity
- 5 No close proximity

Radicalness Of Separation (weaning and post-weaning)

12 Weaning

- 1 Completion of weaning is late, after two years
- 2 Intermediate, between one and two years
- 3 Early, between six months and one year
- 4 Very early, before six months

13 Sleeping Proximity

- 1 Child remains in close proximity to mother
- 2 Child has own bed near mother
- 3 Child sleeps separate from mother
- 4 Child sleeps with father in his quarters
- 5 Child sleeps in different house from parents

14 Diffusion Of Nurturance

- 1 Care almost exclusively by mother
- 2 Principally mother, others have important roles
- 3 Child spends half or less time with mother
- 4 Majority of time spent away from mother
- 5 Practically all time spent away from mother

15 Mother's Productive Labour

- 1 Mother carries child with her when she works
- 2 Mother takes child but others mind it nearby
- 3 Mother generally takes child but sometimes leaves it with others when work demands
- 4 Mother regularly leaves child with relatives
- 5 Mother is absent for extended periods while child remains with relatives

Enforced Separation

16 Occurrence of Male Initiation

- 0 Absence 1 Presence

17 Time Of Initiation

- 0 No specific age
- 1 Past puberty
- 2 Shortly after maturation
- 3 At genital maturation
- 4 At first signs of genital maturation
- 5 Before genital maturation

- 18 Male segregation
- 1 Minor
 - 2 Sacred objects
 - 3 Male clubs
 - 4 Sex-segregated living units
 - 5 Men's houses

Menstrual Taboos

- 19 Form Of Menstrual Taboo
- 0 None
 - 1 Sex avoidance only
 - 2 Belief in danger to men
 - 3 Cooking, domestic, personal taboos
 - 4 Structural segregation (structural and social)
 - 5 Menstrual hut

Society Identification

- 20 Geographical Region
- 1 Sub-Saharan Africa
 - 2 Circum-Mediterranean
 - 3 East Eurasia
 - 4 Insular Pacific
 - 5 North America
 - 6 South America
- 21 Type Of Subsistence Economy (major source)
- 1 Gathering, wild plants and small land fauna.
 - 2 Hunting, includes trapping and fowling.
 - 3 Fishing, includes shellfish and large aquatic animals.
 - 4 Domestic animals, use of their products.
 - 5 Simple/shifting cultivation
 - 6 Semi-intensive agriculture, mainly vegetable gardens.
 - 7 Advanced agriculture, use of irrigation, fertilization

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE IDENTIFICATION

Table B.1: THE SAMPLE

A	Sub-Saharan Africa	N=8
	1 Kung (Botswana, S. Africa)	
	2 Ngoni (E. Zambia border, S.E. Africa)	
	3 Bemba (N. Zambia, S.E. Africa)	
	4 Tonga (S. Zambia, S.E. Africa)	
	5 Tallensi (N.E. Ghana, W. Africa)	
	6 Twi (S.C. Ghana, W. Africa)	
	7 Gusii (Kenya, E. Africa)	
	8 Baganda (S. Uganda, E. Africa)	
C	Circum-Mediterranean	N=7
	9 Fellahin (S.E. Egypt, N.E. Africa)	
	10 Lebanon (E. Mediterranean)	
	11 Palestine (Isreal, E. Mediterranean)	
	12 Morocco (N.W. Africa)	
	13 Yemen (S.E. Circum-Mediterranean)	
	14 Oman (Saudi Arabia, S.E. Mediterranean)	
	15 Kibbutz (Isreal, E. Mediterranean)	
E	East Eurasia	N=9
	16 Burmese (S.C. East Eurasia)	
	17 Chinese (E. East Eurasia)	
	18 Suye Mura (Japan, N.E. East Eurasia)	
	19 Okinawa (South of Japan, C.E. East Eurasia)	
	20 Taiwan (S.E. East Eurasia)	
	21 Thailand (S.C. East Eurasia)	
	22 Hindu (C. & N. India, W. East Eurasia)	
	23 Kerala (S. India, S.W. East Eurasia)	
	24 Rajputs (N. India, W. East Eurasia)	

- I Insular Pacific N=10
- 25 Tarong (N. Philippines, N. Insular Pacific)
 - 26 Buker (Buka Island, E. Insular Pacific)
 - 27 Hagen (Papua New Guinea, C. Insular Pacific)
 - 28 Kuma (Papua New Guinea, C. Insular Pacific)
 - 29 Kaytej (C. Australia, S. Insular Pacific)
 - 30 Kimberly (N.W. Australia, S. Insular Pacific)
 - 31 Tiwi (N. Australia, S. Insular Pacific)
 - 32 Lau (Fiji, E. Insular Pacific)
 - 33 Lesu (New Ireland, E. Insular Pacific)
 - 34 Alor (Lesser Sunda Islands, W. Insular Pacific)

- N North America N=9
- 35 Utkuhikhalingmiut (N.W.T., North America)
 - 36 Thlinket (Alaska, N.W. North America)
 - 37 Klamath (California, W. North America)
 - 38 Arapaho (Wyoming, C. North America)
 - 39 Ojibwa (W. Ontario, C. North America)
 - 40 Montagnais (Labrador, E. North America)
 - 41 Navaho (Arizona, S.W. North America)
 - 42 Papago (S. Arizona, S.W. North America)
 - 43 Zapotecs (Mexico, S. North America)

- S South America N=7
- 44 Carib (Guyana, N.E. South America)
 - 45 Jamaican (Caribbean, N.E. South America)
 - 46 Maroon (Suriname, N.E. South America)
 - 47 Pira-Pirana (Columbia, N.W. South America)
 - 48 Mundurucu (Brazil, C. South America)
 - 49 Sharananua (Peru, W.C. South America)
 - 50 Araucanians (Chile, S. South America)

Table B.2: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

Geographical Area	Standard		Present	
	C.C. N	Sample %	Sample N	%
Sub-Saharan Africa	28	15	8	16
Circum-Mediterranean	28	15	7	14
East Eurasia	34	18	9	18
Insular Pacific	31	17	10	20
North America	33	18	9	18
South & Central America	32	17	7	14
Totals	186	100	50	100

Table B.3: SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY

Subsistence Mode	No.		%	
	No.	%	No.	%
Advanced agriculture	56	30	22	44
Semi-intensive agr.	19	10	1	2
Simple/Shifting cult.	51	27	14	28
Domestic animals	15	8	3	6
Fishing	18	10	2	4
Hunting	14	8	4	8
Gathering/hunting	13	8	4	8
Totals	186	101	50	100

(Above tables adapted from Sanday, 1981:p233)

MAP B.1: AFRICA

MAP B.2: WEST EURASIA

2

of/de

2

MINICARD

MAP B.3: EAST EURASIA

MAP B.4: INSULAR PACIFIC

MAP B.5: NORTH AMERICA

MAP B.6: SOUTH AMERICA

(Maps adapted from Murdock & White, 1969:342-347)

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