**Aleut**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** while a woman otherwise was not completely isolated but could not touch her husband's hunting amulets and gear or go near river or sea. She bathed at the end of the period of uncleanness.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1984

**Focal Year:** 1750 – 1975

**Citation:** Lantis, M. (1984). Aleut. In handbook of north american indians. arctic: Vol. v. 5 (pp. 161–184). Smithsonian Institution: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na06-075

**Description:** The only one practiced with any regularity is that of not entering the church during the monthly period. This restriction makes the women's lives a bit difficult at times, for they cannot discuss their condition with men, and it is always men, either of their family or from the church, who question them about their absence. Lavera told me that her brother once gave her a severe beating for missing church for this reason, and still she could not tell him why.”

D**ate of Ethnography:** 1949

**Focal Year:** 1948

**Citation:** Shade, C. I. (1949). Ethnological notes on the Aleuts. [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/na06/documents/017

**Description:** Married women were not isolated, but they also were considered unclean while menstruating. For a seven-day period they could engage in no coitus and had to wash themselves before rejoining their husbands.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1976

**Focal Year:** 1945 – 1970

**Citation:** Jones, D. M. (1976). Aleuts in transition: a comparison of two villages. Published for the Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research, University of Alaska, University of Washington Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na06-073

**Description:** The tabus on a woman at this time are familiar: she should not contaminate the men of the community or the food supply. To carry out the latter tabu, she must have been restricted from preparing food for others, would have had to use her own cooking and eating vessels, and possibly even had to take food from a stick instead of directly from her fingers.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1970

**Focal Year:** 1750 – 1850

**Citation:** Lantis, M. (1970). The Aleut social system: 1750 to 1810, from early historical sources. In Ethnohistory in southwestern Alaska and the southern Yukon; method and content [by] Robert E. Ackerman and others (pp. 139–301). University Press of Kentucky. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na06-074

**Description:** A menstruating woman was not permitted near the river or sea, in order not to contaminate the water.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1933

**Focal Year:** 1909 – 1910

**Citation:** Jochelson, W. (1933). History, ethnology, and anthropology of the Aleut. In Publication (Issue 432, pp. v, 91). Carnegie institution of Washington. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/na06/documents/002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes, The only one practiced with any regularity is that of not entering the church during the monthly period. This restriction makes the women's lives a bit difficult at times, for they cannot discuss their condition with men, and it is always men, either of their family or from the church, who question them about their absence. Lavera told me that her brother once gave her a severe beating for missing church for this reason, and still she could not tell him why.”

**Alutiiq**

**Aka Chugach**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** According to Davydov, every woman had to leave the yurt during her menstruation period and occupy a small shelter for its duration, where her meals were brought, and she could not leave it. The habit is still to be found on Kodiak.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1985

**Focal Year:** 1780 – 1860

**Citation:** Holmberg, H. J. (Henrik J., Falk, M. W., & Jaensch, F. (1985). The Koniags. In Holmberg’s ethnographic sketches: Vol. v. 1 (pp. 35–61). University of Alaska Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na10-038

**Description:** If a menstruating girl touched a shaman's mask or drum he would know about it and burn it up. When the menstruation had ceased the woman took at sweat bath. It should be added that a female shaman did not lose her power during her menstruation and that the use of the menstrual fluid for magical purposes was unknown.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1953

**Focal Year:** 1741 – 1933

**Citation:** Birket-Smith, K. (1953). The Chugach Eskimo. In Nationalmuseets skrifter. Etnografisk række (Vol. 6, pp. ix, 261). Nationalmuseets publikationsfond. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na10-001

**Description:** Women and girls also had to retire to these huts or to a sleeping compartment for 10 days at the first menstruation and for the period of all subsequent ones.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1984

**Focal Year:** 1760 – 1982

**Citation:** Clark, D. W. (1984). Pacific Eskimo: historical ethnography. In handbook of north american indians. arctic: Vol. Vol. 5 (pp. 185–197). Smithsonian Institution: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na10-031

**Description:** As general among American natives, especially in the hunting tribes, the menstruating woman had to retire to a special hut and stay there as long as the discharge continued; and in numerous tribes the woman in labor had to take to a similar special hut.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1975  
 **Focal Year:** 1 – 1936

**Citation:** Hrdlicka, A. (1975). The anthropology of Kodiak Island. AMS Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na10-007

**Description:** Stories continue to be told about the polluting power of menstruating women on fishing boats and their responsibility for poor fishing seasons

**Date of Ethnography**: 1992

**Focal Year:** 1938 – 1991

**Citation:** Endter-Wada, J., Mason, R., Mulcahy, J. B., & Hofmeister, J. (1992). The Kodiak Region. In Social indicators study of Alaskan coastal villages. I. Key informant summaries: Vol. Vol. 2 (Issue 152, p. [i-B]-xxi-B, 665-882). The Region. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na10-036

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Amish**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** There are a few food prohibitions that are applicable to a menstruating women. Heavy or sour foods are believed to make her periods more difficult but there are teas that help her.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1964

**Focal Year:** 1803 – 1956

**Citation:** Huntington, A. G. E. (1987). Dove at the window: a study of an Old Order Amish community in Ohio. University Microfilms. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm06-015

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Assiniboine**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** At the period of the catamenia they sleep alone and are deemed taboo for ten days. The word in their language expressing that flux literally interpreted would mean “she who lives in a lodge alone,” and their traditions state that it was formerly the custom to pitch a tent outside for the woman to remain in during this period.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1930

**Focal Year:** 1790s – 1850s

**Citation:** Denig, E. T., & Hewitt, J. N. B. (John N. B. (1930). Indian tribes of the upper Missouri. Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nf04-005

**Description:** Neither at puberty, nor during later menstrual periods, were any food restrictions observed, though the women ate from a cup and plate of their own. Two taboos are still rigorously enforced. A menstruating woman must not step over anyone's legs or body, and a certain medicine bundle. must not be kept in the same lodge with her. If a woman menstruates, she immediately tells her husband, who then places the bundle outside his tent. If she is approaching a lodge and does not know whether a medicine-bundle is kept inside, she pauses at the door to inform the inmates of her condition, so that the medicine can be removed. It is said that if the bundle were not taken out, a woman would continue to menstruate indefinitely.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1909

**Focal Year:** 1600s – 1900s

**Citation:** Lowie, R. H. (1909). The Assiniboine. In Anthropological papers of the American museum of natural history: Vol. IV (pp. 1–270). The Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nf04-017

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** yes – “Their traditions state that it was formerly the custom to pitch a tent outside for the woman to remain in during this period.” And “Two taboos are still rigorously enforced.”

**Blackfoot**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** There is no special taboo upon a menstruating woman requiring her to live apart but she is not supposed to come near the sick. The belief is that in such a case something would strike the patient “like a bullet and make him worse.” Further, at this time, women are supposed to keep away from places where medicines are at work. These restrictions also apply to immediate associations with men and to women lax in virtue.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1911

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1905

**Citation:** Wissler, C. (1911). The social life of the Blackfoot Indians. In Anthropological papers (Vol. 7, p. 1 l, 1–64). The Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nf06-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Cherokee**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Although ancient taboos against such women had relaxed to the point where they no longer passed their periods isolated in small huts, Raymond D. Fogelson later discovered that Cherokee conjurers had found a “functional replacement” for the huts: where possible, they exiled their young wives to their grandparents during menstruation.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1991

**Focal Year:** 1938 – 1990

**Citation:** Finger, J. R. (1991). Cherokee Americans: the eastern band of Cherokees in the twentieth century. In Indians of the Southeast (pp. xvii, 246). University of Nebraska Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-041

**Description:** The power of menstruating women is constantly noted in all texts; the influence of women in this state is believed dangerous to the successful outcome of any medicine or ceremonial rites. Women were expected to spend their menstrual days in seclusion and not interact with men (Olbrechts 1931: 21; Mooney 1890: 48). Nevertheless, the role of women in the narrative suggests a mediating influence. During the healing process, pregnant or menstrual women were forbidden to come near the sick or to prepare any food for the sick, as this type of female power had the effect of neutralizing the power of the shaman.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1992

**Focal Year:** 1830 – 1915

**Citation:** Irwin, L. (1992). Cherokee healing: myth, dreams, and medicine. American Indian Quarterly, Vol. 16(2), 237–257. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-046

**Description:** The touch or presence of a menstrual or pregnant woman, a corpse, or someone who has been in contact with, or in the vicinity of, a corpse.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1967

**Focal Year:** Not specified

**Citation:** Kilpatrick, J. F., & Kilpatrick, A. G. (1967). Run toward the nightland: magic of the Oklahoma Cherokees. Southern Methodist University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-011

**Description:** During menstruation blood was outside its appropriate place in the body and women had to take precautions such as retiring to men-struation huts, not participating in ceremonial activities, avoiding contact with the sick, or performing normal tasks. Cherokees believed that the power of blood would neutralize all the treatments of medicine people. Husbands also had regulations to observe, such as dancing behind others in ceremonial occasions and not having intercourse.

**Date of Ethnography:** 2003

**Focal Year:** 1700 – 1995

**Citation:** Fox, M. J. T. (2003). Cherokee. In encyclopedia of sex and gender : men and women in the world’s cultures (pp. 356–363). Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-035

**Description:** Menstrual woman —Among all our native tribes it is believed that there is something dangerous or uncanny in the touch or presence of a menstrual woman. Hence the universal institution of the “menstrual lodge,” to which the woman retires at such periods, eating, working, and sleeping alone, together with a host of tabus and precautions bearing upon the same subject. Nearly the same ideas are held in regard to a pregnant woman.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1540 – 1900

**Citation:** Mooney, J. (1982). Myths of the Cherokee: and sacred formulas of the Cherokees. C. Elder-Bookseller. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-021

**Description:** The menstruation process was accompanied by severe taboos and was related in the minds of the Cherokees to the phases of the moon. There is an avoidance of sexual relations between husband and wife during the menstrual period and also in pregnancy but there is no segregation of the woman during these events. One of the most clearly recognizable of these cyclic tides of feeling in Cherokee Society are those connected with the female menstrual period. Regularly the male is seized with feelings of extreme revulsion and a desire for avoidance of the menstruating female. This feeling takes the form of strict monthly taboos and restrictions on the latter which find reflection not only in customs but also in the magical prayers of the Cherokees and even their myths.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1540 – 1932

**Citation:** Gilbert, W. H. (1978). The eastern Cherokees. In Bulletin ; Anthropological papers (Issue 23, pp. 169–413). AMS Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn08-023

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Although ancient taboos against such women had relaxed to the point where they no longer passed their periods isolated in small huts, Raymond D. Fogelson later discovered that Cherokee conjurers had found a “functional replacement” for the huts: where possible, they exiled their young wives to their grandparents during menstruation.” And “There is an avoidance of sexual relations between husband and wife during the menstrual period and also in pregnancy but there is no segregation of the woman during these events.”

**Chipewyans**

**Aka Dene**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A woman, simply by touching them, can ruin a man's entire supply of healing plants, can ruin the magic of a dog harness simply by stepping over it (when menstruating), can drive away the caribou by stepping over a carcass, can break the “luck” on a man's rifle simply by picking it up. The power of women to pollute is so strongly developed that it is in fact a form of magical power.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1981

**Focal Year:** 1715 – 1980

**Citation:** Sharp, H. S. (1981). The null case: the Chipewyan. In woman the gatherer (pp. 221–244). Yale University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd07-052

**Description:** Menstruating women have their own sleeping blanket and cooking vessels. Nor must they cook for others or walk over others' tracks. According to Mackenzie they must not even touch a man's implements. Hearne states that they must not pass through the usual tent door, but must sleep in a separate hut. They must not go on the ice of rivers or lakes or go near places where the beaver is hunted or fishing nets set. Nor must they eat the head of any animal and neither follow nor cross any track along which the head of caribou, moose, beaver, etc. has been brought.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1930

**Focal Year:** 1900 – 1925

**Citation:** Birket-Smith, K. (1930). Contributions to Chipewyan ethnology. In Report (Vol. 6, Issue 3, p. 115). Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd07-017

**Description:** Menstrual blood was (and still is) offensive to the spirits of game and possibly fish. Thus hunters (and later trappers) were to avoid the contaminating effects of contact with menstruating women. A man who came into contact with a woman in this state would become unlucky in the hunt, and the woman would, in a year's time, sicken and die. Even to cross the tracks of a menstruating woman was bad luck. Contact with a man's weapons, or dog harnesses, after dogs came into use for draught purposes, brought bad luck. A menstruating woman could never come close to freshly killed animals and she could not make dry meat nor work hides.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1786 – 1974

**Citation:** Smith, D. M. (1982). Moose-Deer island house people: a history of the native people of Fort Resolution. In Mercury series (Issue 82, pp. ix, 202). National Museums of Canada. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd07-057

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Comanche**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** During menstruation a woman went into confinement. If her husband had medicine (and what man did not?), she could not sleep in his tipi, for menstrual blood nullifies all power. If she had no tipi of her own, she moved in with her parents (“the medicine of old people was too weak to be harmed”). When an article in her tent was needed by someone, it was set or pitched out the door, and no one entered against the occupant's will. During the time, she ate no meat; it would make her sick at the stomach and cause her to flow more. She could not wash her face because that would make her get wrinkled before her time; nor could she touch or comb her hair because it would cause her to get gray young. At the end of her period she had to bathe in a running creek, no matter how cold, even if it was frozen over, before she could go back to her husband's tipi. No man could eat from the same dish or drink from the same cup as she until this had been done. An unmarried girl had to observe approximately the same restrictions. After menopause all female tabus were removed; the woman was now physiologically equal to man.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1952

**Focal Year:** 1700 – 1945

**Citation:** Wallace, E., & Hoebel, E. A. (Edward A. (1952). The Comanches: lords of the south Plains. In Civilization of the American Indian series: Vol. v. 34 (pp. xviii, 381 , 16 plates). University of Oklahoma Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=no06-003

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Copper Inuit**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** According to the Eskimos, a menstruating woman is very dangerous to a child about to be born.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1972

**Focal Year:** 1958 – 1970

**Citation:** Pryde, D. (1972). Nunaga: my land, my country. M.G. Hurtig Ltd. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd08-037

**Description:** A woman having her menses, or one who has a miscarriage, does not keep it secret, but she is not bound to tell anyone else than her husband; for she may pay visits and is not subjected to any especially strict taboo

**Date of Ethnography:** 1932

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Rasmussen, K. (1932). Intellectual culture of the Copper Eskimos. In Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition, 1921-1924: Vol. IX (pp. 350, plates). [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd08-003

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Creek**

**Aka Muscogee**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A menstruating woman or a woman about to give birth went outside the village to a small hut, where she remained isolated for four days, ate no large game of any kind, used special dishes, and stayed out of the garden. She bathed downstream from any man; and, if she passed a man, she did so downwind of him. When her period of isolation was over, she bathed and put on fresh clothing.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 2004

**Focal Year:** 1540 – 1836

**Citation:** Walker, W. (2004). Creek confederacy before Removal. In handbook of north american indians. southeast: Vol. Vol. 14 (pp. 373–391). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn11-004

**Description:** "When [a woman] is visited with what is peculiar to the sex… she is obliged to occupy a separate tent or house, to eat from separate dishes, and to live entirely apart from all others until it is passed. Then she is taken and thoroughly washed, whether in winter or summer, and returned to the family. The utensils used by her are laid aside until required for a similar purpose. No man is ever allowed to sit in the seat which has been used by a woman under those circumstances. During menses the woman remained in seclusion and did not come into contact with anything belonging to her household.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1928

**Focal Year:** 1700 – 1912

**Citation:** Swanton, J. R. (1928). Social organization and social usages of the Indians of the Creek confederacy. In Annual report (pp. 23–472). U.S. Govt. Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn11-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Chinookans of the Lower Columbia River**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Taboos on a woman (and her husband) during each menstruation continued  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** 1875 – 1950

**Citation:** Silverstein, M. (1990). Chinookans of the Lower Columbia. In handbook of north american indians. northeast: Vol. Vol. 7 (pp. 533–546). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr06-009

**Description:** At each subsequent menstrual period the girl was isolated for a five-day period in the partitioned corner or in a small hut on the outside. Face painting and activities were similar to the initial period. Food tabus, however, included only fresh products. A menstruating woman must not take the head of an elk. Women do not eat the tongue; only men eat it. They do not break the bones of the forelegs. They are carried far away, else a menstruating woman might see them. When such a woman eats the feet and hoofs, the hunter will be unlucky. When she steps over an elk's head, she will be sick with dropsy.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1938

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1936

**Citation:** Ray, V. F. (1938). Lower Chinook ethnographic notes. In University of Washington publications in anthropology (Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp. 29–165). University of Washington. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr06-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Chicano**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Bathing, forbidden during the menstrual period, is encouraged during pregnancy.  
**Date** **of Ethnography:** 1980

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Kay, M. A. (1980). Mexican, Mexican American, and Chicana childbirth. In twice a minority : mexican american women (pp. 52–65). Mosby. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n007-051

**Description:** The belief that washing one's hair during menstruation may lead to death, and the belief that violation of nudity taboos may lead to blindness.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1968

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Kiev, A. (1968). Curanderismo; Mexican-American folk psychiatry. Free Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n007-009

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Delaware**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Being in their catamenial periods. are not pure, be allowed to trouble about the cooking. And should not come in the Big House as long as they are affected with the sickness, because some pure children might be much contaminated, especially when they perform the Gamwing. And it is the rule that persons should abstain from bringing into the Big House any animals of whatever kind they may be which are domesticated.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1931

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1920s

**Citation:** Speck, F. G. (Frank G., Witapano, & Commission, Pennsylvania. H. (1931). A study of the Delaware Indian Big House Ceremony: in native text dictated by Witapano’xwe. [Pennsylvania historical commission]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm07-010

**Description:** Partial menstrual isolation was also practiced by some Oklahoma Delaware women, in particular by cooking over a separate fire and eating alone. There is a tradition that when the Delaware lived in villages a single large house was built at a distance for all the menstruating women of the community to use together.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1600s – 1970s

**Citation**: Goddard, I. (1978). Delaware. In handbook of north american indians. northeast: Vol. Vol. 15 (pp. 213–239). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G. P. O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm07-020

**Description:** During the catamenial period a woman is not allowed to prepared food nor taken an active part in domestic affairs. The separate dishes assigned to her at that time, may only be used by her husband. Food cooked by such a woman would produce tuberculosis in others in a short time. A term translated as “gives dirty food,” is applied to such a practice and refers to the resultant poisonous effects. During her periodic isolation a woman herbalist must refrain from preparing remedies or participating in any of the ceremonies.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1942

**Focal Year:** 1928 – 1930

**Citation:** Tantaquidgeon, G., & Commission, P. H. (1942). A study of Delaware Indian medicine practice and folk beliefs. Dept. of Public Instruction, Pennsylvania Historical Commission. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm07-004

**Description:** Birth itself occurred in the small hut which was also used during menstrual periods.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** 1600s – 1800s

**Citation:** Herman, M. W. (1950). A Reconstruction of aboriginal Delaware culture from contemporary sources. Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, Vol. 1, 45–77. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm07-005

**Description:** Every month, during her menstrual period, a Delaware woman lives by herself in a separate hut, which is usually very poorly built, and remains there two or three days, food being taken to her. When the time is over they bathe and wash their clothes and are allowed to return to their husbands. During the menstrual period, they are not permitted to do any cooking or domestic work. None will eat what a woman in this condition prepares, for food prepared under such circumstances is said to be unwholesome and to cause pain in the abdomen. The women do not go into company, but keep to their huts until their time is over. Hence, it occasionally happens that a woman engaged in baking will leave everything and go to her hut. This custom does not obtain among the Mingoes; their women continue their usual work and remain in the house.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1910

**Focal Year:** 1600s – 1700s

**Citation:** Zeisberger, D., Hulbert, A. B., & Schwarze, W. N. (1910). David Zeisberger’s history of northern American Indians. In Ohio archaeological and historical publications (Vol. 19, pp. ii, 189). Published for the Society by Fred J. Heer. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm07-003

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** none referenced or implied

**Eastern Apache**

**Aka Chiricahua**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Menstrual blood is dangerous for males, and girls are taught to dispose carefully of pads worn during the flow. The illness suffered by a man or a boy as a result of contact with menstrual blood is always described as rheumatism or malformation of the joints. The most serious form of the malady is contracted from union with a menstruating woman. “The Chiricahua are afraid to have intercourse with a woman during her period. It makes them misshapen and deformed. They become unable to straighten their arms or legs. I heard of one man who did this. This man was pointed out to me. He was deformed in this way.”. Menstrual blood is most dangerous to men; contact with it brings, at the least, rheumatic joints. Therefore, men fear it and avoid intercourse with menstruating women. Second, a woman's blood is in a special category because, if she is promiscuous, her augmented supply represents the contributions of many men of dubious soundness.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1941

**Focal Year:** 1840 – 1886

**Citation:** Opler, M. E. (1941). An Apache life-way: the economic, social, and religious institutions of the Chiricahua Indians. University of Chicago Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt08-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Eyak**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Fresh meat or fish were taboo to menstruants or pregnant women, for fear of offending the animals.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1900

**Focal Year:** 1792 – 1985

**Citation:** De Laguna, F. (1990). Eyak. In handbook of north american indians. northwest coast (Vol. 7, pp. 189–196). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/na07/documents/002

**Description:** Menstruating women had to stay in a special hut for five days and purified themselves with a cold bath before returning home. This was kept covered up, because menstruating women were not supposed to see, touch, or eat fresh meat. (That the hunter whispered to his wife might indicate either that menstruation was not a polite topic of conversation, or that the woman was not supposed even to hear conversation about fresh meat. The former is probably the correct explanation.) A menstruating woman could eat only dried meat. We do not know if this rule applied to fresh fish, although it certainly did to the first salmon. The same taboos applied to slave women. A menstruating woman had to eat out of her own dishes, though her food was cooked in the family pot. There is no specific mention of a taboo against the menstruating woman cooking for others, though we should imagine that such a taboo existed.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1938

**Focal Year:** 1883 – 1935

**Citation:** Birket-Smith, K., & De Laguna, F. (1938). The Eyak Indians of the Copper River Delta, Alaska. Levin & Munksgaard, E. Munksgaard. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/na07/documents/001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Fox**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** During subsequent menstrual periods she was similarly isolated but for shorter periods of time.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 2014

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Reid, G. F. (2014). Culture summary: Fox. Human Relations Area Files. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/np05/documents/000

**Description:** There are certain rules connected with the handling of bundles, especially the war bundles, which must be obeyed. They must always be treated with respect, and never opened except for good cause, nor must they ever be allowed to touch the ground. One of the strictest rules provided that no woman should ever touch them or any part of them, or approach them when open; and no woman in her periodic condition approach them even when closed. Should this be allowed, it was believed that not only would the powers of the bundle be spoiled, but the woman would be likely to bleed to death. Another of the late Benan'akw's bundles, bought from Albert Moore, is said to belong to the “Bloody Thigh” class like those purchased from Co'kwīwa, so called because they are exempted from the taboo forbidding a menstruating woman to touch or even approach a sacred bundle. This fetish may not be used for two different purposes—as courting and gambling—at the same time. It is necessary to use the poison-curing medicine and allow four days to elapse after it has been used one way before attempting another. Menstruating women must not approach or touch the image, for if they incautiously do this they are likely to bleed to death. That a woman shall not come into the lodge at certain seasons (during her monthly courses) nor eat anything cooked at the same fire in the lodge.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1914

**Focal Year:** 1700 – 1910

**Citation:** Harrington, M. R. (Mark R. (1914). Sacred bundles of the Sac and Fox Indians. In Anthropological publications: Vol. v. 4 (Issue 2, pp. 121-262 , plates XX-XL). University Museum Pennsylvania Museum. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np05-007

**Description:** Today, some few Mesquakie women observe their catamenial periods by enclosing themselves in a small hut for 4 days. If a neighbor woman not observing this law visits a home, the medicine is rendered useless, however, this is a rationalization for the importance of some medicine. It is for this reason that much Indian medicine is kept outside and often buried.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1961

**Focal Year:** 1954

**Citation:** Fugle, E. M. (1961). Mesquakie witchcraft lore. Plains Anthropologist, Vol. 6(11), 31–39. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np05-020

**Description:** Later menstrual periods required similar isolation (Marston 1912:170–172) but for briefer periods and entailing fewer restrictions.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1660 – 1955

**Citation:** Callender, C. (1978). Fox. In handbook of north american indians. northeast: Vol. v. 15 (pp. 636–647). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np05-095

**Description:** Her old garments were left in the menstrual hut and were worn during subsequent catamenial periods. The menstrual hut stands at the side or back of the house. It is a small dome-shaped structure covered with bark or tarpaulin, and while women no longer sleep there, they do all of their cooking on a separate fire during their catamenial periods. The canvas-covered menstrual hut is off to one side or in the back. Women rarely sleep in them now, but they eat there, and when they do not avail themselves of the hospital facilities, give birth to their babies therein.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1963

**Focal Year:** 1670 – 1937

**Citation:** Joffe, N. F. (1963). The Fox of Iowa. In acculturation in seven american indian tribes (pp. 259–332). Peter Smith. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np05-068

**Description:** During the 6 days she lives entirely alone, visited only now and then by women who bring her food and other necessaries. She cooks her own food, and the things that she cooks with, and the things from which she eats, are left in the lodge when she gets ready to leave. During the period the woman does not visit the main lodge. She wears old clothes which she rolls away in a bundle when her time is up and leaves in a tree by the lodge or in the lodge itself. These clothes she uses again on another occasion. During all this time the woman is considered unclean. She can be visited by women and by girls, but not by men or boys. It sometimes happens that a young woman is visited by a young man wishing to woo her. The woman must first bathe in a brook, or river, or pond, or lake before she returns to the main lodge. She must do this whether in summer or in winter. She must bathe even if she has to break open the ice to do it. Menstruating women are, of course, dangerous to others, but they have to take certain precautions to insure their own well-being. If a menstruating girl should touch her hair, it might all come off; if she should eat sweet things or sour things, her teeth would come out. At the time of her first menstruation her thighs were pecked and made to bleed, so that her menstruation should not be excessive. Menstruating women, along with widows and widowers unreleased from death ceremonies, will cause crops to fail if they run through a garden; will kill a tree if they touch it; will cause a horse to die if they bridle or hitch it.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1939

**Focal Year:** 1640 – 1904

**Citation:** Jones, W., & Fisher, M. W. (1939). Ethnography of the Fox Indians. In Bulletin (pp. ix, 156). U.S. Govt Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np05-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Today, some few Mesquakie women observe their catamenial periods by enclosing themselves in a small hut for 4 days. If a neighbor woman not observing this law visits a home, the medicine is rendered useless, however, this is a rationalization for the importance of some medicine. It is for this reason that much Indian medicine is kept outside and often buried.” And “The canvas-covered menstrual hut is off to one side or in the back. Women rarely sleep in them now, but they eat there, and when they do not avail themselves of the hospital facilities, give birth to their babies therein.”

**Gros Ventre**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1908

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1901

**Citation:** Kroeber, A. L. (Alfred L. (1908). Ethnology of the Gros Ventre. In Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History: Vol. I (pp. 141-281 , pl. VII–XIII). Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq13-001

**Description:** When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1957

**Focal Year:** 1835 – 1907

**Citation:** Cooper, J. M. (John M., & Flannery, R. (1957). The Gros Ventres of Montana: part 2, Religion and ritual. In Catholic University of America. Anthropological series (Issue 16, pp. x, 491). Catholic University of America Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq13-003

**Description:** Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1953

**Focal Year:** 1835 – 1885

**Citation:** Flannery, R. (1953). The Gros Ventres of Montana: part 1, Social life. In Catholic University of America. Anthropological series (Issue 15, pp. xiv, 221). Catholic University of America Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq13-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Haida**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** At each menstrual period a woman went into brief seclusion.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** 1774 – 1985

**Citation:** Blackman, M. B. (1990). Haida: Traditional culture. In handbook of north american indians. northwest (Vol. 7, pp. 240–260). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne09-005

**Description:** Contact with menstruating women is particularly polluting to men, also resulting in bad luck and poverty (7iisanyaa). Gambling sticks and medicine must be kept away from menstruating women. A hunter's blindness is caused through his contact with menstrual blood.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1988

**Focal Year:** 1900 – 1981

**Citation:** Boelscher, M. (1988). The Curtain within: Haida social and mythical discourse. University of British Columbia Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne09-011

**Description:** In traditional Haida society, the monthly seclusions, the concealment of the hunting and fishing gear, the active avoidance of male possessions by menstruating women, and the t﻿ǝgw﻿ǝná celebration were all public advertisements of femaleness. Menstruation was not cloaked in secrecy; rather, public knowledge of it was to everyone's advantage. The repression of these pollution taboos and the consequent repression of natural female power are reflective of the Haida adoption of Euro-Canadian values, the values of a Victorian and patriarchal society. Women's abstention from certain economic activities seems to have been rationalized and prohibited on the basis of pollution taboos associated with menstruation and reproduction. Menstruating women were believed to have supernatural visual powers capable of causing considerable damage. Were a menstruating woman to see a man's fishing or hunting equipment, all of his economic endeavors would be doomed. If a woman were to attempt to hunt or fish herself, her efforts would go similarly unrewarded. For this reason, the Haida say, women never fished or hunted. Nor did women collect octopuses, comestible shellfish but more commonly used as halibut bait. Were a woman to catch an octopus near its rocky den, all octopuses would permanently abandon the site. Menstrual blood was considered extremely polluting. It could detrimentally affect shamanic powers, hunting and fishing equipment, the abundance of certain food resources, and a man's economic powers or his luck at gambling. Hunting, fishing, and gambling paraphernalia were kept outside a house in which a menstruating woman dwelled, and during her periods a woman was forbidden to walk in front of a man or step over salmon spawning creeks. Taboos and prescriptions included the following: no talking or laughing; no use of the regular house entrance; no looking at the house fire or the sea; no eating of fresh fish, seaweed, or shellfish; no contact with the hunting/fishing/gambling equipment of male household members; fasting and abstaining from drinking water

**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1862 – 1977

**Citation:** Blackman, M. B., & Davidson, F. E. (1982). During my time: Florence Edenshaw Davidson, a Haida woman. University of Washington Press ; Douglas & McIntyre. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne09-009

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** yes – “In traditional Haida society, the monthly seclusions, the concealment of the hunting and fishing gear, the active avoidance of male possessions by menstruating women, and the t﻿ǝgw﻿ǝná celebration were all public advertisements of femaleness. Menstruation was not cloaked in secrecy; rather, public knowledge of it was to everyone's advantage. The repression of these pollution taboos and the consequent repression of natural female power are reflective of the Haida adoption of Euro-Canadian values, the values of a Victorian and patriarchal society.”

**Havasupai**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A woman lives at home during her periodical illnesses, the only interruption in her life being the taboos against meat for fear of barrenness, scratching with her fingers, and sexual intercourse. No prayer is said when shooting, nor will sickness or menstruating women in the house where it is kept affect the power of a bow.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1928

**Focal Year:** 1840 – 1921

**Citation:** Spier, L. (1928). Havasupai ethnography. In Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History: Vol. v. XXIX (pp. 81-392 p). The Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt14-001

**Description:** Menstruating women and their husbands also were advised against taking sweatbaths although this taboo could be lifted if a woman suffered severe menstrual pain.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1964

**Focal Year:** 1890 – 1962

**Citation:** Smithson, C. L., & Euler, R. C. (1964). Havasupai religion and mythology. In Anthropological papers (Issue 68, pp. viii, 112). University of Utah Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt14-014

**Description:** Several taboos were observed during the puberty ceremony and all subsequent menstrual periods; meat eating, for example, was forbidden.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1983

**Focal Year:** 1776 – 1983

**Citation:** Schwartz, D. W. (1983). Havasupai. In handbook of north american indians. southwest: Vol. v. 10 (pp. 13–24). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt14-015

**Description:** Although it was denied by several informants, others insisted that menstrual blood brings bad luck to hunters, and for that reason a menstruating woman formerly stayed alone a short distance from camp where men would not come in contact with her. If an unused house or brush shelter was conveniently located near her camp, a woman might occupy this for a few days, but no menstrual hut was purposefully erected. At present a menstruating woman should not enter a sweatlodge. Sexual intercourse is prohibited during menstruation. As one informant phrased it, if this taboo is broken “you will be pregnant right there.” Infraction would result in this penalty for either premarital or postmarital intercourse during menstruation, and for intercourse during the menstrual flow following childbirth. If powdered ocher is used, no deer fat or other grease is mixed with it, because a girl's face would remain oily like the fat. At present, cosmetic cream, lipstick, and cream rouge are taboo during menstruation for the same reason. However, it is suspected that lipstick, at least, may be used by girls who are being courted, especially at boarding school or at work outside the reservation.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1959

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1958

**Citation:** Smithson, C. L. (1959). The Havasupai woman. In Anthropological papers (Issue 38, pp. viii, 170). University of Utah Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt14-004

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** implied – “If powdered ocher is used, no deer fat or other grease is mixed with it, because a girl's face would remain oily like the fat. At present, cosmetic cream, lipstick, and cream rouge are taboo during menstruation for the same reason. However, it is suspected that lipstick, at least, may be used by girls who are being courted, especially at boarding school or at work outside the reservation.”.

**Hidatsa**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** It was believed that menstrual blood would drive the buffaloes away. Sexual relations were avoided during menstrual periods and there was segregation during that time.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1965

**Focal Year:** 1836 – 1870

**Citation:** Bowers, A. W. (1965). Hidatsa social and ceremonial organization. In Bulletin (pp. xii, 528). U.S. Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq14-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Hopi**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** As in most areas of Hopi life, there is no taboo against menstruating women.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1951

**Focal Year:** 1899 – 1940

**Citation:** Aberle, D. F. (1951). The psychosocial analysis of a Hopi life-history. In Comparative psychology monographs (Issue 1, pp. 6, 133). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt09-011

**Description:** The menstruating woman is not debarred from work.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1937

**Focal Year:** 1931 – 1934

**Citation:** Beaglehole, E., & Beaglehole, P. (1937). Notes on Hopi economic life. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 15, pp. 2, 88). Pub. for the Section of Anthropology, Department of the Social Sciences, Yale University, by the Yale University Press ; H. Milford, Oxford University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt09-029

**Description:** The Hopi have an amazing indifference to menstrual blood, which so many primitive groups consider to be terribly dangerous.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1972

**Focal Year:** early 1930s

**Citation:** Titiev, M. (1972). The Hopi Indians of Old Oraibi: change and continuity. University of Michigan Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt09-002

**Description:** There is no taboo on sexual relations during menstruation; in fact, it is believed that sexual intercourse during or around the time of menstruation increases chances of conception, probably because the fetus is regarded as being formed through coalescence of mother's blood and father's semen

**Date of Ethnography:** 1973

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Schlegel, A. (1973). The adolescent socialization of the Hopi girl. American Anthropologist, Vol. 12(4), 449–462. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt09-064

**Description:** Informants insisted that there is nothing unclean or dangerous about a menstruating woman. It is obvious that the menstrual blood is not dangerous in the way that the parturient mother's blood is dangerous.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1935

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Beaglehole, E., & Beaglehole, P. (1935). Hopi of the second mesa. In Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association (Issue 44, p. 65). American Anthropological Association. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt09-056

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Huron**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** When a girl reached puberty, she was not required to leave the house while she was menstruating, as were the women in neighboring Algonkian tribes. Henceforth, however, she cooked the food she ate separately during these periods. Women made small pots for this purpose.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1969

**Focal Year:** 1610 – 1650

**Citation:** Trigger, B. G. (1969). The Huron farmers of the north. In Case studies in cultural anthropology (pp. xii, 130). Holt, Rinehart and Winston. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng05-004

**Description:** Huron women did not leave the house or village during their menstrual periods as did women of the “wandering peoples,” but they did cook their food separately in little pots during their periods and did not allow others to eat their meats and soups. Menstrual taboos still include similar prohibitions: taboos against cooking for a man, drinking from the same glass, or biting the same bread as a man, as well as others, although they are not always observed

**Date of Ethnography:** 1964

**Focal Year:** 1615 – 1649

**Citation:** Tooker, E. (1964). An ethnography of the Huron Indians, 1615-1649. In Bulletin (pp. iv, 183). U.S. Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng05-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Ingalik**

**Aka Deg Xit’an**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** At all subsequent recurrence of the menses women are not permitted to eat fresh food of any kind and are unclean for a few days.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1880

**Citation:** Nelson, E. W., & VanStone, J. W. (1978). E. W. Nelson’s Notes on the Indians of the Yukon and Innoko Rivers, Alaska. In Fieldiana : Anthropology ; Publication (Field Museum of Natural History): Vol. v. 70; 1281 (pp. xi, 80). Field Museum of Natural History. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na08-006

**Description:** Correlated closely with the above attitude is the sense of evil attributed to menstruation. Although this is at its highest point when the individual first experiences menstruation, nevertheless, it extends widely by association. To spit where people walk is bad because a menstruating woman might pass over the sputum. Along with menstrual blood, feces and ashes fall into the category of the “dirty,” and the “dirty” is bad.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1959

**Focal Year:** 1934 – 1956

**Citation:** Osgood, C. (1959). Ingalik mental culture. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 56, p. 195). Dept. of Anthropology, Yale University. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na08-003

**Description:** However, any menstruating woman was believed to be dangerous to men. If she looked them in the eye, they were in danger of losing their subsistence skills.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1979

**Focal Years:** 1790 – 1935

**Citation:** VanStone, J. W. (1979). Ingalik contact ecology: an ethnohistory of the lower-middle Yukon, 1790-1935. In Fieldiana : Anthropology ; Publication (Field Museum of Natural History): Vol. v. 71; 1295 (pp. xii, 273). Field Museum of Natural History. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na08-007

**Description:** Certain foods are taboo to a menstruating woman. She cannot eat mink, otter, lynx, marten, or bear. These are not important foods, but if they are killed by men, as is usual, she cannot even touch them. Most significant in this group is the bear, and no woman of menstrual age should eat the meat. It is not even cooked in the houses for fear that the bear's blood would be spilled while carrying it where a woman might step. If there is bear meat to be prepared, this is done at the edge of the village either by a man or some old woman of postmenstrual age. Also in the matter of food, the menstruating woman must not pick berries and eat them, or her head will shake uncontrollably when she is old. Similarly she cannot even pick flowers to serve as the patterns for fancy work while she is in the same condition; should she do so, her hands would eventually grow numb. During the recurrent periods of menstruation, the women eat no fresh food. Painting the cheekbones red and eyes black is normal procedure, but there is no use of special menstrual equipment such as head bands or a drinking tube. A married woman does not move away from her husband when sleeping together on the bench of the house. She relinquishes her share of the common blanket, however, and should there be only one, she sleeps in her parka. If a second blanket is available, she shares it with her daughter at this time. Sexual intercourse is taboo during the monthly periods. When a period has ended, the woman takes a bath inside the house, applying water all over her body from a birch bark basket by means of a thin caribou skin wash rag. She also washes her hair using some urine as soap. These repeated baths taken by women of child-bearing age are said to make them smell differently from men, but almost any smell is acceptable to the Ingalik. The woman also hangs her blanket outside for a day or two following the menstrual period. When a period has ended, the woman takes a bath inside the house, applying water all over her body from a birch bark basket by means of a thin caribou skin wash rag. She also washes her hair using some urine as soap. These repeated baths taken by women of child-bearing age are said to make them smell differently from men, but almost any smell is acceptable to the Ingalik. The woman also hangs her blanket outside for a day or two following the menstrual period. After a menstrual period a woman washes her hair as well as her whole body by simply rubbing herself with her hands wet with urine and afterward wiping herself dry. A woman takes her bath in her own house during the winter, but when she is living in another residence, as during the summer fishing season, she will build a small temporary shelter for the purpose.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1958

**Focal Years:** 1934 – 1937

**Citation:** Osgood, C. (1958). Ingalik social culture. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 53, p. 289). Published for the Dept. of Anthropology, Yale University, by The Yale University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na08-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Innu**

**Aka Montagnais**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** when this occurs are confined for its duration,—as are all women during the menstrual period,—to their tents (not separated entirely as in former times) where they are forbidden to touch any cooking utensil or to cook for three or four days. When there is no other resident, non-menstruating female, the man of the tent does the cooking. During the menses sexual intercourse between spouses is not allowed. Women are considered unclean at this time, but there does not appear to be any purification ceremony.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1961

**Focal Year:** 1942 – 1953

**Citation:** McGee, J. T. (1961). Cultural stability and change among the Montagnais Indians of the Lake Melville region of Labrador. In Anthropological series (pp. 8, 159 , 7 plates). Catholic University of America Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nh06-026

**Description:** Girls (and women?) did not live in the cabin with the others when they were menstruating, the men fearing even to meet them. One Indian attributed his illness to the glance of a menstruating girl.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1952

**Focal Year:** 1600 – 1948

**Citation:** Lane, K. S. (1952). The Montagnais Indians, 1600-1640. The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, No. 7, 1–62. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nh06-018

**Description:** During all following menstruation periods she remains in her parents' tent, using her own cup and plate, just as usual.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1947

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1947

**Citation:** Lips, J. (1947). Naskapi law: law and order in a hunting society. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., Vol. 37, 379–492. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nh06-008

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “as are all women during the menstrual period,—to their tents (not separated entirely as in former times) where they are forbidden to touch any cooking utensil or to cook for three or four days.”

**Iroquois**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Hereafter, whenever she menstruated, she would have to live apart in a hut, avoiding people, and being careful not to step on a path, or to cook and serve anyone's food, or (especially) to touch medicines, which would immediately lose their potency if she handled them.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1972

**Focal Year:** 1600 – 1850

**Citation:** Wallace, A. F. C., & Steen, S. K. (1969). The death and rebirth of the Seneca. Vintage Books, a division of Random House. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm09-041

**Description:** Instructions are given to catamenial women: they are not to drink from the common ladle when the pail of juice is passed around, but to pour from this ladle to one of their own, lest they or the children present incur “sickness.”

**Date of Ethnography:** 1974

**Focal Year:** Variable

**Citation:** Foster, M. K. (1974). From the earth to beyond the sky: an ethnographic approach to four Longhouse Iroquois speech events. In Mercury series (Issue 20, pp. xi, 448). National Museums of Canada, National Museum of Man. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm09-064

**Description:** This was to the effect that a woman at the menstrual period should abstain from any part in planting operations. A woman at the monthly period should be prohibited from pounding corn, also from touching foods or medicine. Illness of various kinds is ascribed to neglect of this precaution. If a woman at this period, according to David Key (On.), prepares food for twins, the latter will no longer be able to foretell future events or perform the other remarkable things attributed to them. As in the case of other foods, a woman at the menstrual period is not allowed to touch meat intended for preservation or for general household purposes, otherwise it would spoil. A poisonous quality was also thought to be thus imparted to food.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1916

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Waugh, F. W. (1916). Iroquois foods and food preparation. In Memoir (Issue 12, pp. v, 235 , plates). Government Printing Bureau. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm09-025

**Description:** The general menstrual taboos arise out of the belief that women during the first three days of menstruation are “poisonous” and “dangerous” in contact with men, hunters, babies, pregnant women, medicines, and ritual items. Whereas they need not be secluded, menstruating women ought to keep to themselves and not come into intimate contact with a person or an item which might be harmed, nor should they plant corn. In particular, a menstruating woman should not prepare, touch, or look at medicine, for not only will the “power” of the medicine be spoiled or “killed” instantaneously, but harm might come to the patient who takes the medicine and to the woman herself. “Strong” medicines, such as Little Water, are said to act on women who are not very “strong” (physically) and induce menstruation a week early. Therefore, a woman who yet has a week before menstruation is expected but who is considered “sickly” ought not “be around” when the medicine is being used. In fact, those who administer Little Water usually say that preferably all women of menstrual age should leave before the medicine is used. A menstruating woman should not be present at a society meeting which purports to cure, for though there may not be an herbal or other tangible medicine present, the entire procedure “is medicine,” and her presence would “spoil” the “power” inherent in the performance. For example, False Face performers are supposed to burn their hands on the hot coals if a catamenial woman is present. Contamination by a menstruating woman has a vitiating effect on any ceremony, whether in the home or in the Longhouse, and “the poison in the woman spoils the power” of ritual items and ritual foods. The Midwinter Ceremony is scheduled five days past the new moon in order to allow women to complete menstruation and participate in the Longhouse cures. A menstruating woman should not drink from the same glass or bite on the same bread as a man, nor should she kiss, sleep with, breathe upon, touch, or cook for one. At one time a five-day period of isolation was prescribed, but this has now been shortened to three days, and in actuality few women obey even this curtailed prohibition. There is some inconsistency between the Cayuga belief that women are taboo while menstruating and the belief that conception occurs at menstruation, both taking place at the new moon. It is believed that if a child is kissed by a menstruating (or pregnant) woman or drinks from the same cup, it will “get cross and cry.” Men and babies, male children in particular, who drink from the same cup as a menstruating woman are in danger of developing bloody diarrhea and bleeding piles, a belief based on an obvious analogy. Also food prepared by a catamenial woman is supposed to produce cramps in the more sensitive men. Contact of a catamenial woman with a pregnant one is supposed to induce menstruation in the expectant mother and thereby to cause abortion. It is for these reasons that menstruating women are admonished to provide their own drinking vessels when they do attend the Longhouse. Not all the taboos mentioned above are observed by all the Longhouse community, and, indeed, many function in the ideal rather than the real culture. Women frequently ignore the restrictions, if only out of embarrassment of admitting that they are menstruating. Characteristically, children and menstruating women, as well as high-strung women who have not reached the menopause, are considered too weak to attend the medicine-society meetings. Menstruating women are excluded also because of the danger of spoiling the medicine.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1961

**Focal Year:** 1953 – 1960

**Citation:** Shimony, A. (1961). Conservatism among the Iroquois at the Six Nations Reserve. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 65, p. 302). Department of Anthropology, Yale University. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nm09-065

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - At one time a five-day period of isolation was prescribed, but this has now been shortened to three days, and in actuality few women obey even this curtailed prohibition.

**Kaska**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Each month a menstruating woman re-entered sequestration, remaining in the menstrual camp for the duration of the period. At this time she avoided raw (fresh?) meat, moose head, and moose marrow but could drink any amount of water. Also she did not now cook for her husband or children. During seclusion the woman quit wearing her usual long dress and donned a knee-length garment specifically designed for such a time. She also padded her breech cloth with moss to absorb the blood. In the event that in following a traveling party she came across the scene of a moose kill, blue and red paint applied across her cheeks in horizontal lines was supposed to prevent her from seeing the animal's blood. Always the menstruant carefully avoided stepping across snowshoes, bows, or arrows. If her camp traveled by water she followed in her own canoe. A man avoided the camp where his wife stayed, fearing that close contact with the menstrual blood would cause his legs to become sore and thus render him incapable of hunting or performing other work. A menstruating wife who struck her husband's trail while he was on a war party imperiled him seriously. Hence such a woman did not move around when her husband was away fighting. Sexual intercourse with a menstruant caused a man to pass blood in his urine so that he would sicken and die. Despite this belief boys seized on the easy accessibility of girls in seclusion who, in turn, did not always resist their advances. When they became ill the youths might confess such an offense. Ideally it was dangerous to have sex relations with a menstruating woman, nevertheless boys eluding adult watchfulness, sometimes visited the camp of a sequestrated girl and engaged her in coitus. Because menstruation threatened a man's dream power thereby imperiling his success in hunting, women remained isolated during the period of the flow. Widow Matoit, at Fort Nelson, spoke of willow-bark enclosures surrounding the menstruant that prevented her from seeing out of the camp. A woman also stuffed feathers in her ears in order not to hear the hunters returning to camp. A Lower Post informant described all fresh meat and fish as being taboo to the menstruant. The avoidance referred to the dislike which the animals felt for the menstrual blood.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1954

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1945

**Citation:** Honigmann, J. J. (1954). The Kaska Indians: an ethnographic reconstruction. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 51, p. 162). Yale University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd12-006

**Description:** Two or three women may occupy the same menstruation lodge, if convenient. When the woman returns home, medicine bags, guns, etc., and children are taken out of the house and reentered after the woman has entered. Otherwise the people would have bad luck. A woman at this time must not mingle with men nor touch any of their belongings, especially those things connected with hunting. She must not touch any game and must not eat fresh meat of any kind of large game. If she did so the game would become smart or wise and the hunters would be unable to get them. She must not eat any kind of meat from any part of a bear. Some informants claim the restrictions on menstruating women as far as food was concerned were just the same as those enjoined on pubescent girls. They must not eat bear meat, nor fresh meat of caribou, moose, sheep, beaver, marmot etc., nor the heads of animals. They could eat feet of caribou and moose but not of bear. Women did not eat the intestines of bears. If they did, their children would be sickly and ugly. After the child-bearing period was over they might eat intestines and feet of bear and also heads of any kind of game, etc. Some claim women menstruating did not eat even the feet of caribou and moose if fresh. In fact they were supposed to eat no fresh meat of any kind nor fresh fish of any kind. They ate only well-dried meat and dried fish. This was because the spirit, life, or soul of the animal was still in the meat when fresh and the fresher the meat the more of the spirit it contained. As in most tribes women were isolated during each recurring period of menstruation. At these times a woman had to live apart from the people in a shelter or small lodge erected nearby for the purpose. In shape and materials these lodges were like other lodges of the tribe. This custom is now going rapidly out of vogue. If the woman retires to a corner of the common lodge it is generally considered sufficient nowadays.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1956

**Focal Year:** 1834 – 1915

**Citation:** Teit, J. A., & Helm, J. (1956). Field notes on the Tahltan and Kaska Indians: 1912-15. Anthropologica, No. 3, 39–171. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd12-005

**Description:** Apart from the fact that some men refrain from sexual intercourse during catamenia, there are paractically no disabilities restricting girls' behavior at this time. Since women are reluctant to speak of menstruation, even to other women, the subject was not a suitable one for obtaining detailed information. A

**Date of Ethnography:** 1949

**Focal Year:** 1940 – 1945

**Citation:** Honigmann, J. J., & Bennett, W. C. (1949). Culture and ethos of Kaska society. In Yale University publications in anthropology (Issue 40, pp. 366, 12 plates). Yale University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nd12-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “This custom is now going rapidly out of vogue. If the woman retires to a corner of the common lodge it is generally considered sufficient nowadays.”

**Klamath**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** When a woman has her menstrual period, she does not come to eat because of menstruation. (2) [She] does not eat with us. (3) [She] does not bathe, does not get wet. (4) [She] will not get chilled. (5) [She] does not feel well, and does not put her hand in water.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1963

**Focal Year:** 1955 – 1957

**Citation:** Barker, M. A.-R. (1963). Klamath texts. In University of California publications in linguistics (Vol. 30, pp. viii, 197 , plates). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr10-009

**Description:** Menstruant women stay at home during their illness (ata sto[unknown]pwi) unless they are members of a shaman’s household. Shamans must avoid them; seemingly other men are indifferent. Women of a shaman’s household occupy a little dome-shaped lodge near-by for five days. Menstruants eat only lily seed, camas, etc.; they permit themselves dried fish, but meat and fresh fish are taboo. A series of restrictions ensued; she was sccluded or her movements restricted during the period. For her own well-being she must fast or at least refrain from fresh meat or fish, but the latter proscription was also rationalized as avoiding damage to the food supply, especially fishing. She must not touch hands to face or hair, using instead a scratching stick, must not wash nor arrange her hair, and must dispose of her garments before resuming her normal life.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1930

**Focal Year:** 1860 – 1900

**Citation:** Spier, L. (1930). Klamath ethnography. In Publications in American archaeology and ethnology (Vol. 30, pp. x, 338). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr10-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Mi’kmaq**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** The first is this, that the women and girls, when they suffer the inconveniences usual to their sex, are accounted unclean. At that time they are not permitted to eat with the others, but they must 361 have their separate kettle, and live by themselves.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1910

**Focal Year:** 1675 – 1690

**Citation:** Le Clercq, ca., Chrestien, & Ganong, W. F. (1910). New relation of Gaspesia: with the customs and religion of the Gaspesian Indians. In The publications of the Champlain Society (Vol. 5, pp. xvi, 452). The Champlain Society. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nj05-002

**Description:** Elaborate menstrual taboos were formerly observed, that is, monthly seclusion and prohibition of women's stepping over the legs or weapons of hunters. Menstruants were also expected to observe with special care the rules for showing respect for animals—for example, bones and even sticks used in cooking meat were treated with care and not simply thrown away. Beaver bones were never given to dogs or thrown into the river. The bear was treated with special respect.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1500 – 1970

**Citation:** Bock, P. K. (1978). Micmac. In handbook of north american indians. northeast: Vol. v. 15 (pp. 109–122). Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nj05-009

**Description:** Menstruction required seclusion in a separate wigwam for four days. A menstruant might not eat with others, and cooked her food in a separate vessel. Contact with a man or with any of his possessions would bring disability to him and his weapons. Even a beaver would be insulted if it knew that a man had allowed its flesh to be eaten by “unclean daughters.” Infection was inherent in menstrual blood. A hundred years later, a man still feared contact with a menstruant, for, he believed, this would deprive him of the use of his legs. Should this happen, he would not attempt to take a step, convinced that he was helpless, and would remain in bed “until the imaginary cause of his malady, no less imaginary, had passed away.” If the woman touched a musket, it would not fire. Married women, to prevent sexual contact, at once told their husbands of their condition.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year:** 1500 – 1953

**Citation:** Wallis, W. D. (Wilson D., & Wallis, R. S. (1955). The Micmac Indians of eastern Canada. University of Minnesota Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nj05-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - Elaborate menstrual taboos were formerly observed, that is, monthly seclusion and prohibition of women's stepping over the legs or weapons of hunters. Menstruants were also expected to observe with special care the rules for showing respect for animals—for example, bones and even sticks used in cooking meat were treated with care and not simply thrown away. Beaver bones were never given to dogs or thrown into the river. The bear was treated with special respect.

**Maricopa**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Throughout their lives, women left their dwellings for these shelters during their monthly illnesses. Meat and salt were again tabu at this time, and the scratching stick, kept in the hut, must be used. They bathed each morning, but did not run to the east. There they worked at their basketry and the like; other women and girls, menstruants and otherwise, joining them in their activities and eating with them there.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1933

**Focal Year:** 1774 – 1932

**Citation:** Spier, L. (1933). Yuman tribes of the Gila River. In The University of Chicago publications in anthropology ; Ethnological series (pp. xviii, 433 , 15 plates). University of Chicago Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt43-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Mescalero Apache**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Menstruating women were not permitted to attend the meeting, and were, in fact, expected to remove themselves from hearing distance of the drum.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1936

**Focal Year:** 1931 – 1933

**Citation:** Opler, M. E. (1936). The influence of aboriginal pattern and White contact on a recently introduced ceremony, the Mescalero peyote rite. The Journal of American Folk-Lore, Vol. 49, 143–166. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt25-027

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Mormons**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** It was a solemn belief that washing the hair during menstruation would surely cause death  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1959

**Focal Year:** 1958

**Citation:** Hendricks, K., Hansen, A., Dunn, D., Thompson, G., Reeves, J., Wright, I. A., Tallsalt, B., & Williams, M. E. (1959). Utah State University folklore collection. Western Folklore, Vol. 18, 107–120. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt24-068

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Navajo**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A menstruating woman should stay at home, not attend ceremonials or see sandpaintings, avoid livestock and children, stay away from the fields (lest they dry up), not fetch water, not use the sudatory, nor urinate where there would be danger of contact (a special hole may be dug for a urinal—Hill). Four days after the cessation of flow a bath should be taken, in plain water or in a sage infusion, or she may take a sweat bath. Her clothes should also be washed. Contact with menstrual blood causes crippling, ‘hump back’—arthritis deformans (if swallowed), or a sprain (if stepped on). Intercourse with a menstruating woman will cause impotance [sic] and later paralysis (Hill). Menstrual blood may be surreptitiously placed in food to injure ‘someone you hate’ (DS). Children who ‘won't stay home and work, but visit other families and eat there’, are disciplined by threats that menstrual blood will be put in their food by those they eat with.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1943

**Focal Year:** 1940 – 1942

**Citation:** Wyman, L. C., & Bailey, F. L. (1943). Navaho girl’s puberty rite. In New Mexico anthropologist: Vol. Vol. 6/7 (pp. 3–12). Dept. of Anthropology, University of New Mexico. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-120

**Description:** No menstruating woman was allowed in the field. It was believed that her presence would prevent the seed from growing, cause the plants to dry up, and the soil to turn red. In recent time this particular tabu has not been too rigidly observed. A menstruating woman was never allowed to enter the ceremonial hogan, [WPM: during the rain ceremonial] else all the lands would become bare, red and dry. Even a man whose wife was menstruating was not allowed to enter.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1938

**Focal Year:** 1849 – 1935

**Citation:** Hill, W. W. (Willard W. (1938). The agricultural and hunting methods of the Navaho Indians. Published for the Department of Anthropology,Yale University, by the Yale University Press ; H. Milford, Oxford University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-008

**Description:** Menstrual blood and the blood of childbirth were considered dangerous. There was no menstrual hut or isolation of menstruating women. Women were said to wear cloths while menstruating. As already mentioned, menstrual discharges were regarded as being very dangerous, and the blood of childbirth was classed in the same category.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1951

**Focal Year:** 1946

**Citation:** Roberts, J. M. (John M. (1951). Three Navaho households: a comparative study in small group culture. In Reports of the Ramah project ; Papers: Vol. v. 40 (Issue 3, pp. xiii, 87 , plates). Published by the Museum. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-217

**Description:** A menstruating woman was not allowed in the hogan of the Rain Ceremony or in the place where prayersticks for the Night Chant were being made.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Reichard, G. A. (1950). Navaho religion: a study of symbolism. Bollinger Foundation. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-063

**Description:** Several informants have stated that a menstruating woman must on no account step over a man or the man will be injured, even to the extent of becoming pregnant.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1942

**Focal Year:** 1937 – 1942

**Citation:** Bailey, F. L. (1942). Navaho motor habits. In American anthropologist, n.s.: Vol. Vol. 44 (pp. 210–234). American Anthropological Association, etc. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-033

**Description:** The belief in the dangerous character of the menstrual discharge necessitated careful disposal of the pads, although methods varied. Burning, burying, throwing away, and hiding were all mentioned. The touch of a menstruous woman is said to cause stiffness and the hunchback. Menstruating women were prohibited the use of the sweathouse; “that would make it unfit for use”. If a menstruating woman used the sweathouse the leaves on nearby trees would wither and die. Those with menstruation with possible loss of efficacy of the item or person with which the menstruant came in contact. Restrictions were enforced only so long as the condition existed.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1971

**Focal Year:** 1846 – 1969

**Citation:** Kluckhohn, C., Hill, W. W. (Willard W., & Kluckhohn, L. W. (1971). Navaho material culture. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-192

**Description:** Menstruating women may not see sandpaintings, enter a ceremonial hogan, be a patient, attend or lead a Sing, or join in the dancing which occurs at certain ceremonies. A menstruating woman should not go to the fields, carry water, or use the sweat house. During one's menstrual period the visiting of sick people or touching of children is thought to weaken them. Any contact with livestock — such as riding horses, herding sheep or milking goats — is also restricted. A menstruating woman should not urinate in areas with which others might come in contact. Secondly, menstrual blood itself, while symbolizing fertility, is also considered dangerous.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1978

**Citation:** Wright, A. L. (1982). An ethnography of the Navajo reproductive cycle. American Indian Quarterly, Vol. 6(nos. 1 & 2), 52–70. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-286

**Description:** She is not allowed to laugh, either, because it will make her face wrinkled and stay that way. They pull her hair back hard, so it will grow long. The menstruation is to make the baby. Menstruating women can come and go from the house freely, but have one special sheep pelt seat, then wash it and wash their clothes.’ He also makes a note regarding the ceremonial participation of menstruous women: Women must never conduct a chant while menstruating. And they are not supposed to conduct sings at all until they are past the menopause. But they sometimes learn it and do it anyway. If the woman gets the bleed during a sing, give the patient some sour red ochre in a half cup of water and let drink up and stop the sing. Start it all over after period is over. If sour red ochre is not administered, patient will get worse quickly. Singers take this and administer to patient at full moon and first quarter. Won't do any harm then. Because this is when (menstruation) come. Two informants said that a woman must not pass through a cornfield if she is menstruating for it will dry up the corn and kill it. They also said that if a man steps over a menstruous woman it will cause the man to become pregnant and insisted ‘that's right. It's true. You must be very careful this way!’ This taboo on stepping over a person's body is one which is generally observed, and it is possible that the fear is intensified and the results greater when a menstruant is involved.”. There is a dichotomy expressed in the matter of having intercourse with a menstruous woman. On the one hand there is the fear of contact with blood and the resultant crippling. On the other, there is the belief that such intercourse insures immediate pregnancy. Methods of disposal were varied. Burning, burying, throwing away, and hiding were mentioned. One woman added that they must be put where no animal could step into them. This again is a reference to the dangerous character of the menstrual discharge. Menstrual blood is definitely considered dangerous and there is considerable anxiety and fear in connection with it. This is reinforced by the emphasis on the careful disposal of menstrual pads.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** 1938 – 1942

**Citation:** Bailey, F. L. (1950). Some sex beliefs and practices in a Navaho community: with comparative material from other Navaho areas. In Reports of the Ramah project, report: Vol. v. 40 (Issue 2, pp. xii, 108). The Museum. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt13-054

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Northern Paiute**

**Aka Wadadokado**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** The menstrual hut has fallen into disuse and I was told that the food taboos are no longer observed. There are vestiges however of the latter. A menstruating woman retired to a special lodge (huni'-nobi; huni', menstrual blood) where she remained in seclusion for five days. 206 206 Three or four days according to MA. If a person happened to inquire for a woman during her absence, he was told, “Hu'˙na patsa'”; she killed a badger. This was the conventional way of indicating that the woman was in retirement. The menstrual lodge was built to the north of the main house, but no reason for the orientation was given except that “it comes from the north.” Several menstruating women might occupy a hut jointly.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1934

**Focal Year:** 1870 – 1930

**Citation:** Kelly, I. T. (1934). Ethnography of the Surprise Valley Paiute. In University of California publications. American archaeology and ethnology: Vol. v. 31 (Issue 3, pp. 67-210 , plates 17-32). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr13-001

**Description:** For example, menstruating women could not handle nets or harpoons or approach the platforms because they would defile the equipment and make it unlucky.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1981

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Fowler, C. S., & Bath, J. E. (1981). Pyramid Lake Northern Paiute fishing: the ethnographic record. Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, Vol. 3(2), 176–186. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr13-018

**Description:** If a woman ate game during her period her act was detected when the hunter's gun flashed red flames and was not accurate. The hunter, realizing that his poor shooting was due to the fact that some young woman had eaten meat killed with his gun during her monthly period, would take steps to make his gun shoot straight and, additionally, put a curse on the guilty woman. The hunter might not know just who the woman was, but in purifying his gun he automatically put a curse on her and she would become ill within a year and might die.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1960

**Focal Year:** 1843 – 1954

**Citation:** Riddell, F. A. (1960). Honey Lake Paiute ethnography. [Anthropological Papers (Nevada State Museum)], vol xxxix(1), vi, 92 , 5 plates. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr13-015

Description: Furthermore, the breaking of the taboo on eating meat during menstruation is responsible for some sickness. When the month is over the girl takes a bath, puts on a new dress, paints her face with red paint and returns home. During subsequent menstrual periods she is secluded for five days and observes the same taboos. use a stick to scratch themselves, brush their hair every day with a porcupine brush, and bathe, preferably in running water. They are supposed to get up early, pile wood and move around fast, make their own fires and cook for themselves. They are advised to drink warm water, eat lightly lest they become heavy eaters, and abstain from meat lest they bring bad luck to the man who killed the game, and lest they bleed a lot like animals. They may never take sweat baths or attend doctorings.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** 1860 – 1938

**Citation:** Whiting, B. B. (1950). Paiute sorcery. In Viking Fund Publications in anthropology (Issue 15, p. 110). The Viking Fund Inc. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr13-007

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - The menstrual hut has fallen into disuse and I was told that the food taboos are no longer observed. There are vestiges however of the latter.

**Nuu-chah-nulth**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** She should not: 1. Close a door behind her. To do so would be to invite a hard labor. 2. Chew gum. This “messes up your insides.” 3. Eat smoked fish. Consequences unknown. 4. Eat ice-cream. This makes the baby small. 5. Look at ugly things such as octopus, whalebirds ( ashats ). These deform the baby in their own image. 6. Run around too much. The baby will also be wild and run around a lot, being too friendly, “not a right person.” All these regulations were learned by the women at their first menstruation and should be observed every subsequent month, and when pregnant.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1980

**Focal Year:** 0 – 1974

**Citation:** Kenyon, S. M. (1980). The Kyuquot way: a study of a West Coast (Nootkan) community. In Mercury series Paper - Canadian Ethnology Service ; Diamond Jenness memorial volume (Issue 61, pp. xviii, 180). National Museums of Canada. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne11-022

**Description:** During the 4 days following the onset of her menses, a woman was not permitted to eat fresh fish of any kind, nor wild rose haws, nor could she approach sick persons even of her own family. Otherwise, her activities were restricted but little except during the dog salmon or herring runs. She could work at anything she wished, cook for her family, and mix with the people of her household. Her husband could hunt and fish just as at any other time; her condition did not affect his luck. During the time of the dog salmon run (and some informants included the time of the herring run as well), the menses were referred to as sitsūł (instead of the ordinary term, nūmak˙amił). At this time, a woman had to make a little cubicle of mats or boards in the house, in which she was secluded for 4 days (or 10, if her menses occurred at the beginning of the run). She could not go out by the front door (which faced the river), and had to cover her head with a blanket or robe when she went out by an improvised “back door.” She had to use a scratching stick, and had a separate set of cooking and eating vessels (for other people were eating the fresh salmon). She ate dried cod or halibut; women always kept a small store of these dried foods for these times.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1951

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1937

**Citation:** Drucker, P. (1951). The Northern and central Nootkan tribes. In Bulletin (pp. ix, 480 , 5 plates). For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne11-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos**: None referenced or implied

**Nuxalk**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Thus the most powerful of all charms are pads that have been used by women during their menses. Although the menstrual blood which appears at the first discharge is considered more baneful than that emitted on later occasions, it is always regarded as uncanny or unclean. It is the most human of all substances, and, therefore, a potent protection against supernatural beings. It is valuable as a defence against evil monsters, but it is equally deadly to shamans and other human beings with supernatural powers. In the distant past, Raven taught mankind that to sleep with a menstruating woman would so blind a man that he would be unsuccessful in hunting. The belief is that animals, knowing everything that takes place, avoid one who is so unclean. One old man mentioned that he had failed to obey this injunction and considered his loss of virility as a punishment, overlooking the fact that he was over seventy years of age.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1948

**Focal Year:** 1840s – 1924

**Citation:** McIlwraith, T. F. (Thomas F. (1948). The Bella Coola Indians: volume one. University of Toronto Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ne06-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “In the distant past, Raven taught mankind that to sleep with a menstruating woman would so blind a man that he would be unsuccessful in hunting.”

**North American Hasidic Jews**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** On the first day of her period each month, Rachel, like all Lubavitcher women, is rendered “Niddah,” or impure. During this time and for an additional seven “clean” days (a minimum total of twelve days is required), she is forbidden to have sexual relations with her husband. At the end of this time, she must go to the mikvah for her ritual cleansing, which removes her “impure” state.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** variable

**Citation:** Srinivasan, G. (1990). Strategies for strength: women and personal empowerment in Lubavitcher Hasidim. In encounters with american ethnic cultures (pp. 171–221). University of Alabama Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-018

**Description:** The controversial period of separation during the woman's menstrual period and afterwards until her immersion in the ritual mikveh is likewise explained by Hasidim as a pleasant marital aid which challenges the husband to view his wife as more than an accessible sexual plaything.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1995

**Focal Year:** variable

**Citation:** Morris, B. (1995). Agents or victims of religious ideology: approaches to locating Hasidic women in feminist studies. In new world hasidim : ethnographic studies of hasidic jews in america (pp. 161–180). State University of New York Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-024

**Description:** The Lubavitchers emphasize that the mikvah ritual bath [described by Baldinger in the preceding essay] is not some form of “primitive menstrual taboo” [from a Lubavitcher pamphlet, “The Purifying Waters”]: it does not deal with “clean” and “dirty” but with purely spiritual concepts of “purity” and “impurity.” Blood, it is said, is a “touch of death,” which confers spiritual impurity on a menstruating woman.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1990s

**Focal Year:** Mid 1980s

**Citation:** Baldinger, P. (1990). Equality does not mean sameness: the role of women within the Lubavitcher marriage. In encounters with american ethnic cultures (pp. 151–178). University of Alabama Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-017

**Description:** You know, I suppose, that according to Jewish law women may not have sexual relations or any physical contact whatever with their husbands while they menstruate and for a week afterward.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1985

**Focal Year:** variable

**Citation:** Harris, L. (1985). Holy days: the world of a Hasidic family. Summit Books. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-037

**Description:** The theory underlying sexual separation of adults stems from the code of Jewish law which defines a menstruating woman as ritually unclean (polluted) and forbids a male from coming into contact with her until she has been ritually purified. Since a woman's pollution-purity status is indeterminable by appearance, men insure their own purity by sustaining customs that prohibit any physical contact between men and women, except for the marital relationship. One aspect of these laws is a mandated period of sexual separation during the time a woman is “impure”. A woman is considered impure or polluted a minimum of five days during her menstrual period and at least seven days thereafter, to insure that all signs of bleeding are gone. For at least twelve days a woman is untouchable to any man. Her period of pollution ends when, having counted seven “clean” days, she immerses herself in a ritual bath. Lubovitchers explain that pollution occurs when any potential life-creating force is destroyed. Menstrual blood is polluting because it is associated with an unfertilized ovum. A wife, during her period of pollution, does not touch her husband, sleeps in a separate bed, and avoids all physical contact with him.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1975

**Focal Year:** variable

**Citation:** Levy, S. B. (1975). Shifting patterns of ethnic identification among the Hasidim. In The new ethnicity : perspectives from ethnology (pp. 25–50). West Publishing Co. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-014

**Description:** During the period of the menstrual flow, for seven days after it has ceased, and until the woman has immersed herself in the mikveh , sexual con  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1974

**Focal Year:** Variable

**Citation:** Shaffir, W. (1974). Life in a religious community: the Lubavitcher chassidim in Montreal. Holt, Rinehart & Winston of Canada. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-007

**Description:** These laws demand a two-week sexual separation between husband and wife during her menstrual cycle. To end the period of niddah (exclusion, sexual separation), the baalot teshuvah immerse themselves in a ritual body of water (called the mikvah ) on the seventh day after they have completed menstruating.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1995

**Focal Year:** variable

**Citation:** Kaufman, D. R. (1995). Engendering orthodoxy: newly orthodox women and Hasidism. In new world hasidim : ethnographic studies of hasidic jews in america (p. p 135-160). State University of New York Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=n011-023

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**O’odham**

**Aka Tohono O’odham**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Menstruating and pregnant women must stay away from the ceremonies following war in any case. Any person who is sick will be made worse by the approach of a menstruating or pregnant woman.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1983

**Focal Year:** 1860 – 1976

**Citation:** Bahr, D. M. (1983). Pima and Papago medicine and philosophy. In handbook of north american indians. southwest: Vol. v. 10 (pp. 193–200). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-023

**Description:** A male who touched a menstruating woman might die, and even to see her would cause weakness. Contact with her would take the strength from his weapons and poison his food. For the sake of the community, therefore, she must be segregated whenever the magic came upon her, and every family had a hut where its women could be sent at the proper time.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** 1931 – 1935

**Citation:** Underhill, R. (1946). Papago Indian religion. In Contributions to anthropology (Issue 33, pp. viii, 359). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-001

**Description:** One other practice with regard to women should be mentioned. In the old days menstruating women were greatly feared. Their touch was thought to weaken a man and blight any project in which he was engaged. Women were obliged to segregate themselves each month in a hut built for the purpose, on pain of bringing supernatural punishment upon their families or on the whole village.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1949

**Focal Year:** 1942 – 1943

**Citation:** Joseph, A., Spicer, R. B., & Chesky, J. (1949). The desert people: a study of the Papago Indians. In [Indian education research series] (Issue 4, pp. xviii, 288 , 21 plates). The University of Chicago Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-004

**Description:** If a menstruating woman were to see them [tobacco plant] they would shrivel up and die.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1935

**Focal Year:** 1687 – 1934

**Citation:** Castetter, E. F., & Underhill, R. M. (1935). The ethnobiology of the Papago Indians. Ethnobiological Studies in the American Southwes, 4(3), 84. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-017

**Description:** A brush hut for the seclusion of menstruating women

**Date of Ethnography:** 1983

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1970

**Citation:** Bahr, D. M. (1983). Pima and Papago social organization. In handbook of north american indians. southwest: Vol. v. 10 (pp. 178–192). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-022

**Description:** Piman women were not allowed to see tobacco growing, and if a menstruating woman were to see the plants they would shrivel up

**Date of Ethnography:** 1942

**Focal Year:** 800 – 1940

**Citation:** Castetter, E. F., & Bell, W. H. (1942). Pima and Papago Indian agriculture. In Inter-Americana studies (pp. xvi, 245). The University of New Mexico press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-005

**Description:** Menstruation was regarded with horror. The touch of a menstruating woman could weaken a man and take all power from his weapons. The taint of it would cause the deer to avoid a hunter, cause a shaman's crystals to rot and tobacco plants to shrivel up. Therefore, for a menstruating women not to segregate herself was a crime against the community. Men were urged nightly in the council meeting to see that their women obeyed the rule. The punishment for disobedience was usually a supernatural one: lightning or flood would destroy the family of the offender or, possibly, her whole village. She must always go to the menstruation hut for four days and must use the dishes kept there, not touching those of the family. One informant said that, when a woman was married, her husband must also use separate dishes during her period. These were kept outside the house and only brought in when necessary. As a rule, the women found the four days segregation no burden. Rather it was a pleasant chance to sit still and give up the household responsibility. They took their basketry to the hut where all women, except first menstruants, might visit them. The groups gambled, sang and told stories. No man might shout to the menstruant or even look at her from a distance. A tale recounts that once a woman in the segregation hut saw an approaching party of Apaches. She shouted to some men in the fields but they would not turn round nor watch her signals and she dared not approach, so the Apaches attacked the village. Another local tale says that a woman who frequently quarrelled with her husband would on each occasion retire to the hut whence he was powerless to get her back. He had to move the family before she would come out. The segregation custom is still in use, though not so widely as formerly.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1939

**Focal Year:** 700 – 1935

**Citation:** Underhill, R. (1939). Social organization of the Papago Indians. In Contributions to anthropology (Issue 30, pp. xii, 280). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nu79-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “The segregation custom is still in use, though not so widely as formerly.”

**Omaha**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** The disappearance of the menstrual hut was accompanied also by a complete abrogation of the old taboo against intercourse during the four days of menstruation.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1932

**Focal Year:** 1890 – 1931

**Citation:** Mead, M. (1932). The changing culture of an Indian tribe. Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq21-003

**Description:** Menstruating women amongst the old time Omaha were regarded with considerable dread. They were segregated for the times of their periods, by convention four days at a time. They emanated batho n at the times of their periods, batho n which might carry a long way on the wind, but which produced different illness from the maleficent batho n of a mishandled medicine bundle.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1932

**Focal Year:** 1897 – 1932

**Citation:** Fortune, R. (1932). Omaha secret societies. In Columbia University contributions to anthropology: Vol. Vol. XIV (pp. ii, 193). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq21-005

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes, The disappearance of the menstrual hut was accompanied also by a complete abrogation of the old taboo against intercourse during the four days of menstruation.

**Ojibwa**

**AKA Northern Saulteaux**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Nevertheless the idea of contamination by menstrual blood still prevails, and is avoided by the use of contraceptives during a woman's menstrual period, suggesting that oncine˙ may still be thought to result from this cause.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1962

**Focal Year:** 1958 – 1959

**Citation:** S., Rogers. E. (1962). The Round Lake Ojibwa. In Occasional paper (Issue 5, p. 1v. (various pagings)). Published by the Ontario Dept. of Lands and Forests for the Royal Ontario Museum. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-061

**Description:** menstrual blood which could cause illness in men and obstruct hunting. Although menstrual blood was not evil — it possessed curing properties — it contained powers which should not come into contact with men too weak to associate with them.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1983

**Focal Year:** 1600 – 1900

**Citation:** Vecsey, C. (1983). Traditional Ojibwa religion and its historical changes. In Memoirs (Vol. 152, pp. x, 233). American Philosophical Society. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-041

**Description:** Intercourse is avoided during the mense

**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year:** 1930 – 1940

**Citation:** Hallowell, A. I. (Alfred I. (1955). Culture and experience. In Publications (Vol. 4, pp. xvi, 434). University of Pennsylvania. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-021

**Description:** Cedar boughs constituted the most potent purificatory antidote to the dangerous properties of female menstrual blood. For instance, he learned that all menstruating women were to be avoided. Their touch was believed to cause paralysis or death in a child—a notion widely held even today in northern Wisconsin, where cases of infant mortality are still attributed to this cause.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** 1944 – 1947

**Citation:** Barnouw, V. (1950). Acculturation and personality among the Wisconsin Chippewa. In Memoir Series of the American Anthropological Association (Issue 72, p. 152). American Anthropological Association. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-006

**Description:** they were expected to use dishes reserved for them and were not to touch food that was to be eaten by others. “The dishes were tied together after her days were over, and laid aside until the next period.” They were not to touch or step over clothing since it might paralyze the owner.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1951

**Focal Year:** 2932 – 1940

**Citation:** Hilger, M. I. (Mary I. (1951). Chippewa child life and its cultural background. In Bulletin (Issue 146, pp. xiv, 204). U.S. Govt. Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-015

**Description:** The Chippewa believed that contact with a menstruating woman or anything she touched was harmful. “Those that touched her or anything that she had handled such as food, water, or clothing would become very sick. She even had to be careful about touching herself. Formerly such girls used sticks to scratch their heads or other parts of their bodies because using a comb might cause the hair to fall out. Scratching the body might cause the finger nails to drop off or raise blisters on the skin.”

**Date of Ethnography:** 1953

**Focal Year:** 1941 – 1944

**Citation:** Ritzenthaler, R. E. (1953). Chippewa preoccupation with health: change in a traditional attitude resulting from modern health problems. In Bulletin: Vol. Vol. 19 (Issue 4, pp. 175–257). [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-013

**Description:** The married women, when come to a certain age, have a little more indulgence when in this situation; they may sleep in the wigwam and even pass the Whole day in it, but they must go and cook out, and must not dare touch the victuals of their husbands, nor eat, nor drink out of the same vessel.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1890

**Focal Year:** 1786 – 1804

**Citation:** Cameron, D. (1890). The Nipigon country 1804. In les bourgeois de la compagnie du nord-quest (pp. 229–300). De L’Imprimerie Generale A. Cote et cie. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-018

**Description:** During menstruation women use separate utensils.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1937

**Focal Year:** 1932 – 1935

**Citation:** Landes, R. (1937). Ojibwa sociology. In Contributions to Anthropology (Vol. 29, pp. 144, plates). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng06-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - Formerly such girls used sticks to scratch their heads or other parts of their bodies because using a comb might cause the hair to fall out. Scratching the body might cause the finger nails to drop off or raise blisters on the skin.

**Pawnee**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** No menstruating woman could approach the skull, as it would anger the buffalo spirit that resided in the skull and cause the buffalo to elude the hunters. The girl neither bathed nor combed her hair and was not allowed to eat fresh meat, her food consisting chiefly of corn and pemmican brought by her mother. At the end of the period the grandmother took the girl to a creek, where they both bathed; the latter was then clothed with a new dress and was further purified by wrapping a blanket about herself and standing in the smoke rising from smoldering cedar leaves. A menstruating woman was considered unclean, and the chief restriction placed against her was that she should in no way come in contact with the sacred bundles nor approach the objects contained in them. This restriction prohibited her from appearing at sacred bundle ceremonies. The reason seems to be based on the theory that the bundles and all objects of a religious nature carried with them their own odor, which was that of sweet grass.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1940

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Dorsey, G. A., Murie, J. R., & Spoehr, A. (1940). Notes on Skidi Pawnee society. In Anthropological series (Vol. 27, Issue 2, pp. 65–119). Field Museum Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nq18-005

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Pomo**

**Aka Eastern Pomo**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A female bear doctor could not operate during her menstrual period, but a male bear doctor was similarly restricted by the menstrual periods of both his wife and his female assistant or the other female members of his household. He was even prohibited from going near his bear hiding-place during his wife's menstruation. The periods of other members of his household also restricted him.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1917

**Focal Year:** 1850s – 1904

**Citation:** Barrett, S. A. (Samuel A. (1917). Pomo bear doctors. In Publications in American archaeology and ethnology (Vol. 12, Issue 11, pp. 443-465 , plates). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-005

**Description:** In the majority of cases, however, a menstruating woman ceases all such work, which accounts for the fact that not all baskets show the small pieces of quill, and that very few baskets show more than one or two of them.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1908

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Barrett, S. A. (Samuel A. (1908). Pomo Indian basketry. In Publications in American archaeology and ethnology (Vol. 7, Issue 3, pp. 133-308 , plates). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-006

**Description:** Menstruating women contaminated and counteracted mana. Later menstrual periods entailed disabilities for a woman and for her husband. She could not eat meat or fish during her periods, nor could the husband hunt or gamble. A woman in catamenia could not cook for anyone; nor could she feed a boy child, lest he die of gas swelling. The menstruating woman was thought to have dangerous power which only proper observance of the ritual taboos could control.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year:** 1800s – 1950s

**Citation:** Kennedy, M. J. (1955). Culture contact and acculturation of the southwestern Pomo. [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-024

**Description:** A menstruating woman contaminated a man if she crossed his shadow. When a man's wife was menstruating he had to be very cautious. If another man touched him or even talked to him it would bring bad luck. The husband remained at home for the four days and on the fifth day he took a bath. It was said that the menstruation hut was not only employed for the first menstruation, but for all subsequent menstruations as well. The hot bed was made with heated rocks, above which were placed grass and wormwood. The mother or aunt attended to the girl. The patient was forbidden the use of meat, bird, or fish. She was allowed to eat mussels, kelp, sea grass, acorn bread, and pinole. The customary taboos against washing, scratching, or combing the hair were enforced. She was not allowed to engage in loud conversation, and she covered her face with a deer skin when she went out of doors. At the end of the four-day period she was washed, but the taboo on meat and grease lasted for a month. A woman was not considered as dangerous in her ensuing menstrual periods. Instead of being forced to leave the house she had a special corner of the home prepared for her. In other respects she was forced to undergo the same treatment given her at the time of her first period. When a woman was menstruating the husband had to abstain from meat and fish. He was also forbidden to hunt, dance, fish, or gamble. If he started on a war party and his wife was taken sick in this manner, a messenger was sent out to the warriors, and the war declared off. Any infringement of the menstruation taboos was punished, among other ways, by the dreaded sight of the water monster Bagil. For example, if a menstruating woman were weaving and she looked into a basket of water she would see Bagil appear on the surface of the water. Women were not allowed to wear hairpins during their menstrual period.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1926

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Loeb, E. M. (1926). Pomo folkways. In Publications in American archaeology and ethnology (Vol. 19, Issue 2, pp. 149-404 , plates). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-003

**Description:** Certain ritual restrictions are still observed. Among these are restrictions on the activities of menstruating women, who must isolate themselves from the community for a few days, refrain from eating certain foods, and absent themselves from any rituals.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1579 – 1970s

**Citation:** Bean, L. J., & Theodoratus, D. J. (1978). Western Pomo and Northeastern Pomo. In handbook of north american indians. california: Vol. Vol. 8 (pp. 289–305). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-030

**Description:** Likewise, a menstruating woman always gave her husband bad luck in fishing, gambling, and other pursuits where skill or chance played a part. The husband of a menstruating woman never washed his face, touched his body, or combed his hair during her menstrual period, and for the same reasons that these acts were prohibited to her. He never went hunting during her period, nor for four days thereafter. If he did so he was almost sure to be found in an unconscious condition and usually bleeding, at least from the nose. He was carried home and the services of a medicine man were required to restore him. As usual the doctor performed a singing ceremony to determine just what spirit had appeared to the patient and caused the illness. When this was determined, he could be cured by another ceremony which drove out the offending spirit. For these six days such a woman was most strictly controlled in her every act, even in the care of her person, for her female attendant waited upon her in every way: washed her face, combed her hair, scratched her when necessary, and in every other way waited upon her. Upon the sixth day, however, she bathed, and on the following day she resumed her normal life. A menstruating woman could not touch her face or hair because this would cause her to grow old quickly, and would cause her face to wrinkle and her hair to become gray. She dared not scratch or rub her body with her finger nails as a scar would appear wherever she touched her skin. She wore a small, pointed stick, suspended from a cord passing about her neck, with which she scratched her head and sometimes other parts of her body. She could not touch anyone, particularly any grown person, and she could not step over anyone. To do so would make such a person ill and would cause him or her to have bad luck. To break any of these rules would, in addition, give her husband bad luck in hunting, fishing, gambling, and in every other pursuit. Such bad luck was called ka'iaxarsi E. During her menstrual period a woman could under no condition go near a spring, lake, river, or other water, since such localities were the abodes of certain very dangerous monsters and she was sure to see one of them and become ill. This applied even to the ocean, as is shown by the description of the abode of Thunder which, according to one version, is located under the ocean near the mouth of the Garcia river. If a man whose wife was menstruating ventured out to fish in this vicinity, he was sure to see something supernatural, like a moving log or rock. A menstruating woman had to keep inside the house, except when necessity compelled her to resort to the special place, a very short distance away, which was reserved for her use. Work of all kinds was prohibited to her. During each menstruation after the first, the following restrictions were observed for six days (some informants say four days). The woman could remain in the same dwelling with her family, but she had to sleep a little apart from all others, including her husband. In case, however, someone was ill in the house she had to move out, either to another dwelling or to a small shelter built specially for the purpose. She dared not cook, even for herself. Some woman was detailed to prepare the special foods prescribed for her, to bring her water, and to attend to her wants in general. This attendant should have passed the menopause, and preferably should be an elder female relative, but in any event had to be a woman who was not menstruating at the time. The patient always used, in eating and drinking, certain baskets and musselshell spoons which were kept specially for this purpose. She was allowed to handle these and to feed herself. Her foods were largely vegetal: acorn mush, pinole, bread, clover, bulbs, corms, manzanita berries, and other fruits. She was permitted to eat the body of any fish, but was forbidden to eat its head, or to eat any kind of meat, fat, or any food containing blood. They were most particular about the head and internal organs of any mammal, especially those of the deer. If even one of these parts of any mammal was eaten by the menstruating wife of a hunter, his luck would be spoiled for hunting all kinds of game, and for fishing as well. So careful about this were those men who made a regular business of hunting that they always gave these parts of their game to some very old woman who had passed all possibility of menstruation. The Pomo considered menstruation, as do many other aboriginal peoples, to be in some manner tinged with the supernatural. Special restrictions were required as safeguards, not only to the patient but also to those associated with her, particularly her male relatives. The restrictions placed upon a woman during the period of her sweating and recuperation after childbirth were very similar to those imposed at times of menstruation, and the reasons for them were the same. She could not go near any spring, river, lake, or other source of water. She could not cook, even her own food, and her diet was restricted to vegetal foods and the body of any species of fish. She could not eat the head of a fish, the meat of any mammal or bird, or any food containing fat or blood in any form. She could not touch her own face or hair, and could not scratch any part of her own body. For this purpose she wore, suspended by a string about her neck, a special pointed stick. Menstruation required abstinence from certain foods.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1952

**Focal Year:** 1820 – 1949

**Citation:** Barrett, S. A. (Samuel A. (1952). Material aspects of Pomo culture. In Bulletin of the Public Museum of the city of Milwa (Issue nos. 1/2, p. 2 v., 507). Published by order of the Board of Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns18-023

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Quinault**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** She remained in this room for ten days at the first menses and for five days on the four successive months during which the rigid restrictions were followed. A married woman also was under certain restrictions for five days at the time of the menses. She stayed inside the house, kept away from the river, and refrained from eating fresh meat or fish. At the end of the period she purified herself by bathing. If her husband was hunting at the time he would move out of the house and camp in the woods. If a hunter so much as saw a menstruating woman he had to bathe and purify himself for ten days.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1936

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1890

**Citation:** Olson, R. L. (Ronald L. (1936). The Quinault Indians. In University of Washington publications in anthropology: Vol. v. 6 (Issue 1, p. 194). The University of Washington. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr17-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Slavey**

**Aka DeneTha**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** During her period, a woman “sits down” in one corner of the house, usually next to the special exit. She does not walk around the house, nor does she indulge in even common household tasks, such as washing and cooking. Her activities are restricted to such small immobile pursuits as needlework. If a couple has no children of a helpful age, the entire burden of woman's work, such as preparing dog feed, fetching water, washing clothes and cooking, devolves upon the husband. A menstruating woman is a threat to the well-being of the male and thus sexually tabu. During her period, the woman may not cross the threshold of the cabin. Two reasons are given for this injunction: to ignore it would bring tuberculosis to her husband and children, and (apparently the more common explanation) would bring bad luck to her husband in his snaring and hunting activities. The concept of the danger of blood appears to lie back of the restrictions on women at the menstrual period and after parturition. All the women of the community observe the menstrual tabus.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1954

**Focal Year:** 1951 – 1952

**Citation:** Helm, J. (1954). Contemporary folk beliefs of a Slave Indian band. Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 67(264), 185–198. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/nd14/documents/008

**Description:** A major rationale for the menstrual taboos of women is that non-observance will bring bad luck to the husband in hunting. Two other interdictions on woman are actively observed. These are the taboos against a woman stepping on or over a man's rifle or his cap. The rationale in these instances is again that they will bring the male bad luck in hunting.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1961

**Focal Year:** 1951 – 1952

**Citation:** Helm, J. (1961). The Lynx Point people: the dynamics of a northern Athapaskan band. In Bulletin (National Museum of Canada) ; Bulletin (National Museum of Canada). Anthropological series (Issue 176, pp. v, 193). Dept. of Northern Affairs and National Resources. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/nd14/documents/002

**Description:** The decline of the menstruant's hut appears to have been gradual. The first change in the patterns of menstrual seclusion came when the girl or woman was allowed to remain in the cabin during the catamenial period. To attend to bodily needs she sometimes left the building through a window or special exit. One informant had seen a Slave dwelling at Bestu Lake with a little “door” cut into the sidewall; through this the menstruant crawled when she entered or left the building. This informant also reported that the cabin was permitted to the menstruant only in winter; in summer she remained in a brush tipi located in the brush.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1943

**Citation:** Honigmann, J. J. (1946). Ethnography and acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave. In Yale University Publications in Anthropology (Issue 33, p. 169). Pub. For the Dept. of anthropology, Yale University, Yale University Press ; H. Milford, Oxford University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/nd14/documents/003

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - The decline of the menstruant's hut appears to have been gradual. The first change in the patterns of menstrual seclusion came when the girl or woman was allowed to remain in the cabin during the catamenial period.

**Southern Coast Salish**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** During succeeding menstrual periods, women left the houses because of the fear connected with menstrual blood. If women slept within a house during menstruation the powers of its inhabitants would be driven away and the loss of power, even if temporary, might occasion failure in hunting and fishing, sickness, death at the hands of enemy shamans, etc. The shelters to which women retired were make-shift affairs made of old mats, bark or branches and large enough for only one person. It is possible that the huts were built near or within sight of the house and that the women who stayed in them during the night spent the day in their usual occupations. During the five days in which they occupied the huts, the women bathed once or twice daily, rubbing with smooth sticks or stones and with rotted wood. The only tabus imposed upon menstruating women seem to have been those related to the driving away of power: thus, their presence upon fishing or hunting expeditions meant failure, if they came near men engaged in the bone gamble their friends or relatives would lose and they were not allowed to sleep in the same structure with other persons. Similar restrictions upon their joining women's employments were not mentioned. The interest of the informants could not be centered upon these recurrent periods but turned constantly to the period of first menstruation and its special reference to bashfulness.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1999

**Focal Year:** 1790 – 1890

**Citation:** Smith, M. W. (Marian W. (1940). The Puyallup-Nisqually. In Columbia University contributions to anthropology: Vol. Vol. 32 (pp. xii, 336). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr26-014

**Description:** Menstruating women continue to join other women in monthly seclusion, enjoying a respite from work.

**Date of Ethnography:** 2022

**Focal Year:** 1839 – 2016

**Citation:** Crawford O’Brien, S. J. (2022). Culture Summary: Southern Coast Salish. Human Relations Area Files. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr26-000

**Description:** Because menstrual blood was thought to be powerful, during every menstrual period a woman retired to a menstrual hut away from the houses.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** 1824 – 1987

**Citation:** Suttles, W. P., & Lane, B. S. (1990). Southern Coast Salish. In handbook of north american indians. northwest coast (Vol. 7, pp. 485–502). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr26-001

**Description:** Menstrual pollution. The element of pollution inherent in menstruation was verbally expressed as asba′łqo, which might be rendered as “ritually unclean from contact with menstrual blood.” Both men and women might be asba′łqo, the former only by derivation. Any menstruant was of course de facto asba′łqo, but she could contaminate others of her own sex. No girl engaged in spirit questing or woman sponsoring a spirit dance could risk contact with a menstruant. Such contact would make them asba′łqo as surely as it would a man and would put a temporary stop to any activities concerned with or requiring support from supernatural powers. 8 8 We do not know whether a Yurok woman “training” herself in control of her telogeł and doctoring power suspended this training during her periods; but I should expect it. Certainly the spirits would not touch her then to impart a telogeł; nor can I see men letting her dance the remohpo (kick dance) in their sweathouse. Both menstrual pollution, when acquired by contact, and seminal pollution could be removed by ritual purification involving bathing and scrubbing of the body plus the passage of time, usually one to two days. The menstruant herself could not be purified until the physical condition causing the pollution had ceased. Many of the elaborate prescribed observances of the pubertal seclusion period were not repeated at subsequent menstruations, although such prescriptions as there were followed the pattern of the pubertal regulations. At the onset of the menses every woman went into seclusion in a special menstrual hut, set up apart from the dwellings of village or encampment. The hut was occupied singly. The period of separation lasted ordinarily four days, or for the duration of the flow if it continued longer. No woman came out of seclusion until her flow had ceased and she had purified herself of the asba'łqo pollution by rigorous bathing. 30 30 I think actual cessation was a requisite in California too, even though statements usually say five or 10 days (or in recent times, “a week”). The question rather is, would the duration be abbreviated if the flow ceased sooner; and to that we do not know the answer. Restrictions on eating were in general similar to those applying to pubertal girls. The menstruant ate apart from others in her own seclusion hut, served by another, preferably older, woman. Only dried or preserved foods were eaten; fresh meat and other fresh foods were taboo. The menstruant avoided contact with others; touching a menstruant contaminated the toucher. Passing in front of a man “spoiled his luck” for hunting, fishing, gambling, or almost any other activity. The same held for touching or stepping over weapons, hunting gear, nets, canoes, or tools; such equipment contaminated by a menstruant might break on use or even injure the user. A man normally refrained from hunting during his wife's periods; even apart from the possibility of contact pollution, specifically male activities were apt to be unsuccessful at such times. In seclusion the menstruant moved about as little as possible, and spent most of her time sitting or lying quietly in the menstrual hut. Many women concentrated on basket making during seclusion, but formalized industriousness was not stressed to the same degree as with pubertal girls.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1999

**Focal Year:** 1790 – 1850

**Citation:** Elmendorf, W. W. (William W. (1960). The structure of Twana culture. In Research studies : a quarterly publication of Washington State University: Vol. Vol. 38 (Issue 2, pp. xvi, 576). Washington State University. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr26-012

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Seminole**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Women in the tourist attractions continued to isolate themselves during menses and childbirth and observed food restrictions and preparations at those times.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1998

**Focal Year:** 1890s – 1990s

**Citation:** West, P. (1998). The enduring Seminoles: from alligator wrestling to ecotourism. In The Florida history and culture series (pp. xvi, 150). University Press of Florida. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn16-049

**Description:** A menstruating girl or woman isolated herself, spending her period away from the family, cooking her own food and using her own dishes. She did not venture into the fields lest the plants weaken and die. She attended no dances at the square ground. After her menstrual period, she bathed and put on fresh clothes. If she were married, her husband was also obliged to be careful of his behavior. He did not scratch his nieces and nephews in punishment, for it was thought scratches made at this time would become infected and refuse to heal. At dances he took medicine last, and if the town were about to play a match ball game with another town of opposite “fire,” he had to sit in a special place and be the last to take medicine in the preliminary ceremonies. These restrictions were all in the nature of hygienic precautions. A menstruating woman was believed to carry influences dangerous to the health of herself and others. Such influences were counteracted through the observance of traditional behavior during menstruation. Now that these customs are no longer followed, the old people say it is no wonder that the Indians die young, that medicine-men lose their power, and that the health of the tribe has declined.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1942

**Focal Year:** 1800s – 1903

**Citation:** Spoehr, A. (1942). Kinship system of the Seminole. In Publication ; Anthropological series: Vol. v. 33 (Issue 2, pp. 31–113). Field Museum of Natural History. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn16-005

**Description:** A menstruating woman still must not cook for men, and it is considered dangerous for a woman to come in contact with the medicine bundles.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1966

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Garbarino, M. S. (1989). Economic development and the decision-making process on Big Cypress Indian Reservation, Florida. University Microfilms. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn16-033

**Description:** Today's Seminole women isolate themselves from the rest of the family during their period, eating apart from the men, but do not stay in a separate dwelling.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1984

**Focal Year:** 1850s – 1982

**Citation:** Howard, J. H. (James H., & Lena, W. (1984). Oklahoma Seminoles: medicines, magic, and religion. In Civilization of the American Indian Series (Vol. 166, pp. xxii, 279 , plates). University of Oklahoma Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn16-002

**Description:** If a man has sexual intercourse with a woman during her menstrual period, the results are more serious. A doctor would never do this, as it would damage the “medicine” which he has in his body.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year:** 1880 – 1953

**Citation:** Sturtevant, W. C. (1989). The Mikasuki Seminole: medical beliefs and practices. University Microfilms International. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nn16-046

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Now that these customs are no longer followed, the old people say it is no wonder that the Indians die young, that medicine-men lose their power, and that the health of the tribe has declined.”. and “Today's Seminole women isolate themselves from the rest of the family during their period, eating apart from the men, but do not stay in a separate dwelling.”

**Tlingit**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Other structures in the village included death houses (normal and shaman), special purpose huts (for birth, girl’s puberty seclusion, menstruation), storage houses, drying racks, and carved poles.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1975

**Focal Year:** 1971 – 1974

**Citation:** Klein, L. F. (Frances). (1988). Tlingit women and town politics. Xerox University Microfilms. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na12-025

**Description:** the new mother and infant were confined for ten days after birth in the same hut as that used for menstruation. Other structures in the village might be smokehouses for curing fish, cache houses for storing provisions, and shelters behind the houses to which women retired during menstruation or child-bearing.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1991

**Focal Year:** 1700s – 1910

**Citation:** Emmons, G. Thornton., & De Laguna, F. (1991). The Tlingit Indians. In Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History (Issue 70, pp. xl, 488). University of Washington Press ; American Museum of Natural History. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na12-031

**Description:** Both the menstrual period and anything connected with it was called ‘taboo’ ([unknown]lÌgás). It should be noted that this version, which blames the flood that destroyed the beaver colony on the breach of a menstrual taboo, was told a month before Frank Italio recorded the story, as translated above by the same informant.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1972

**Focal Year:** 1741 – 1972

**Citation:** De Laguna, F. (1972). Under Mount Saint Elias: the history and culture of the Yakutat Tlingit. In Smithsonian contributions to anthropology (Vol. 7, p. 3 v. [i-xxiv, 1-548 ; xxix–xli, 549-914 ; xlvii–xlix, 915-1395 ], plates). Smithsonian Institution Press; [for sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=na12-020

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Potentially – 2 ethnographies reference the use of a menstrual hut while the last ethnography makes no mention of the menstrual hut and only says that menstruation is taboo.

**Tubatulabal**

**Aka Tübalaulabal**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** At a girl's first menses she refrained from eating meat, salt, and grease for one month; thereafter she observed this taboo only for the length of her menstrual period.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1972

**Citation:** Smith, C. R. (Ethnologist). (1978). Tubatulabal. In handbook of north american indians. california (Vol. 8, pp. 437–445). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns22-005

**Description:** Menstruating women stayed inside family living house or camp; did not occupy separate menstrual hut. Don't eat meat or grease when you have your menses; drink only warm water then. Use a stick to scratch your head at this time; if you don't, your hair will fall out.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1938

**Focal Year:** 1850 – 1933

**Citation:** Voegelin, Mrs. E. W. (1938). Tübatulabal ethnography. In Anthropological records (pp. 1–90). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns22-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Tillamook**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Tillamook villages consisted of several permanent dwelling houses, at least one work-and-menstrual hut for women, sweathouses, and a graveyard for raised canoe burials.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** 1805 – 1912

**Citation:** Seaburg, W. R., & Miller, J. (1990). Tillamook. In handbook of north american indians. northwest coast (Vol. 7, pp. 560–567). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr21-002

**Description:** Summer homes, storage huts and menstrual huts were made of matted grass.

**Date of Ethnography:** 2022

**Focal Year:** 1805 – 1890

**Citation:** Skoggard, I. A. (2022). Culture Summary: Tillamook. Human Relations Area Files. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr21-000

**Description:** At least one menstrual-and-women's-work hut stood at the edge of the clearing. Women kept a very careful account of their menstrual periods and went to the menstrual house early in order to be sure not to have sexual relations near the “unclean” period. Although menstruating girls and women retired to the menstrual house on all subsequent months, the first period was a serious occasion demanding that the girl rest in seclusion in her own home and be closely attended by an older woman. After the two months had passed the girl retired to the menstrual house for her regular periods. The communal menstrual house sat a few yards away from the village, usually at the edge of the woods. It had a construction similar to the permanent dwellings, except for being smaller with perhaps only one fire. It was intended to accommodate three or four women.

**Date of Ethnography:** 2003

**Focal Year:** 1805 – 1934

**Citation:** Jacobs, E. D. (2003). The Nehalem Tillamook: an ethnography. Oregon State University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nr21-006

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Tewa Pueblos**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Women will not accept men during menstruation, but at such times boys are not afraid of girls. The menstrual tabu is much the same as in our own culture.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1947

**Focal Year:** 1936 – 1939

**Citation:** Whitman, W., & Whitman, M. W. (1947). The Pueblo Indians of San Ildefonso. In Columbia University contributions to anthropology (Issue 34, pp. x, 164). Columbia University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt18-005

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Ute**

**Aka Southern Ute**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A few visiting Indians had arrived at Whiterocks, and I was informed that a menstrual lodge had been erected in the vicinity of the dance corral for the use of visiting women, as the monthly taboo is still strictly observed.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1962

**Focal Year:** 1931

**Citation:** Steward, J. H. (1962). A Uintah Ute bear dance, March, 1931. American Anthropologist, n.s., Vol. 34, 263–273. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt19-039

**Description:** Menstruating women were not allowed to eat meat for fear their husbands would have bad luck in the hunt. They were never allowed to attend a dance, although social intercourse was not completely denied them. The young men were allowed to court women in the menstrual huts, although cohabitation at such a time was considered dangerous to the health of both sexes.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year**: 1776 – 1955

**Citation:** Jones, J. A. (John A. (1955). The Sun Dance of the Northern Ute. Bulletin ; Anthropological Papers, 47, 203–263. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt19-006

**Description:** Then and during subsequent menstrual confinements the woman was subject to several restrictions: she had separate eating and drinking receptacles; meat, cold water, and (only among the Weeminuche) salt were taboo; she could only scratch herself with a wooden scratcher; and she must avoid hunters, gamblers, and the sick.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1986

**Focal Year:** 1650 – 1986

**Citation:** Callaway, D., Janetski, J. C., & Stewart, O. C. (1986). Ute. In handbook of north american indians. great basin: Vol. Vol. 11 (pp. 336–366). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt19-050

**Description:** The menstrual hut, after the first period, was a sociable place. Seclusion was only for three or four days, and several women might be there together. They would grind seeds, sew on moccasins, and U women could make baskets. WR informants said that if you split twigs with your teeth while menstruating, your teeth would fall out. All informants agreed that a man should not have intercourse with a menstruating woman, because it would endanger his “power” and might make him sick. However, this taboo was rarely observed, and many informants spoke of men visiting and sleeping with women in the hut. Some women said they dreamed that it was all right to have intercourse while menstruating. Courtships took place in the hut, and many resulted in marriage. “When a woman knows what time she is going to be sick, she tells her sweetheart, and then he knows where she will be, and he goes and sleeps with her there.” This was the place for flirtations, and both single and married women used to receive their lovers there. The menstrual hut was still in common use in 1936 and 1937. Several references were made to men (not shamans) whose power would be damaged by the presence of a menstruating woman. That this was not true for all men is shown by the popularity of the menstrual hut as a courting place. The Ute women tell me that although the menstrual hut is no longer used, some of them stayed in menstrual huts near the Bear Dance grounds during their own first menstrual period, or at the Bear Dance following their first menstrual period. Those who were not menstruating, but whose first menstruation had occurred previously during the year were the women (woman) chosen to be danced to exhaustion.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1974

**Focal Year:** 1900 – 1937

**Citation:** Smith, A. M. (Anne M. (1974). Ethnography of the Northern Utes. In Papers in anthropology (pp. 6, 6, 288 , 30 plates). Museum of New Mexico Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt19-024

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “The menstrual hut was still in common use in 1936 and 1937.” And “The Ute women tell me that although the menstrual hut is no longer used, some of them stayed in menstrual huts near the Bear Dance grounds during their own first menstrual period, or at the Bear Dance following their first menstrual period. Those who were not menstruating, but whose first menstruation had occurred previously during the year were the women (woman) chosen to be danced to exhaustion.

**Western Apache**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Also her menstrual periods are a matter of special care to prevent injuring her health, sometimes extending to extreme foggy notions. John Lupe's wife was having her menstrual period. She would not work in the cornfield lest the menses cease prematurely and injure her. The Indians asserted that if a woman goes into the cornfield and works during her period, it always makes her sick.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1930

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Reagan, A. B. (1930). Notes on the Indians of the city of the Fort Apache region. The Trustees. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt21-014

**Description:** At some point in the proceedings the dancing subsides and each witch, if he so desires, has sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman, usually a close maternal kinsman (ki). The menstrual fluid (juš bι dił) is collected in a small resin-covered basket (tus žaži) and stored, later to be used as an ingredient in ‘poison’ (□łkaš).

**Date of Ethnography:** 1967

**Focal Year:** 1880s – 1967

**Citation:** Basso, K. H. (1980). Heavy with hatred: an ethnographic study of Western Apache witchcraft. University Microfilms International. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt21-023

**Description:** While the women are restrained from participation in a number of activities open to men, the latter must adhere to taboos prohibiting sexual contact with women during the menstrual period. Not only sexual intercourse, but any contact with menstrual blood could lead to sickness, manifested in the bending up of the back with pain and problems with urinating. Such symptoms are cured by a ceremony which is also employed to combat venereal disease.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1969

**Focal Year:** 1959 – 1965

**Citation:** Variakojis, D. J. (1980). Concepts of secular and sacred among the White Mountain Apache as illustrated by musical practice. University Microfilms. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt21-029

**Description:** If a pregnant woman or a menstruating woman “with the blood of the underworld” entered a field, it was thought the crop would spoil and turn “just like mash and rotten inside.” Copulation within a field was believed to injure the crops. Menstruating women could not eat the head or heart of a deer or the hunter would lose his power to kill. menstruating women could not eat the head or heart of deer, for such an act would make the hunter unable to kill the animal in the future.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1986

**Focal Year:** 1800 – 1950

**Citation:** Buskirk, W. (1986). The Western Apache: living with the land before 1950. In The Civilization of the American Indian series: Vol. v. 177 (pp. xiv, 273). University of Oklahoma Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt21-058

**Description:** Men still avoided contact with menstrual blood and childbirth, both of which could cause aching, swollen joints. But young women no longer underwent prolonged seclusion during menstruation, and many of the restrictions associated with this among other Athapaskan peoples either were dropped or relegated to token observances.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1993

**Focal Year:** 1800s – 1980s

**Citation:** Perry, R. J. (1993). Apache reservation: indigenous peoples and the American state. University of Texas Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt21-056

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “But young women no longer underwent prolonged seclusion during menstruation, and many of the restrictions associated with this among other Athapaskan peoples either were dropped or relegated to token observances.”

**Western Woods Cree**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Girls were secluded at first menses and regularly thereafter. These traditional practices are rapidly disappearing.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 2009

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Smith, G. E. (2009). Culture summary: Western Woods Cree. HRAF. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng08-000

**Description:** Complete isolation at subsequent menstrual periods was not essential, but a woman in this state usually held herself aloof from camp activities. If on a journey, she had to plough through the snow at the side of her husband's trail and was forbidden to cross the spoor of game for fear of bad luck to the hunter. Upon her return to normal life she extinguished all the camp fires and lighted new ones as a symbol of purification.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1967

**Focal Year:** 1611 – 1940

**Citation:** Mason, L. (1967). The Swampy Cree: a study in acculturation. In Anthropology papers (Issue 13, p. 75). Queen’s Printer. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ng08-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Girls were secluded at first menses and regularly thereafter. These traditional practices are rapidly disappearing.”

**Winnebago/Ho-Chunk**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Menstrual seclusion was the rule for girls and women, with the onset of menstruation marked by special instructions and isolation when a girl might also receive spirit guidance and prophetic dreams. Compulsory schooling contributed to the end of fasting and other puberty rites in both Nebraska and Wisconsin.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 2010

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Lurie, N. O. (2010). Culture Summary: Winnebago/Ho-Chunk. Human Relations Area Files. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np12-000

**Description:** While menstruating women were deemed dangerous to men and surrounded with many taboos, women were courted while isolated in the menstrual lodge.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1978

**Focal Year:** 1620 – 1978

**Citation:** Lurie, N. O. (1978). Winnebago. In handbook of north american indians. northeast: Vol. Vol. 7 (pp. 690–707). Smithsonian Institution : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S.G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np12-011

**Description:** From the time of her first menstrual flow to her climacteric a woman retired to a menstrual lodge every month for a few days. An excellent account of Winnebago customs in this respect was obtained in a text from a male informant, and, although somewhat discursive, it is given in full here: As soon as a woman begins to have her menstrual flow she has to retire to a menstrual lodge and to be careful never to come in contact with any sacred objects. If she did, these objects would all lose their power. Everything that is holy would immediately lose its power if a menstruating woman came near it. A holy woman or a holy man or even a holy child would be affected by the proximity of a menstruating woman. Their holy condition would immediately disappear. In a similar way, if food were served to a sick person from the same dish used for a menstruating woman the sick person would become far more sick. The food for a menstruating person is always cooked separately. Special dishes are used and special fireplaces are made. If a person possessed any medicines, they would lose all their power if a menstruating woman came in contact with them. If any person should enter a menstrual lodge, in after life, whenever he fasted, he would not be blessed by any spirit. However, there is one thing that a menstruating woman is afraid of, and that is the war bundle. These war bundles are kept in cedar [leaves?] mixed with medicine to prevent danger from just such a source. If a menstruating woman comes near a war bundle, her flow would increase and never cease, and after a while she would die, 5 5 This explains what puzzled the author for some time—namely, the fact that although contact with a menstruating woman destroyed the efficacy of everything holy, in the case of the war bundle the reverse was true and the woman was destroyed. Many of the Indians who spoke of this matter also seemed to believe it was the war bundle that killed the woman. From this account, however, it is perfectly clear that it is not the war bundle at all that killed the woman, but the poison in which the war bundle was wrapped. The war bundle is therefore no exception to the general rule, and it is only on account of the serious consequences that would accrue to so many people from any impairment of its powers, and the care taken to prevent this by surrounding it with special medicines, that it offers externally an exception to the fatal effects of contact with a menstruating woman. and only if the owner of the war bundle personally attends to her can she be cured. For that reason whenever a war-bundle feast is being given a woman is very careful, and even if it is a few days before her menstrual flow she will not go. The menstrual lodge is never far from the lodge in which she lives. Indeed, it is within speaking distance, so that the occupants of her parents' lodge can hear her. All the utensils she uses are very small. The women stay from 4 to 10 days in the menstrual lodges. The older women stay out the shorter time because they are over it sooner. It is said that if the young girls have any lovers they always come to the menstrual lodges at night. This is therefore the time for wooing. It is said that the girls cohabit with their lovers in these menstrual lodges. Those girls who have parents are attended by watchers, so that no unworthy men may visit them. They are especially guarded against ugly men, who are very likely to have love medicines. However, generally it is of no avail to struggle against such men, for they are invincible. The women always take their blankets with them when they go to a menstrual lodge, for they never lie down but remain in a sitting posture, wrapped in their blankets. The women are always watched, so that when their menstrual flow comes everything is in readiness and lodge poles are placed around them and a lodge erected above their heads just about large enough to fit their body. They are not permitted to look upon the daylight nor upon any individual. If they were to look out during the day the weather would become very bad, and if they were to look at the blue sky it would become cloudy and rain. If they looked at anyone that person would become unfortunate. For four days they do not eat or drink anything; not even water do they drink. They fast all the time. Not even their own body do they touch with their hands. If they ever have any need of touching their bodies they use a stick. If they were to use their hands in touching their own body their bones would be attacked with fever. If they were to scratch their hands their heads would ache. After the fourth day they bathe in sight of their home. Then they return to their homes and eat. (This, of course, holds only for those whose menstrual flow ceases in four days.) If any women have to stay longer than four days they have to fast for that entire period. They always fast during this period and often some spirits bless them. When a woman who has stayed in the menstrual lodge for 10 days is ready to return to her lodge, she bathes herself and puts on an entirely new suit of clothes. Then her home is purified with red-cedar leaves and all the sacred bundles and medicines removed. Only then can she enter her parents' lodge. As soon as she returns to her parents' lodge after her first menstrual flow she is regarded as ready to be wooed and married. Thus the teacher of our customs, the Hare, has willed it. At a feast all the young girls nearing the age of puberty will be absent, but the old women, who have passed their climacteric, sit right next to the men, because they are considered the same as men as they have no menstrual flow any more. If the Winnebago can be said to be afraid of any one thing it may be said it is this—the menstrual flow of women—for even the spirits die of its effects. When you have your menses, do not ask those in your lodge to give you any food, but leave the lodge and fast and do not begin eating again until you return to your own lodge.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1923

**Focal Year:** 1634 – 1913

**Citation:** Radin, P. (1923). The Winnebago tribe. Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=np12-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Compulsory schooling contributed to the end of fasting and other puberty rites in both Nebraska and Wisconsin.”

**Yokuts**

**Aka Southern Valley Yokuts**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** The monthly condition of women—which was thought to be connected with the dark period of the moon—was viewed with less scrupulous abhorrence by the Yokuts than among many tribes. There was no separate menstrual hut, nor any dance nor public ceremony at a girl's adolescence. For six days a woman took no meat, fish, or cold water. Some tribes allowed her to cook, work, and stay by the sick; others forbade her to prepare food or to leave the house.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1953

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Kroeber, A. L. (Alfred L. (1953). The Yokuts. In Handbook of the Indians of California (pp. 474–543). California Book Company Ltd. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns29-002

**Description:** Menstruants scratched the head with a stick; otherwise the hairs would split and fall out. a menstruant cooked for the family as usual, but she slept on the opposite side of the house from her husband and intercourse was strictly tabu. At ensuing periods only the meat tabu was observed. Girls who drank cold water and ate meat got overly fat. There was no separate hut for birth or menses. There was no separate hut for menstruating women; they did not cook, and intercourse was forbidden. Bathing followed the period.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1948

**Focal Year:** 1890s – 1930

**Citation:** Gayton, A. H. (Anna H. (1948). Yokuts and western Mono ethnography: vol. 1, Tulare Lake, Southern Valley, and Central Foothill Yokuts. In Anthropological records (pp. viii, 1–253, 291–301). Univ. of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns29-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied

**Yurok**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** Her subsequent menses were surrounded by similar restrictions, and the Yurok woman was virtually isolated for at least ten days each month. During this period, it was considered especially important that she take food separately from others. According to Aileen Figueroa (Yurok), the woman had to stay in a menstrual hut, consuming only a small portion of smoked salmon each day; she also had to wear a flickertail feather in her septum so that others could be alert to avoid her.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1992

**Focal Year:** 1775 – 1980

**Citation:** Keeling, R. (1992). Cry for luck: sacred song and speech among the Yurok, Hupa, and Karok Indians of northwestern California. Unversity of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns31-018

**Description:** According to traditional “Indian law” (rules for conduct), a menstruating woman is highly polluting and will contaminate the family house and food supply if she comes into contact with either. Thus, in the old days, a special shelter for menstrual seclusion was built near the main house, and special food for a family's menstruating women was separately collected, stored, and prepared for consumption in this shelter. In my friend's modern house, a back room had been set aside for his wife's monthly use. Separate food storage, as well as cooking and eating utensils, was furnished in the kitchen. A menstruating woman should isolate herself because this is the time when she is at the height of her powers. Thus, the time should not be wasted in mundane tasks and social distractions, nor should one's concentration be broken by concerns with the opposite sex. Rather, all of one's energies should be applied in concentrated meditation on the nature of one's life, “to find out the purpose of your life,” and toward the “accumulation” of spiritual energy. The menstrual shelter, or room, is “like the men's sweathouse,” a place where you “go into yourself and make yourself stronger.”. Menstrual blood itself was thought by Yurok to be a dire poison, and menstruating women were believed to contaminate whatever they came into contact with—houses, food, hunting gear, weapons, canoes, water, trails, and, above all, the men's wealth objects central to these acquisitive societies and emblematic of spiritual ascendancy. Menstruating women, beyond contaminating concrete objects, were perhaps most dangerous through their negative effect on men's psychic or spiritual life. These women spoiled men's “luck” ( heyomoks- )—their ability to exercise power in, among other things, the accumulation of wealth. A menstruating woman who seduced an unwary man was therefore □isˇah ([worse than] a dog), the lowest form of mammalian life. Thus, menstruating women were isolated in special shelters, ate carefully segregated foods, and used scratching bones, being so highly charged with negative energy that they could not touch even themselves for fear of poisoning.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1900 – 1980

**Citation:** Buckley, T. C. T. (1982). Menstruation and the power of Yurok women: methods in cultural reconstruction. American Anthropologist, Vol. 9(1), 47–60. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns31-016

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Thus, in the old days, a special shelter for menstrual seclusion was built near the main house, and special food for a family's menstruating women was separately collected, stored, and prepared for consumption in this shelter. In my friend's modern house, a back room had been set aside for his wife's monthly use. Separate food storage, as well as cooking and eating utensils, was furnished in the kitchen.”

**Yuki**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** A man might hunt or eat deer after cohabitation, but he could not fish or hunt when his wife had her menses. A man whose wife had her menses or a new child could not butcher deer. No meat was cooked or eaten by a menstruating woman although she might eat salmon. The husband of such a woman might not hunt during her period.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1965

**Focal Year:** 1830 – 1929

**Citation:** Gifford, E. W. (1965). The Coast Yuki. Sacramento Anthropological Society, Sacramento State College. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns30-003

**Description:** At subsequent menses women were considered unclean and required to follow certain rules. Menstrual huts were not used; the woman retired to the back of her home, where she remained until she was ready to rejoin her family. Bathing was forbidden until the last day, as was cooking and eating out of utensils used by the rest of the family. Special bedding—tule rushes when available—was brought in fresh each day, and the old removed and burned. A man could not have intercourse with a menstruating woman; it was believed that he absorbed her blood, which was exceedingly poisonous. Consumption or other sickness would result, and if a man developed a wasting illness with no apparent cause, he was suspected of having violated this taboo. While his wife was ill, a man was supposed not to hunt. Even though he would not touch her, her blood would somehow contaminate his, and he himself would not be quite normal. It was believed that a deer could smell this in a man, and would not come near him.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1944

**Focal Year:** 1800s – 1937

**Citation:** Foster, G. M. (1944). A summary of Yuki culture. In Anthropological records (pp. v, 155–244). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ns30-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes – “Soon after white contact, menstrual rules were relaxed so that women were not forced into complete seclusion. Eventually they were even allowed in the dance house for dances, but could never participate because “the whistles and voices of the singers would choke up.”

**Zuni**

**Continent:** North America

**Description:** No menstrual taboos  
**Date of Ethnography:** Not Specified

**Focal Year:** 1904

**Citation:** Stevenson, M. C. E. (1904). The Zuni Indians: their mythology, esoteric fraternities, and ceremonies. In U.S. Bureau of American ethnology. Twenty-third annual report. 1901-1902 (pp. 1-634 , 129 plates (41 in color)). Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=nt23-004

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None referenced or implied