**Amahuaca**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Intercourse is prohibited while a woman is menstruating. Spouses sleep in separate mosquito nets during this period. If the norm is broken, the moon turns copper color, a lunar eclipse.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1981

**Focal Year:** 1974 – 1977

**Citation:** Woodside, J. H. (2014). Developmental sequences in Amahuaca society. Univ. Microfilms International. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=se06-008

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

**Aymara**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** There is a slight fear of menstrual blood, and, although women are not segregated during their monthly period, it is believed that intercourse should be avoided at these times. Menstruating women should not work in the fields, since their organs at this time are thought to absorb the earth's fertility. Similarly, they should not handle agricultural implements. Menstrual pads are not used.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Tschopik Jr, H. (1946). The Aymara. In Bulletin (Vol. 2, Issue 143, pp. 501-573 , plates). Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sf05-001

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

**Bahia Brazilians**

**Aka Brazilians**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Menstruating slave women not only did not work in water, in accordance with general custom, but also did not work or attend mass and sometimes stayed in bed for two or three weeks.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1985

**Focal Year:** 1550 – 1835

**Citation:** Schwartz, S. B. (1985). Sugar plantations in the formation of Brazilian society: Bahia, 1550-1835. In Cambridge Latin American studies (Issue 52, pp. xxiii, 616). Cambridge University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=so11-011

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

**Barama River Carib**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The technique of the sexual act is explained in some detail, care of the body during the menstrual period is described, and the restrictions placed upon women at menstrual periods are outlined. A special loin cloth of the usual pattern, but which is worn only during menstruation, is prepared for the girl. The girl is told that during her period a woman is not allowed to eat meat, to prepare food, or to touch a man's hunting implements. She must remain in her hammock, and is allowed only to spin cotton. A man who eats food prepared by a woman during her period will never be well, and bad luck will attend his hunting efforts if a menstruating woman touches his weapons.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1936

**Focal Year:** 1920 – 1936

**Citation:** Gillin, J. (1936). The Barama River Caribs of British Guiana. In Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology (Vol. 14, Issue 2, pp. xiv, 274 , 30 plates). The Museum. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sr09-001

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

**Bororo**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** As the Bororo told me, during the menstruation of the married woman, she and the husband would fast, in order to become strong.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1937

**Focal Year:** 1899 – 1935

**Citation:** Baldus, H., & Lillios, I. (1937). The social position of the woman among the Eastern Bororo. In Ensaios de etnologia Brasileira, by Herbert Baldus (Vol. 101, pp. 112–162, 323-330 , 16 plates (9-24)). Companhia Editora Nacional. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp08-005

**Description:** Mature women, when menstruating, wear black loin cloths. Both wife and husband fast while she is menstruating; they also avoid drinking and taking baths. A girl who is having sexual relations with several men will notify all of them when she menstruates so that they may observe these rules, since otherwise they can become sick.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1973

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Levak, Z. D. (1974). Kinship system and social structure of the Bororo of Pobojari. University Microfilms. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp08-004

**Description:** Women wear a gray perineal band, or a black equivalent during menstruation; it is attached either to a girdle or to a tight-fitting bark corset.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Lowie, R. H. (1946). The Bororo. In Bulletin (Vol. 1, Issue 143, pp. 419-434 , 12 plates (numbered as 83-94)). Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp08-002

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None Referenced or Implied

**Chachi**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Contrary to the customs of many aboriginal peoples, there are not at present, and apparently never have been, any special ceremonial observances associated with birth, puberty, and menstruation, although there are certain restrictions and slight observances of an ordinary character connected with each of these.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1925

**Focal Year:** 1908 – 1909

**Citation:** Barrett, S. A. (Samuel A. (1925). The Cayapa Indians of Ecuador. In Indian notes and monographs (Issue 40, p. Vol. I. xvi, 1-181 , plates 1-90; Vol. II viii, 183-476 , plates 91-142). Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sd06-003

**Description:** The menstrual discharge is not considered dangerous in any way, and the women may eat anything, bathe in the river, work in the gardens, and engage in sexual intercourse. The women claim that they experience no cramping, nor other discomfort during catomenia.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1965

**Focal Year:** 1908 – 1960

**Citation:** Altschuler, M. (1965). The Cayapa: a study in legal behavior. University Microfilms, Inc. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sd06-004

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** None Referenced or Implied

**Enxet and Enlhet**

**Aka Lengua**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The most common source of threat to group health was the menstruous woman, for nothing angered water spirits as much as the smell of menstrual blood. For this reason every menstruating woman had to abstain from getting water from the water holes. In fact, she had to observe a whole range of taboos, such as abstaining from meat; for should she eat meat not only would the weapon that killed the animal become useless for future hunting, but the very animal resources might become sterile and unable to reproduce.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1967

**Focal Year:** 1889 – 1963

**Citation:** Loewen, J. A. (Jacob A. (1967). Lengua festivals and functional substitutes. Practical Anthropology, Vol. 14(1), 15–36. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sk15-004

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

**Goajiro**

**Aka Wayuu**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** A woman piache cannot practice during menstruation.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1957

**Focal Year:** 1920 – 1955

**Citation:** Bolinder, G. (1957). Indians on horseback. Dennis Dobson. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sc13-007

**Description:** The shaman must not perform ceremonial acts of curing when she is in her menstrual period because the patient will become worse instead of improving.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1947

**Focal Year:** 1947

**Citation:** Pineda Giraldo, R., & Muirden, S. J. (1950). Aspects of magic in La Guajira. In Revista del Instituto Etnologico Nacional (Vol. 3, Issue 1, p. HRAF ms: iii, 180 [Original: x, 164 ]). [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sc13-002

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

**Inka**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** They also hold the superstitious belief that pregnant or menstruating women should not walk through sown fields.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1916

**Focal Year:** 1200 – 1600

**Citation:** Polo de Ondegardo, d. 1575, Urteaga, Horacio H., b. 1877, Romero, C. A., Hoyo, J. J. del., Brunel, A., Murra, J., & Muirden, S. (1916). Information concerning the religion and government of the Incas. In Collecion de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Peru (Vol. 3, p. HRAF MS: ii, 211 [Original: xxxvi, 212 ]). [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=se13-005

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

**Jivaro**

**Aka Shuar**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The Chiwaros have no menstruation customs.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1930

**Focal Year:** 1860 – 1920

**Citation:** Tessmann, Günter, b. 1884, & Nagler, A. M. (1930). The Indians of northeastern Peru. In Nagler, Alois M (pp. xi, 856). Friedrichsen, de Gruyter & Co. m.b.h. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/sd09/documents/028

**Description:** Speaking of the first menstruation of girls, we must add that at the following menses too a Jibaro woman is always taboo to a certain extent. She has to diet, abstaining from eating meat, and contenting herself during the days of menstruation chiefly with mashed manioc and plantain ( nauma ). She is likewise sexually taboo, her husband avoiding her during these critical days. Much the same rules are observed among the Canelos Indians.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1935

**Focal Year:** 1916 – 1929

**Citation:** Karsten, R. (1935). The head-hunters of Western Amazonas: the life and culture of the Jibaro Indians of eastern Ecuador and Peru. In Commentationes humanarum litterarum (pp. xvi, 598). Centraltryckeriet. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sd09-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Implied. No menstrual taboos mentioned in one ethnography and menstrual taboos mentioned in the other ethnography.

**Kogi**

**Aka Cagaba**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Seclusion at subsequent menstruations is not required, and apparently no particular restrictions are placed on the menstruating women.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** 1937 – 1941

**Citation:** Park, Willard Z. (Willard Zerbe), d. 1965. (1946). Tribes of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia. In Handbook of South American Indians, edited by Julian H. Steward: Vol. v. 2 (pp. 865-886 , plates). U.S. Govt. Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/sc07/documents/005

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

**Mapuche**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** There were no taboos regarding the use of dishes by menstruating women. There are no taboos regarding eating off dishes used by a menstruating woman; nor is it believed that men's clothing will be contaminated if left in her presence.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1957

**Focal Year:** 1450 – 1952

**Citation:** Hilger, M. Inez (Mary Inez). (1957). Araucanian child life and its cultural background. In Smithsonian miscellaneous collections (Vol. 133, pp. xx, 439 , 80 plates). Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sg04-010

**Description:** Unwillingness to reveal the menarche, to resort to menstrual huts, or to wear protective pads, stems not from indifference but rather from the fear that a woman can be easily bewitched if an enemy gets hold of some of the discharge. An ambivalent attitude exists toward sexual relations during menstruation. Such relations are forbidden on the grounds that both parties will be subject to disease; yet intercourse at these times, it is thought, will very likely result in impregnation.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1951

**Focal Year:** 1930 – 1938

**Citation:** Titiev, M. (1951). Araucanian culture in transition. In Occasional contributions from the Museum of Anthropology of the University of Michigan (Issue 15, pp. xii, 164 , 16 end plates). University of Michigan Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sg04-001

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

**Mataco**

**Aka Wichi**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Not only the first menstruation, but similarly the following monthly courses of a woman are regarded by the Mataco as critical in so far as she is then particularly exposed to supernatural dangers. The Mataco woman therefore on these occasions always takes the precaution to restrict her diet, abstaining particularly from eating fish and meat.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1932

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Karsten, R. (1932). Indian tribes of the Argentine and Bolivian Chaco: ethnological studies. In Commentationes humanarum litterarum (Vol. 4, Issue 1, pp. x, 236). Akademische Buchhandlung. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/si07/documents/002

**Description:** If a man has sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman his loins and head will ache. As for the woman, she is in no danger. When a woman is menstruating, she must not go to the bush where she could easily become frightened and die.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1939

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Métraux, A. (1939). Myths and tales of the Matako Indians (the Gran Chaco, Argentina). In Ethnological studies (Vol. 9, p. 127). Walter Kaudern. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=si07-003

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

**Nambicuara**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The taboo on eating for five days is not rigorous, and usually concerns certain types of food. Besides this, a woman cannot bathe during her menses, as is, of course, the general rule for the two sexes during this period. One goes to the river to put water in a gourd and pours it over the body while crouching. Otherwise, the woman takes care of all her habitual occupations.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1948

**Focal Year:** 1907 – 1939

**Citation:** Lévi-Strauss, C., & Sittler, E. (1948). Family and social life of the Nambikwara Indians. Société des Américanistes. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp17-001

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

**Ona**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** On this day and the following one the woman abstains from any firm meat. Instead, she chooses the mesenteric fat or lungs, spleen and stomach of the guanaco; moreover, fish, berries, and mushrooms, as well as train oil from the sea lion, if she can obtain this. She is permitted a generous amount, “so that she will not become weak!” More mature women, however, less rigorously observe these regulations, which are not very strictly binding.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1931

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Gusinde, M., & Schütze, F. (1931). The Fireland Indians: Vol. 1. The Selk’nam, on the life and thought of a hunting people of the Great Island of Tierra del Fuego. In Expeditions (pp. 32, 1176 , 51 plates). Verlag der Internationalen Zeitschrift. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/sh04/documents/001

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

**Otavalo Quiche**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Menstruants who go into a canoe or even approach the river will be killed (?) by the anaconda, it is believed by the Cubeo of southwestern Colombia, and after parturition the anaconda threatens the family. Menstruants usually stay at home; a little folk tale is told girls to warn them against going up the mountain during menstruation lest a bear get them.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1945

**Focal Year:** 1940 – 1941

**Citation:** Parsons, E. W. C. (1945). Peguche, canton of Otavalo, province of Imbabura: a study of Andean Indians. In The University of Chicago publications in anthropology. Ethnological series (pp. i–viii, 1–182, 217-225 , 40 plates). University of Chicago Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sd16-001

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

**Pume**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The Yaruro's actual attitude toward menstruation is not one of fear or wonder. The phenomenon is accepted much as it is among us, as a disturbing but unavoidable event. In the literature on primitive peoples it is often reported that menstruation is held to be a dangerous period for the woman and for the people.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1939

**Focal Year:** 1933 – 1934

**Citation:** Petrullo, V. (1939). The Yaruros of the Capanaparo River, Venezuela. In Bulletin (pp. 161-290 , 14 plates). U.S. Govt Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ss19-001

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

**Saramaka**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** As soon as a negress notices that such a female condition is coming on, she must leave her house and family immediately, even in the middle of the night, and go to this designated kay -house. She takes along her cookware, some food, and her hammock, and a mother can take along her very small children. On the way to this house of quarantine, she must very carefully avoid showing her back to any man she happens to meet, nor can anyone pass behind her. She must stop still when anyone approaches, and wait till the person has passed by. If it happens that a man or woman comes toward her, and it appears they want to speak to her, then she immediately stands still and says, in a fearful voice, mi kay, mi kay, I am unclean! She is not allowed to reenter the house of her husband until everything is over with. If she needs something from her house during this time... she must stand in front of the doorway and whatever she needs must be handed out to her. And then she must scurry back to her shelter. Furthermore, she is not allowed, during this time, to have dealings even with her very best female friend. These rules must be observed to the letter by all negro women, and even the wives of the village captain are no exception to the rule. From a modern Saramaka perspective, the single most important difference in conduct between Christians and non-Christians involves menstruation. All obias , gods, and other spiritual powers are vulnerable, and a man’s ability to hunt or fish, not to mention his sexual prowess, depends on his staying unpolluted. Modern Saramaka women, like Alabi’s contemporaries, spend their several days per month of menstruation in a small hut at the edge of the village. A menstruating woman may not cook for a man, or even speak to men who have certain obias . During the 1960s, it was still considered a serious communal danger for an Upper River man to marry a Christian woman, because on her visits to his village people could never be certain that she was not “cheating” (as any observance of the rules on her part would represent a courtesy to her hosts, not a matter of belief). Domosi’s act of accepting food from Alabi’s wife Sialoto in effect signaled that she was willing to risk the vengeance of her gods and ancestors. (For a discussion of menstrual pollution in modern Saramaka, which, when compared with Brother Riemer’s description, shows remarkable cultural continuities.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1990

**Focal Year:** 1660 – 1820

**Citation:** Price, R. (1990). Alabi’s world. In Johns Hopkins studies in Atlantic history and culture (pp. xx, 444). Johns Hopkins University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sr15-005

**Description:** The women who are in the menstrual house can’t dance. When they hear the drums, they are troubled, but they must remain quiet. Do not let the obia come near a menstruating woman, and do not eat the meat of the crab. There was nothing more hateful to the gods and the spirit of obia than an unclean woman, yet if an obia man wished, he could instruct the power in the obia not to take offense at unintentional contacts with menstruating women, or at cloths belonging to such women, or at food prepared by such women. But to accomplish this, an obia man had to be very powerful and, even so, he could not feel sure that the obia spirit would countenance such violations indefinitely.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1934

**Focal Year:** 1928 – 1929

**Citation:** Herskovits, M. J., Herskovits, Mrs., Frances (Shapiro), & Guiana, B. N. O. D. (1934). Rebel destiny: among the bush Negroes of Dutch Guiana. Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sr15-006

**Description:** In regard to certain physical conditions of women, there is among the Free Negroes a unique and remarkable custom. Because they leave the company of their husbands during this critical moment and must avoid all kinds of social interaction, it was decided to establish an institution by which some of the families get together and build for their wives and young women a certain communal house for this purpose, and they are obliged to maintain it in a liveable condition. As soon as a negress notices that such a female condition is coming on, she must leave her house and family immediately, even in the middle of the night, and go to this designated kay -house. She takes along her cookware, some food, and her hammock, and a mother can take along her very small children. On the way to this house of quarantine, she must very carefully avoid showing her back to any man she happens to meet, nor can anyone pass behind her. She must stop still when anyone approaches, and wait till the person has passed by. If it happens that a man or woman comes toward her, and it appears they want to speak to her, then she immediately stands still and says, in a fearful voice, mi kay, mi kay , I am unclean! She is not allowed to reenter the house of her husband until everything is over with. If she needs something from her house during this time... she must stand in front of the doorway and whatever she needs must be handed out to her. And then she must scurry back to her shelter. Furthermore, she is not allowed, during this time, to have dealings even with her very best female friend. These rules must be observed to the letter by all negro women, and even the wives of the village captain are no exception to the rule. Menstruating women are required to leave their homes and retire to a separate hut situated outside the village on a by-path; they may not return until three days after the period is over. Under no condition are they allowed to go to the provision fields during this time. Menstrual blood, in addition to embodying hebu [a supernatural force] in its negative and harmful sense, attracts the nabarao , river inhabitants who, driven by a predilection for menstruating women, abduct them and carry them off as wives to their homes at the bottom of the water. The Warao often identify the nabarao with dolphins ( Inia geoffroyensis ), which inspire in them great fear. For this reason, menstruating women refrain from bathing in the river, and during their periods wash instead in small pools in the forest, close to the house of seclusion. A belief in the polluting force of childbirth and menstruation stands behind an extensive range of ritual prohibitions. Both phenomena are carefully isolated from men and their ritual powers, which means that women’s involvement in ritual life is restricted in important ways. During menstruation, women may not approach any structure except those specially designated for menstruating women. Villages have one or two such houses ( faági ), which are built and maintained by women once men have set the corner posts, and sometimes an open-sided cooking shed as well. A woman’s emergence from menstrual seclusion is marked in several ways. She removes her belongings from the menstrual hut, launders the hammock she slept in, and bathes. Special greetings are reserved for the occasion.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1993

**Focal Year:** 1870 – 1970

**Citation:** Price, S. (1993). Co-wives and calabashes. In Women and culture (pp. xxxi, 224). University of Michigan Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sr15-001

**Change in Menstrual Taboos:** Yes - From a modern Saramaka perspective, the single most important difference in conduct between Christians and non-Christians involves menstruation.

**Shipibo**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The dolphin is especially dangerous to a menstruating woman since the dolphin will attempt either to have relations with her or to kill her.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1986

**Focal Year:** 1930s – 1974

**Citation:** Eakin, L., Lauriault, E., & Boonstra, H. (1986). People of the Ucayali, the Shipibo and Conibo of Peru. In Publication (pp. ix, 62). International Museum of Cultures. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=se26-025

**Description:** The Shipibo parallel other Panoan groups, like the Cashinahua (Kensinger 1975:62), in prohibiting women from bathing in the lakes or rivers when they are menstruating. Instead they have to bring up water in a jar and bathe on dry land. The reason the Shipibo give for this practice is that during their periods women are particularly susceptible to the spells cast by the dolphins. Therefore they cannot bathe in the dolphin's domain. Menstrual blood is likewise thought to be polluting and is related to the aquatic seducers as those seducers are related to the moon. Indeed a woman's period is called “the evil of the moon” in Shipibo. In nearby groups the moon can be either a younger, mortal, and therefore “feminine” male or a female who causes the initial menstruation of women.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1982

**Focal Year:** 1500s – 1900s

**Citation:** Roe, P. G. (1982). Myth, cosmos, and ceremony among the Shipibo. In The cosmic zygote : cosmology in the Amazon Basin (pp. 32–126, 313–331, 343–365). Rutgers University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=se26-019

**Description:** Disgust is sometimes expressed over a man and wife who fail to observe postpartum sexual abstinence or if a menstruating woman enters the water during a fish-poisoning expedition.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1988

**Focal Year:** 1979 – 1981

**Citation:** Behrens, C. A. (1988). Time allocation among the Shipibo of Nuevo Eden. In Cross-cultural studies in time allocation: Vol. v. 4 (pp. ix, 87). Human Relations Area Files. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=se26-001

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

**Siriono**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Contact with menstrual blood, especially in sexual intercourse, is regarded as harmful, while contact with ordinary body blood is considered innocuous. Although menstrual blood is looked upon as something dangerous to the Siriono, they have not developed attitudes of disgust or horror toward it. During menstruation women wear nothing; they are neither isolated from the rest of the group nor restricted from participation in such household activities as cooking that bring them into intimate contact with other people. While menstruating women bathe more often during the menstrual period than at other times, they are not subject to food taboos and are not even required to sleep apart, although no sexual intercourse is indulged in at this time. All of my male informants told me that they had never had intercourse with a menstruating woman and that to do so was very dangerous, but there were varied opinions as to what might happen to those who did. It was generally thought that they would become ‘blood sick’ and die.   
**Date of Ethnography:** 1950

**Focal Year:** 1940 – 1941

**Citation:** Holmberg, A. R. (1950). Nomads of the long bow: the Siriono of eastern Bolivia. In Smithsonian Institution. Institute of Social Anthropology (Issue 10, p. iv,104 plates). U.S. Govt. Print. Off. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/cultures/sf21/documents/001

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

**Tapirape**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** During her menstrual period she was known to have appeared in public with blood on her legs; any self-respecting woman would have bathed several times, or at least kept out of sight, for menstrual blood is considered ugly and unclean.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1977

**Focal Year:** 1900 – 1974

**Citation:** Wagley, C. (1977). Welcome of tears: the Tapirapé Indians of central Brazil. Oxford University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp22-016

**Description:** The menstruation net is a peculiarity of Tapirapé culture. Certain hammocks have an opening at the spot where the woman's buttocks lie. As a rule, these nets are also used at other times.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1970

**Focal Years:** 1900 – 1935

**Citation:** Baldus, H., & Brunel, A. (1970). The Tapirapé: a Tupí tribe of central Brazil. Revista Do Arquivo Municipal, 183. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp22-001

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

**Tehuelche**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** There are no menstrual taboos after menarche  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** 1670 – 1946

**Citation:** Cooper, J. M. (John M. (1946). The Patagonian and Pampean hunters. In Handbook of South American Indians, edited by Julian H. Steward: Vol. v. 1 (pp. 127–168). Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=sh05-001

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

**Terena**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Even today, menstruating women paint themselves black and abstain from washing as in the past. Contact with water is believed to cause the enmity of a certain water witch that lives in a lake or river and controls the supply of fish.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1949

**Focal Year:** 1750 – 1947

**Citation:** Oberg, K. (1949). The Terena and the Caduveo of Southern Mato Grosso, Brazil. In Publication (Issue 9, pp. vi, 72 , plates). United States Government Printing Office. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sm05-002

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

**Ticuna**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Subsequent menstruations entail few restrictions: a woman stays in her yard because the spirits of certain trees may injure her with an arrow and because contact with her would make a man inefficient in any undertaking.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1948

**Focal Year:** 1935 – 1948

**Citation:** Nimuendajú, C. (1948). The Tucuna: habitat, history, and language. In Bulletin (pp. 713-725 , 2 plates). Smithsonian Institution. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq20-002

**Description:** There are few restrictions for this. Only if the flow is very strong does the menstruating girl retire for a while. The spirits of certain trees such as the kapok— sumahuma (v(ɔ)či'ne), which the Tukuna identify with the curupira of the Neobrazilians—have the tendency to wound menstruating women with “arrows,” even by day; this is why women do not like to stray far from the house yard while menstruating. Contact with menstrual blood makes a man inefficient (l.g., panéma; T., ˙nëëį n ) in hunting and fishing, and even in other activities. A pepper bath is the most efficacious antidote.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1952

**Focal Year:** 1935 – 1942

**Citation:** Nimuendajú, C. (1952). The Tukuna. In University of California publications in archaeology and ethnology (Vol. 45, pp. x, 209 , 18 plates). University of California Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq20-001

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

**Trumai**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The taboo on male contact with women's wacta was due in part to inclusion within it of articles used during menstruation. Menstruation caused no special distress to the Trumaí women. They maintained personal cleanliness with the aid of leaves, going out into the brush behind the house to care for themselves. Although the relevant taboos were observed, the women talked frankly to Quain about menstruation, and were interested in learning what white women did during the period. The men, although expressing a fear of menstrual blood, did not shun the subject either. Most of them knew when women in the village were having their menses. Everyone was extremely shocked when Quain told them that white people often had intercourse during the menstrual period, for such contact would make a Trumaí man fall ill and die. Aloari said that he would surely die of a cough if he copulated with his wife then. The blood itself was considered malignant, infecting whatever it touched. The whole village became very disturbed when Kuyafi dropped some menstrual blood on the path to the gardens. Aloari averred that he would not go for manioc until the rain washed it away.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1955

**Focal Year:** 1884 – 1955

**Citation:** Murphy, R. F., & Quain, B. H. (Buell H. (1955). The Trumaí Indians of central Brazil. In Monographs (p. xii,108). J. J. Augustin. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp23-001

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

**Tukano**

**Aka Tucano**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** there is segregation of the woman during menstruation  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1954

**Focal Year:** 1954

**Citation:** Fulop, M., & Bravo, M. L. (1954). Aspects of Tucano culture: cosmogony. Revista Colombiana de Antropología, Vol. 3, HRAF MS: 1-54 , plates [original: 97-137 , plates]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-003

**Description:** Dahsiro claims that Edu has brought him into the polluting presence of menstruating women.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1993

**Focal Year:** 1616 – 1980

**Citation:** Chernela, J. M. (1993). The Wanano Indians of the Brazilian Amazon: a sense of space. University of Texas Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-018

**Description:** Women may be sexually prohibited because they are uninitiated, because they are menstruating or because they belong to the wrong relationship category in relation to a particular man

**Date of Ethnography:** 1981

**Focal Year:** 1971 – 1973

**Citation:** Arhem, K. (1981). Makuna social organization: a study in descent, alliance, and the formation of corporate groups in the north-western Amazon. In Uppsala studies in cultural anthropology (Issue 4, p. 379). Academiae Upsaliensis ; Distributed by Almqvist &Wiksell International. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-013

**Description:** On one level, menstruating women are dangerous, polluting, and must be controlled and at times avoided. On another level, as we have seen, menstruation has strong positive, creative, life-giving associations. Many states (e.g., menstruation) and activities (e.g., hunting) require observing a particular level of food restrictions.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1983

**Focal Year:** 1968 – 1970

**Citation:** Jackson, J. E. (Jean E. (1983). The fish people: linguistic exogamy and Tukanoan identity in northwest Amazonia. In Cambridge studies in social anthropology (Issue 39, pp. xix, 287). Cambridge University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-012

**Description:** A man will not copulate with a menstruating woman because he believes it will make him lazy. On the other hand, if there is a sick person in the house a menstruant will move and live in a shelter nearby, or else t The water anaconda attacks menstruating women who come to the river. A menstruant is endangered by land snakes, too, but can ward them off by painting with genipa. Nothing, however, will protect her in the water. he ill person cannot recover. For her part the menstruant must avoid the river, or she will be killed by the water anaconda. She may not enter a canoe for fear that the headman of the fish will destroy the canoe. A menstruating woman will always coat her back with genipa as a safeguard against animal spirits. She will coat her hands with it when handling sacred substances such as coca and tobacco.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1963

**Focal Year:** 1939 – 1940

**Citation:** Goldman, I. (1963). The Cubeo: Indians of the Northwest Amazon. In Illinois studies in anthropology (Issue 2, pp. x, 305). University of Illinois Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-005

**Description:** Menstrual blood is called abé dií /sun blood, and the menstruation of women is thus a reminder that for a certain period the female is in a state of impurity. Menstruation is then an occasion surrounded with shame and anxiety because the condition of the woman is a living memory of a criminal act that weighs continually on the conscience of humanity. The women must never touch a bow, nor must a man whose wife is pregnant or is menstruating touch another’s bow, because the owner of the weapon would lose his skill and all his luck in the hunt.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1971

**Focal Year:** 1960s

**Citation:** Reichel-Dolmatoff, G. (1971). Amazonian cosmos: the sexual and religious symbolism of the Tukano Indians. University of Chicago Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-008

**Description:** Menstrual restrictions are less marked as life progresses but, whatever her age, a menstruating woman does not cook for others or do any manioc work for at least a day.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1979

**Focal Year:** 1968 – 1970

**Citation:** Hugh-Jones, S. (1979). The palm and the Pleiades: initiation and cosmology in northwest Amazonia. In Cambridge studies in social anthropology (Issue 24, pp. xvi, 332 , plates). Cambridge University Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq19-010

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

**Tupinamba**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** Then every time they have their menstruation, which lasts for three or four days, they clean themselves with a smooth white stick three feet long. They refrain from touching any food or beverage, and the married women do not sleep with their husbands, saying in their language aikoaip ‘I am ill, please don't get near me.”  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1575

**Focal Year:** 1555

**Citation:** Thevet, A., & Métraux, A. (1575). The universal cosmography. [s.n.]. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=so09-003

**Description:** Menstruating women clean themselves with a stick which they always have with them and which they carry when leaving their houses. They are not ashamed to clean themselves in front of people and to eat lice when they delouse each other. When they find a louse they give it to the one on whose head it was and he crushes it between his teeth, not to eat it but in revenge for the bites.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1851

**Focal Year:** 1570 – 1587

**Citation:** Soares de Souza, G., & Métraux, A. (1851). Descriptive treatise on Brazil in 1587. In Revista do Instituto Historico e Geographico do Brazil (pp. 94-347 [incomplete]). Impr. Nacional. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=so09-008

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

**Warao**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** At the westernmost point of the center, the people erected a windscreen or a more elaborate hut which served as a place of seclusion for menstruating women, who had to isolate themselves from the community and the ceremonial center.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1980

**Focal Year:** 1954

**Citation:** Wilbert, J. (1980). Genesis and demography of a Warao subtribe: the Winikina. In demographic and biological studies of the warao indians: Vol. v. 45 (pp. 13–47). UCLA Latin American Center Publications, University of California, Los Angeles. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ss18-034

**Description:** The menstruating woman does not bathe in the river, and during the time of her period washes in the small water holes in the forest near the house of seclusion. If a woman during her menstrual period, bathes in the river, it is bad for us, the nabarao come and take our wives away under water so that they become their wives; they can also undermine the piles and cause our houses to collapse. Menstrual blood inspires horror because it has hebu in its negative form. Food prepared by a menstruating woman is inedible; whoever eats it, dies without hope of recovery. For this reason women during their menstrual period are not allowed to enter the family kitchen and they, on their own behalf, prepare their own food inside the house of seclusion. Furthermore, the impurity of the menstrual flow also affects fire. They may light the fire in the house of seclusion with live coals brought from the family homes, but once used, that fire is no longer good for the use of other persons and no one else uses those live coals in order to light new fires. Food and fire, upon contact with the menstruating woman, become impregnated with her intrinsic impurity; hence the custom of her being the object of proscriptions in order to safeguard the well-being of the settlement. In addition to this, hebu is also found in menstrual blood and poses a danger to the settlement. The menstruating woman, because of her intrinsic impurity, is the 158 subject of prohibitions and is secluded during the time of her period.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1968

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Suárez, M. M., & Muirden, S. (1968). The Warao: natives of the Orinoco Delta. Deparemento de Antropología, Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ss18-031

**Description:** While menstruating they must never eat the flesh of large animals, such as tapir or turtle, nor of certain fish. The meat of animals caught with the help of dogs is specially forbidden them lest the dogs never again be good for the chase. Menstruating women must cook their own food in special small vessels, but may not prepare any food for others and must never extinguish a fire. Finally, they may not touch boats, fishing gear, or anything else connected with water. During this time women are especially open to sexual attacks from the spirits of the bush and of the water.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1946

**Focal Year:** 1954

**Citation:** Kirchhoff, P. (1946–1959). The Warrau. In Handbook of South American Indians, edited by Julian H. Steward (Vol. 3, Issue 143, pp. 869–881). U.S. G.P.O. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ss18-003

**Description:** A menstruating woman exerts negative influence on the hunting and fishing luck of her man. By no means may she touch his weapons or implements, lest they become “useless” and the flesh of the game indigestible. Should any woman in this state touch the gear it is immediately discarded. It is taboo for menstruating women to tend their garden plots, nor may they handle the fruits of the field. Should a man have intercourse with a woman in this condition he would fall sick or become enfeebled for the rest of his life; so strong is the taboo that a shaman would perish if he had intercourse with a menstruating woman and would lose his hearing should a menstruating woman address him. A woman is considered “unclean” during the days of her period and hence isolates herself in a special hut. The fire she uses is tabooed; she may not touch any tools or weapons, or go to the fields. A woman who commences menstruating while on a river journey must take special precautions. She rubs her body with fragrant herbs and retreats to the bow of the boat behind a screen of timiche leaves, lest the water spirits stop the dugout and pull it beneath the surface. When her period is over, the woman leaves the menstruation hut, cleanses herself with a ritual bath, and rejoins society.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1988

**Focal Year:** 1900s – 1980s

**Citation:** Heinen, H. D. (1988). Oko Warao: marshland people of the Orinoco Delta. In Ethnologische Studien (Münster in Westfalen, Germany) (p. 131). Lit. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=ss18-042

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

**Xavante**

**Aka Shavante**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** A man will not in any case have intercourse with his wife for some time after the birth of each child nor while she is menstruating.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1967

**Focal Year:** 1958 – 1964

**Citation:** Maybury-Lewis, D. (1967). Akwẽ-Shavante society. Clarendon Press. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sp26-001

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

**Yahgan**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** “Subsequent menstrual periods do not give rise to any particular practices and do not prevent sexual relations”  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1937

**Focal Year:** 1918 – 1924

**Citation:** Gusinde, M., & Schütze, F. (1937). The Yahgan: the life and thought of the water nomads of Cape Horn. In Die Feuerland-Indianer [The Fuegian Indians]: Vol. Vol. II (p. HRAF: xv, 1471 [incomplete] [original: 365-1185, 1278-1499 ]). Anthropos-Bibliothek. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sh06-001

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

**Yanomami**

**Continent:** South America

**Description:** The Yanomamö word for menstruation translates literally as “squatting” ( roo ), and that fairly accurately describes what pubescent females (and adult women) do during menstruation. Yanomamö women do not employ tampons; they simply remain inactive during menstruation, squatting on their haunches most of the time After her puberty confinement, a girl is eligible to begin life as a wife and take up residence with her husband.  
**Date of Ethnography:** 1968

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Chagnon, N. A. (1968). Ya̦nomamö, the fierce people: the fierce people. In Case studies in cultural anthropology (pp. xiv, 142). Holt, Rinehart and Winston. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq18-011

**Description:** “Dark blood” is produced in the body of a man when a woman during menstruation touches the hunter or one of his weapons, or also when a woman in this condition has eaten any of the game hunted by him. They do not eat meat. An informant from the Erebato spoke to us of a special hut where the women remain for the duration of their menstrual period. If we understood him correctly, this hut is round and dome-shaped and made of palm leaves stuck into the ground. Inside the hut there is a circle made of little sticks placed side by side, within which there are two sticks stuck into the ground one meter apart. Between these sticks is fixed a bejuco . 216 The woman, who must not lie down during menstruation, sits down and the bejuco serves as a back support. We did not see any house of this type.

**Date of Ethnography:** 1963

**Focal Year:** Not Specified

**Citation:** Wilbert, J., & Muirden, S. (1963). The Sanema. In Indios de la región Orinoco-Ventuari, by Johannes Wilbert (Issue 8, pp. 11–20, 177-236 [HRAF ms.: 1-115 ]). Fundación La Salle de Ciencias Naturales. https://ehrafworldcultures-yale-edu.uleth.idm.oclc.org/document?id=sq18-004

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