

Greenberg's combination of life history with a more general historical analysis is an effective approach to the question of violence in the life of rural Mexicans. Following Don Fortino's life takes the reader behind statistics and presents a picture of daily life that is at some points funny and at others depressing. This account of Mexico's history includes the turbulence of the revolution, the Cristero rebellion, Cardenas' reforms, and the rise of coffee plantations in the region. Fortino's account reveals the impact of capitalism on the area, positive in terms of wealth and negative in terms of violent factionalism within the community.

The second half of the book is a more general but no less passionate account of violence. Greenberg takes to task earlier approaches to the study of violence (including psychological and structuralist models). In their place he proposes a historical approach which analyzes the political economy of the region and the community's relationship to the developing national economy. A recurring theme presents the Chatino as active participants in relation to state development (Chapter 14). While not allowing themselves to be passively swallowed by the expanding capitalist economy, they are unable to foster change; thus communities like Yaitepec are forced to take the law into their own hands. The ideology of this violence (Chapter 15) acts as a false consciousness which disguises the material nature of economic relations as battles for manhood and honor. According to his Afterword, Yaitepec's future is not locked into this cycle of violence; its struggle is meeting with some success, and internal acts of violence are declining.

Blood Ties is a well-executed analysis of violence, a troubling issue for most social scientists. Greenberg has defined an approach to violence that is rooted in an appreciation of the political, historical, economic, and cultural reasons for its existence. His book is an important addition to the general ethnography of Mesoamerica as well as to the growing literature on political economy and violence.

Thomas Buckley and Alma Gottlieb, eds. **Blood Magic: Anthropology of Menstruation**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. Pp. x + 326. \$45.00 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

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Menstrual taboos have long been a favorite subject of ethnographic inquiry, but in the past their study has suffered from both an ethnocentric and male-centered bias. Burdened by their own set of "menstrual taboos," ethnographers have too often assumed they knew what those of another culture meant. *Blood Magic*, a collection of essays by nine fieldworkers in anthropology and related disciplines, marks a welcome departure from earlier studies in a number of ways. It derives its perspective from women's studies in recognizing the need to focus on women's experiences as well as those of men, and in recognizing the

importance of female fieldworkers to do this. This is the first book-length collection of essays to grow out of recent cultural anthropological research on menstruation. Never before has the study of menstruation been so well informed by a combination of fieldwork and theoretical approaches to the study of gender and the symbolism of the body.

Blood Magic sets out with two central goals: to redress the biases which have attended the study of menstrual taboos and practices, and to add to anthropology's understanding of gender politics and the interrelationships between biology, culture, and society by providing concrete examples based on fieldwork. The book is organized into four sections, the first being an introduction, and the second and third offering, respectively, studies on the cultural meanings and socio-political implications of menstrual symbolism and practices. The final section of the book is the most speculative, offering exploratory studies in menstrual synchrony and its possible cultural and political ramifications.

The introduction begins by discussing the range of approaches anthropologists have taken to the concept of "menstrual taboo." Buckley and Gottlieb charge that anthropologists have often conflated very different practices into the single category of "taboo" and have tended to assume that menstrual seclusion or taboo implies low status of women and negative attitudes about menstruation. Noting the wide range of practices and beliefs associated with menstruation and the status of women, Buckley and Gottlieb suggest that "the menstrual taboo' as such does not exist" (7).

Part Two of *Blood Magic* is made up of three articles which consider the cultural values and meaning of menstruation in three cultures: the Beng of Ivory Coast, Turkish village society, and the Rungus of Borneo. The first article, by Gottlieb, shows how what seems at first glance to be a clear-cut case of menstrual pollution is actually a far more subtle and complex question of the symbolic management of two separate but related forms of fertility—human fertility, represented by menstruation, and the fertility of the earth. Menstruation has a positive value among the Beng: it is only menstruating women who have time to cook dishes that are highly esteemed. The second article, by Carol Delaney, discusses the largely negative value of menstruation in a Turkish village society, relating it to Islamic worldview and stressing the need to get away from a simple cause-and-effect relationship between the two. In the third article, Laura W.R. Appell finds that among the Rungus, menstruation is an "unmarked category" with no special observances or taboos. She relates this to the social complementarity of the sexes and to a deep reticence about sexuality in Rungus culture. Thus, Part Two discusses a positive, a negative, and a neutral approach to menstrual beliefs. In all three cases, however, the values, beliefs, and symbols of menstruation are complex, and reward close analysis with a deeper understanding of the cultural meanings of gender and fertility.

Part Three contains three articles focusing on the relationships between social and political organization and the shape of menstrual beliefs and practices. The first of these, by Denise L. Lawrence, deals with the management of menstrual taboos by women in rural Portugal, who use these traditional practices as means to achieve upward social mobility for themselves and their families.

In the second, Vieda Skultans examines menstrual symbolism in South Wales and finds two distinct sets of attitudes related to menstruation and menopause, which she correlates to feelings of satisfaction and success (or lack thereof) with the traditional female role. The third article, written by Emily Martin, is a fascinating discussion of PMS in late-industrial society. Relating studies of the discipline required by industrial work to women's premenstrual complaints, she suggests that rather than focusing on hormonal imbalances and treating PMS as a disease, we should look at the possibility that PMS represents a protest against this discipline, against women's dual responsibilities. She implicates medical science for treating only the physical causes of PMS and not recognizing the social ones.

The final section of the book is entitled "Exploratory Directions: Menses, Culture, and Time," and contains three articles dealing with the concept of menstrual synchrony and its possible relation to the lunar stages. These articles are for the most part historical in their focus. Thus, Buckley writes about menstrual practices among pre-contact Yurok women; Frederick Lamp, although writing about a current ritual calendar among the Temne of Sierra Leone, draws largely on historical evidence to make his case; and Chris Knight, discussing menstrual synchrony in Aboriginal Australia, draws on myth, song, cats' cradle string figures, and rock carvings to develop his argument.

Drawing on folk belief, myth, ritual, and song, and arguing against "a rigid dichotomization of 'folk' and 'scientific' theories of menstruation" (42), *Blood Magic* should be of interest to folklorists working in a wide variety of areas, including gender issues, folk medicine, folk belief, folklore of the body, and many others. This is a well-constructed and well-researched collection, grounded in received anthropological theory, yet looking far beyond it.

Hugh Anderson, Gwenda Davey, and Keith McKenry. **Folklife: Our Living Heritage. Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia.** Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987. (U.S. publication, 1988; distributed by I.S.B.S., 5602 NE Hassalo St., Portland, OR 87213) Pp. x + 306, illustrations, notes, appendices. \$29.95 paper.

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Nearly thirty years ago John Greenway said in *Folklore Research Around the World: A North American Point of View* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961) that Australians lagged half a century behind Americans in national maturity and self-confidence. Australians themselves talked about their "cultural cringe": a pervasive tendency to regard their own culture as second-rate and unworthy of attention. Accordingly, Greenway found very little to report on the study of folklore in Australia beyond a few amateur collections and some recordings of bush ballads. The establishment of a committee of inquiry into