



Blood Stories: Menarche and the Politics of the Female Body in Contemporary U.S. Society

By Janet Lee, Jennifer Sasser-Coen

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Blood Stories focuses on menarche as a central aspect of body politics in contemporary US society, emphasizing that women are integrated into the social and sexual order through the body. Using oral and written narratives of 104 diverse women, the authors address the central question of how menarche as a bodily event signifying womanhood takes on cultural significance in a society that devalues women. Exploring issues of contamination and concealment and the sexualization of women's bodies that occurs at menarche, the authors emphasize how the politics of gender are negotiated on/through women's bodies.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

What are women's experiences of menarche, an event that so completely identifies them as female in a society that devalues womanhood and women's bodies? In *Blood Stories* Janet Lee and Jennifer Sasser-Coen focus on menarche as a central aspect of body politics in contemporary society. Using a social constructivist post structuralist view of the subject, the book emphasizes that it is in part through the body that women are integrated into the social and sexual disorder, and it is in part through the discourses and disciplinary practices of menstruation, framed as "'feminine'" normative practices, that heterosexuality is constructed and reconstructed in everyday life.

About the Author

Janet Lee is Associate Professor and Director of Women's Studies at Oregon State University. **Jennifer Sasser Coen** is a doctoral candidate and instructor in the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences at Oregon State University.

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