

Chapter 1 : Creating a Sustainable Future: Women at the Center - Resource Media

When women have the power to make decisions about childbearing, the ripple effect is remarkable - bringing health, prosperity, enhanced human rights and a more sustainable future.

Women at the Center: Life in a Modern Matriarchy To order, visit this site: Cornell University Cornell University Press, This pioneering feminist anthropologist now gives substance to her arguments, redefining matriarchy and revealing the power of maternal symbols through an accessible ethnography of a famous matrilineal community. It dispels the notion that society always has been and always will be male dominated. It shows that societies where women have power are not mirror images of patriarchy but societies where both women and men benefit from an ethos of peace and accommodation. The importance of these findings cannot be overemphasized in a world where relations based on domination rather than partnership threaten us, our children, and our future. In this important and useful ethnography, Sanday provides the closely observed, everyday details of how such a system works and considers the bases for Minangkabau cultural practices in founding origin myths and proverbs, conceptions of cosmological and village space, and key life cycle rituals. Sanday foregrounds this particular reading of Minangkabau culture in terms of the larger question of matriarchy. Her contribution lies in her sustained rejection of dualist models of gender and powerâ€™matriarchy as the mirror image of patriarchyâ€™and in her sensitive treatment of how males uphold matrilineal adat custom. Those in search of a thorough treatment of feminist and anthropological theories of gender and difference may be disappointed, while those looking for a clear and engaging treatment of gender in a matrilineal society will be rewarded. Likewise, those interested in the role of Islam may find this part of the book thin, but the inclusion of post-reformasi changes is welcome. Of interest to anthropologists, students of kinship, and area studies specialists; useful for undergraduate collections on cross-cultural gender issues. It was obvious from the bags of newly threshed rice stored in the living room of the house that we were not expected. From my seat in the back of the Jeep that brought us from the coastal city of Padang, the capital of West Sumatra, I saw Wik grab a broom and start sweeping when she realized who was pulling into her driveway. His little body stood momentarily still, arched like a streak of lightning staring up at me in sheer amazement. Over and over he yelled to his mother, Ibu Wik. I embraced her gently in the Minangkabau way of familiar greeting, inhaling as I touched my cheek to hers. Because Agoes was still a little afraid of me, I offered him the more formal greeting. Leaning down to his level I stuck out my palm. At first hesitant, he stopped just long enough to extend his little hand making it stiff as a board. We touched palms and then drew our hands back to our hearts. I liked this greeting because of the emphasis on the heart. The look on the faces of Agoes and Eggi expressed what I felt on returning to Belubus â€™ joy at being once again in my adopted home; anticipation at what would transpire during this visit; excitement at the prospect of catching up with the family. I could see how Eggi and Agoes had grown in the nine months of my absence. Eggi was now a girlish nine and Agoes had left the toddler stage behind. Eggi was named after me in July of 1 after her birth in the house at which we had just arrived, my home during our visits to the village. The honor these women conferred by bestowing my name on Eggi transformed me from anthropologist to family member. This is one of hundreds of villages in the Minangkabau heartland connected by a shared sense of being part of a common world, founded centuries ago on the slopes of Mt. Merapi, the impressive volcanic mountain that rises majestically on the horizon wherever one travels. Numbering some 4 million people in West Sumatra, the traditional homeland of their culture, the Minangkabau are the fourth largest ethnic group in the archipelago. On my first visit I encountered many people who proudly referred to their society as a matriarchaat, using the Dutch term for matriarchy. I understood that this term was adopted from Dutch colonial officials who used it in the 19th and early 20th centuries to describe the Minangkabau. It is a tale about a special relationship, a special people, and a special place. The journey began in 1 Between the years 1 and 1, with the exception of five years between and , I returned every year to West Sumatra. Most of those years I lived in Belubus. I was alone until 1 when my husband, Serge, joined me for the first time. The Minangkabau matriarchaat deserves our attention because it has managed to accommodate patrilineal influences for centuries brought by immigrant

kings, traders and religious proselytizers looking to establish a base in the gold and pepper rich regions of the Minangkabau heartland. Today, tradition and modernity live in visible coexistence in the cities of West Sumatra. Malls, universities, banks, and book stores share the same street with traditional market places in the capital city of Padang. The colorful cities of the highlands attract tourists from all over the world. Buses link most villages to the cities. How these diverse influences are accommodated in village life is part of my story. My journey into the heart of the Minangkabau matriarchaat suggests that the time is long overdue for challenging the Western definition of matriarchy as rule by women. This definition has had the unfortunate consequence of producing over a century of squabbling over a vision that could only have been crafted through a Western patriarchal lens. It is impossible to find something that has been defined out of existence from the start. Furthermore, to look narrowly at secular rule in one domain of life to the exclusion of all other domains is to ignore much that is going on in the traditional societies of the human record. Finding no society where females as a class ruled like men, mainstream anthropologists proclaimed the universality of male dominance and struck the word matriarchy from their lexicon. To neglect this role because women do not flood the domain of male politics, despite the fact that they play a central role in other ways, has always struck me as androcentric bordering on misogyny. A number of feminist writers within and outside anthropology are not so myopic in their vision. Many understand the social implications of maternal meanings and refer to a female ethos in social relations which emphasizes love, duty, and common commitment to a sacred tradition. This characterization fits the Minangkabau as many of the anthropologists who have studied them have been at pains to point out. I prefer to retain the term matriarchy out of courtesy and respect for Minangkabau usage. As an anthropologist I see my task as one of understanding what the Minangkabau mean before devising a new term. I hope the reader will agree with my conclusion that rather than abolishing the word it should be refurbished. Had the original definition been devised based on what was known of female-oriented societies in the 19th century the word matriarchy would have had a very different genealogy in anthropological usage. In the interest of starting from ground zero, the chronicle of my journey includes the kind of ethnographic analysis that might have led to a different conceptualization of matriarchy. How the Minangkabau conceive of their world and think humans should behave in it along with the practices and rituals they have devised to uphold this world operates as a central theme in the story I tell. My experience of the centrality of women in this world at the end of the 20th century is the stage from which I speak. Based on this experience, I suggest that the term matriarchy is relevant in societies where maternal symbols are linked to social practices influencing the lives of both sexes and women play a central role in these practices. At the least, I hope this book conveys the respect for women that characterizes Minangkabau culture and permeates social relations in villages like Belubus. If this comprehension gives the reader an incentive to rethink female-oriented webs of significance in the societies of the human record including more patriarchal settings I will have accomplished my goal.

Peggy Sanday l and Peggi Sandi r , Aug.

Chapter 2 : Black Women at the Center - Higher Heights

Editor's Note: We had another busy, successful month in October at the Center for Women's History. Below, CWH intern Brigitte Dale recaps our participation in the Women's Building Block Party, and CWH special assistant Allee Surgeary reports on our Spicy Talk salon conversation.

Creating a Sustainable Future: More than you might think. Family planning gives women and families the tools they need to decide whether and when to have children – and that, quite literally, can mean the world. Here are a few of the ways in which access to family planning can help us build a healthier, more resilient world this Earth Day: Healthier moms and babies First and foremost, family planning supports later childbearing and healthier birth-spacing, which turns out to be very, very good for both moms and babies. Over million women in the world currently suffer from long-term or short-term illness brought about by pregnancy or childbirth, limiting their options for safeguarding themselves and their families in the face of natural disasters like drought, floods or heat waves. When women are healthier, they have greater ability to participate in activities that help their families and communities adapt to a changing environment and other stresses. That makes family planning an important foundation for healthy, thriving communities. Greater opportunities for education Family planning can also help women and girls complete their education – one of the general building blocks of resilience for society. Early childbearing is associated with early departure from school for young women, meaning many never get the education they need to realize their full potential. When women are educated, their options multiply and their earning power increases – money which is often invested back into the family. Educating girls and women is one of the best ways to lift families out of poverty , which ultimately builds healthier communities AND a healthier environment. That gives kids a head-start in life, puts families on a path toward greater resilience, and allows community development that is truly sustainable. Reduced pressure on natural resources If every woman around the world had access to family planning, and could determine the number and timing of their children, future population growth would be slower than most current estimates. That by itself would dramatically reduce pressure on natural systems that are already over-taxed. Research shows that a host of environmental problems – including the growth of greenhouse gases , food and water scarcity , and biodiversity loss – would be far easier to address if world population peaks at 8 billion, rather than climbing to 11 billion or more. Yet right now, many of the regions of the world that are most vulnerable to climate impacts also offer the least access to family planning options. Investing in Women, Investing in the World More than million women around the world still lack the family planning that would enable them to determine the timing and spacing of their children. We can and should do better. And the benefits for a more sustainable world ripple on. You can download the infographic here.

Chapter 3 : Blog | Women At The Center

A gifted innovator and advocate for people living with mental illness, Edna Stein was the first "Woman at the Center," the founder and first president of The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health.

Chapter 4 : Women at the Center, Life in a Modern Matriarchy

Women at the Center leaves the reader with a solid sense of the respect for women that permeates Minangkabau culture, and gives new life to the concept of matriarchy. Read more Read less Give the gift of reading, now \$

Chapter 5 : Women at the Center: Life in a Modern Matriarchy by Peggy Reeves Sanday

Women at the Center. Contrary to the declarations of some anthropologists, matriarchies do exist. Peggy Reeves Sanday first went to West Sumatra in , intrigued by reports that the matrilineal Minangkabau – one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia – label their.

Chapter 6 : Women at the Center -

For clarity - this was the WOMENS world championships. I repeat. Women's. Congratulations to the brave faces of silver & bronze. The world is gripped by a febrile madness.

Chapter 7 : Women at the Center: Life in a Modern Matriarchy - Peggy Reeves Sanday - Google Books

Founded in , The Women's Center's mission is to inspire and empower women, men and children to overcome violence, crisis and poverty. It is a place of hope, opportunity and better futures for families in Tarrant County.

Chapter 8 : Women at the Center - Empowered storytelling with Exposure

In Northern Virginia: Park St NE Vienna, VA () (TTY:) Fax: () questions@calendrierdelascience.com In Washington, DC: Vermont Ave NW, Suite Washington, DC () Fax: ()

Chapter 9 : Home - The Women's CenterThe Women's Center

Blog The Women at the Center blog features stories and tips on connecting women's empowerment and sustainability. You can sort this content by Issue area, or search using the tag cloud on the right.