



The Creation of Patriarchy (Women and History; V. 1)

By Gerda Lerner

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The Creation of Patriarchy (Women and History; V. 1) By Gerda Lerner

A major new work by a leading historian and pioneer in women's studies, *The Creation of Patriarchy* is a radical reconceptualization of Western civilization that makes gender central to its analysis. Gerda Lerner argues that male dominance over women is not "natural" or biological, but the product of an historical development begun in the second millennium B.C. in the Ancient Near East. As patriarchy as a system of organizing society was established historically, she contends, it can also be ended by the historical process.

Focusing on the contradiction between women's central role in creating society and their marginality in the meaning-giving process of definition and interpretation, Lerner explores such fascinating questions as: What can account for women's exclusion from the historical process? What could explain the long delay--more than 3,500 years--in women's coming to consciousness of their own subordinate position? She goes back to the cultures of the earliest known civilizations--those of the ancient Near East--to discover the origins of the major gender metaphors of Western civilization. Using historical, literary, archaeological, and artistic evidence, she then traces the development of these ideas, symbols, and metaphors and their incorporation into Western civilization as the basis of patriarchal gender relations.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Using admittedly sparse prehistorical evidence, Lerner offers a plausible multicausal theory to explain the development of the patriarchal system. She seeks to show that the subordination of women is a historical (i.e., changeable) phenomenon, not a natural one. Lerner posits that division of labor by sex occurred early but that the oppression of women began with the emergence of agriculture; the domination of women, she argues, preceded and served as the foundation for the origin of private property and the state and the institutionalization of slavery. More narrowly focused and more successful than Marilyn French's *Beyond Power* (LJ 6/1/85), Lerner's book will appeal to a sophisticated general reader. For large public libraries. Cynthia Harrison, American Historical Assn., Washington, D.C.
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Review

"Excellent and worthwhile for a course on status and gender."--Prof. Hedrich, *UCSanta Cruz*

"Lerner places the patriarchal issues in a larger historical context--which is absolutely necessary for understanding how patriarchy functioned in ancient Israel, and how it finds expression in the Hebrew Scriptures."--Alice L. Laffey, *College of the Holy Cross*

"A provocative and challenging interpretation of the historical subordination of women."--*The History Teacher*

"Lerner's work represents a significant step forward in the development of the feminist critique of the patriarchal edifice of knowledge and the writing of women's history....A very serious, provocative and important book."--*America*

"An important book, worthy of careful study."--A.D. Kilmer, *University of California, Berkeley*

"May well be the most important work in feminist theory to appear in our generation."--*New Directions for Women*

"History in the grand mode....[It] should be on everyone's reading list."--*The Women's Review of Books*

"This book dramatically reopens a chapter of women's history that historians had thought was forever closed to them--the origins of the collective dominance of women by men."--Kathryn Kish Sklar, *State University of New York, Binghamton*

"Written by one of the most brilliant historians of our era, this book dramatically reopens a chapter of women's history that historians had thought was forever closed to them--the origins of the collective dominance of women by men. Its evidence is fascinating, its arguments compelling, and its conclusions full of significance for our time as well as the distant past."--Kathryn Kish Sklar, *University of California, Los Angeles*

"A magnificent achievement."--William Chafe, *Duke University*

From the Back Cover

Women's history is indispensable and essential to the emancipation of women. The practical argument rests on observations of the profound changes in consciousness which students of Women's History experience.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Castaneda:

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Ann Edwards:

The feeling that you get from *The Creation of Patriarchy (Women and History; V. 1)* will be the more deep you looking the information that hide into the words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *The Creation of Patriarchy (Women and History; V. 1)* giving you thrill feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having this specific *The Creation of Patriarchy (Women and History; V. 1)* instantly.

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