



The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets

Barbara G. Walker

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Do You Know...

- where the legend of a cat's nine lives comes from?
- why "mama" is a word understood in nearly all languages?
- how the custom of kissing began?
- whether there really was a female pope?
- why Cinderella's glass slipper was so important to the Prince?

The answers to these and countless other intriguing questions are given in this compulsively readable, feminist encyclopedia. Twenty-five years in preparation, this unique, comprehensive sourcebook focuses on mythology anthropology, religion, and sexuality to uncover precisely what other encyclopedias leave out or misrepresent. *The Woman's Encyclopedia* presents the fascinating stories behind word origins, legends, superstitions, and customs. A browser's delight and an indispensable resource, it offers 1,350 entries on magic, witchcraft, fairies, elves, giants, goddesses, gods, and psychological anomalies such as demonic possession; the mystical meanings of sun, moon, earth, sea, time, and space; ideas of the soul, reincarnation, creation and doomsday; ancient and modern attitudes toward sex, prostitution, romance, rape, warfare, death and sin, and more.

Tracing these concepts to their prepatriarchal origins, Barbara G. Walker explores a "thousand hidden pockets of history and custom in addition to the valuable material recovered by archaeologists, orientalists, and other scholars."

Not only a compendium of fascinating lore and scholarship, *The Woman's Encyclopedia* is a revolutionary book that offers a rare opportunity for both women and men to see our cultural heritage in a fresh light, and draw upon the past for a more humane future.

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Angela Smith:

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