



# She: Understanding Feminine Psychology

*Robert A. Johnson*

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## **She: Understanding Feminine Psychology** Robert A. Johnson

What does it mean to be a woman? What is the pathway to mature femininity? And what of the masculine components of a woman's personality? Robert A. Johnson explores these questions in this new edition of *She*, updated to reflect the growth of his thinking on these subjects.

Many writers and scholars have long considered that the ancient myth of Amor and Psyche is really the story of a woman's task of becoming whole, complete, and individuated. Here, examining this ancient story in depth and lightening up the details, Johnson has produced an arresting and perceptive exploration of what it means to become a woman. You will not read these pages without understanding the important women in your life and a good deal more about yourself as a woman.

## **She: Understanding Feminine Psychology Details**

Date : Published November 1st 1989 by Harper Perennial (first published 1976)

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Author : Robert A. Johnson

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Genre : Psychology, Nonfiction, Spirituality, Philosophy, Fantasy, Mythology, Self Help, Relationships, Womens, Feminism, Psychoanalysis

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# From Reader Review She: Understanding Feminine Psychology for online ebook

## Elizabeth Merchant says

I recently discovered this author but I wasn't as impressed with this as I was some of his other titles. It read more like a good college psychology paper. Maybe feminine psychology isn't his strongest point. I wouldn't call it a waste of time, however.

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## Lisa Hough-Stewart says

A narrow and occasionally offensive reduction of women that purports to be an analysis of the female psyche. What it is, is a reasonably interesting interpretation of the myth of Psyche and Eros. I would be giving it more stars if the author had been honest about what this short book actually is. Instead he makes sweeping conclusions about femininity (but only in relation to masculinity, because the female psyche is valued only by reference to what it can do for men, apparently), based on his subjective views on one myth.

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## Ashley says

She: Understanding Feminine Psychology is an interesting book for readers that are intrigued by philosophy, psychology, mythology. Johnson relates feminine psychology to the Greek myth of Eros (Cupid) and Psyche to show the similarities between modern and ancient times, as well as the surprising authenticity and relevance of this myth.

The myth deals with Psyche, a young, lonely daughter of a royal family that ends up falling in love with Cupid, the son of the very jealous Aphrodite. She has no idea that she's in love with Cupid because she was originally arranged by Aphrodite to love and marry Death, but Cupid pricks himself with one of his arrows and falls for Psyche. Long story short, Psyche finds out that she's in love with Cupid and loses him. In order to win him back, she must go through many challenges created by Aphrodite. She makes it through each task with the help of nature and even Cupid. In the end, they get married and Psyche receives immortality from Zeus.

Johnson compares this myth to the experiences that women have in their transition from maidenhood to womanhood. He also elaborates on the maturation of women during marriage and the relationship between women and their mother-in-laws. One of the most interestingly analytical aspects of the book is his explanation of a woman's abilities to gain consciousness of the cruelty in the world around her and to encourage and understand herself emotionally and psychologically in times of distress. I found it quite interesting when Johnson admitted that men needed the femininity of a woman in order to fully understand and find meaning in situations and sometimes even in themselves. He elaborates on this topic much further in one of his other books, He: Understanding Masculine Psychology.

Many women that have read this book were taken aback and somewhat offended by the fact that the writer was a man, but I actually wasn't surprised or angered by it. I can honestly say that there is a great deal of truth in the book, but it is quite general. I really enjoyed the book because the author kept me on edge. Not

because he was always right about everything, but out of my own curiosity to see whether or not he'd say something ridiculously sexist. I have to admit that the book wasn't what I was expecting, and I'm pretty relieved about that. Of course there are a few things that I disagree with, but that's mainly because I can't relate to a lot of the generalizations that were made in the book. I would recommend this book for strongly opinionated people because its great for finding new topics to either support or refute. Its also a good book for debates and discussions concerning both the masculine and feminine psyches.

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### **Nancy Lewis says**

An interesting essay, but still slightly subjugative. I wonder if it's because of the author's personal views, or a sign of the time in which the book was written. Was 1989 really that long ago? There is a companion book called "He" (of course).

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### **Sebrena Williamson says**

Some of it made sense, some of it was kind of nonsensical... women should not define themselves and their femininity around men. Also, I would of been more comfortable and the research done was by women.... However, there are some good ideas about men and women needing femininity and masculinity both. There is a lot of good information surrounding evolutionary theory: how did the genders get this way? However, the author defines personality and purpose strictly in gender. As my boyfriend has many feminine qualities, and I have many masculine qualities, we cannot fit into these strict gender roles.

All in all, some interesting ideas about femininity and masculinity—but lots of cringes.

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### **Adam says**

A short read assembled by a Jungian psychologist type fellow. Overall pretty flaky and shallow. Idea herein is that the Greco-Roman character Psyche and her associated tale of love w/ Eros is actually a template for feminine behavior and personal evolution. The book reads pretty much like a horoscope and as such is not terribly interesting or full of impact (or win, if you're a hip nerdcore kid).

Apparently, this same author has written a similar tome for males based upon Ares. Most likely won't be visiting that.

Really need to stop picking books at complete random (and movies for that matter), or not. Either a gem is uncovered, or I die havin' read only crummy books. But at least that's better than spending nights w/ stains of a salisbury steak hungry man spattered across my shirt and stuck in the moustache while being sedated by Dharma & Greg re-runs.

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## Humaira Khatoun says

A book about feminine psychology written by a man and using a man-centric psychological interpretation. An interesting essay, but still slightly subjugative.

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## Nicole says

Don't be fooled by the book's small size. *She: Understanding Feminine Psychology* packs a powerful and frighteningly applicable punch. Delving deep into Greek mythology (particularly the tale of Psyche), Robert A. Johnson reveals how age-old stories contain universal truths. The work draws parallels to modern-day situations, and in effect, sheds light on the psychological and emotional issues that are prevalent in contemporary society. The information is useful to both men and women alike, since there are "feminine" elements in each of us.

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## Owlseyes says

**"Unless we do conscious work on it, the shadow is almost always projected. That is, it is neatly laid on someone or something else so we do not have to take responsibility for it".**

I took notice of him passing away last 24th September. My homage, reading him and listening to him.

This is a great book as proof that, in some cases, a myth (namely Psyche and Eros) may provide a model for understanding woman's failed or successful psychological development. But, despite Robert Johnson mentioning the feminists having a lot to say about this mythical approach, he doesn't reveal much.

To me, in our days the Feminist movement, in some cases, reached the incomprehensible level, maybe, demanding new Myths to explain and understand such a feminist fury (and hate projection?), ultimately, and negatively, impacting on women's psychological development.

And there's always the question of those true and false feminists. Though not agreeing totally with Ayaan Hirsi Ali, her words may shed some light on these issues: "...the serious and sincere feminists who really care about the equality between men and women...should not be seen with these fake feminists". Hirsi Ali was commenting on a "Women's March" back in 2017; and she's been critical about Islam\*.

She's quite an antithesis to Linda Sarsour.

\* <https://womenintheworld.com/2017/02/0...>

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## Alex says

This book has been sitting on my shelf for years. I picked it up today because it is December 28th and I

needed one more book to reach my 40 book goal. This was by far the skinniest book on the shelf, alas! I grabbed that shit and sat down to speed-read (this 40 book challenge was really important to me, ok?!)

Well, I'm not a believer in fate, but this book was what I needed to read at this exact moment in my life. Some of the love stuff was kinda schmaltzy for me, but I really loved the bits about personal development and growth. Oh, and the parts about weddings and marriage? I had to get a pen out to underline at that point- I was like, PREACH, Robert A. Johnson!

The mythical, dreamy, Jungian stuff was totally new to me and I really enjoyed it. My Aphrodite/Psyche energy is bout ready to bring a new consciousness to birth, mmk.

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## Azy says

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## Jenny says

There were moments when I thought Johnson was really on to something, but overall I couldn't relate an iota to the "femininity" posed in this book and, in fact, felt offended by it at times. This could be due to my surface-level reading of the book, but it could also have to do with the fact that Johnson tries to summarize feminine psychology in a mere 80 pages- missing opportunity after opportunity to present concrete modern examples of his interpretation of this Greek myth. Alas, true to my compulsive form, I must now read "He" and "We." I'd like to see how they all tie together and to see if Johnson interprets the psychology of his own sex/gender better than that of females.

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### **Shavawn Berry says**

In this book, *She: Understanding Feminine Psychology*, Robert A. Johnson examines the myth of Eros and Psyche as a metaphor for the work a woman must do to become conscious and alive. I found the the story illuminating and surprising -- full of magical events (ants sorting seeds, reeds giving advice on how to gather the golden fleece, an eagle who is sent to gather water from the river Styx)-- and down to earth explanations of the difficult passage that Psyche must make in order to become conscious. It is a life long journey that I find extremely fascinating. I am drawn to myths as sources of spiritual solace, and this is no exception.

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### **Will Bellais says**

This slim volume focuses on the story of Cupid (eros) and Psyche. Eros is the need for love and Psyche is the spirit of love. Johnson explores the maturing process of women through the story of Eros and Psyche. The story enchants on its own -- and we have heard much of this story through the Grimm Bros. fairytales. However, once we meet Eros, the perfect man who does not want to be seen for what he really is, Eros' mother Aphrodite, and the most beautiful girl on earth -- Psyche -- we are taken in by all the tasks that Mother-in-Law sends her through so she will be qualified to marry her perfect son. Sounds crazy, but when we realise this is the story of all women as they mature into womanhood, then the story is not crazy. I used it as a text in my classes for over 25 years. It is an important book.

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### **Eileen says**

Well, I still don't understand *Feminine Psychology*, but I enjoyed reading the book. Another notch in the belt of Jungian thought. One of these days I expect to have an awakening when it will all suddenly make sense to me. Till then I continue to plug away at reading -- building a foundation I hope. This one looks at the myth of Eros and Psyche as a metaphor for the spiritual journey every woman faces.

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