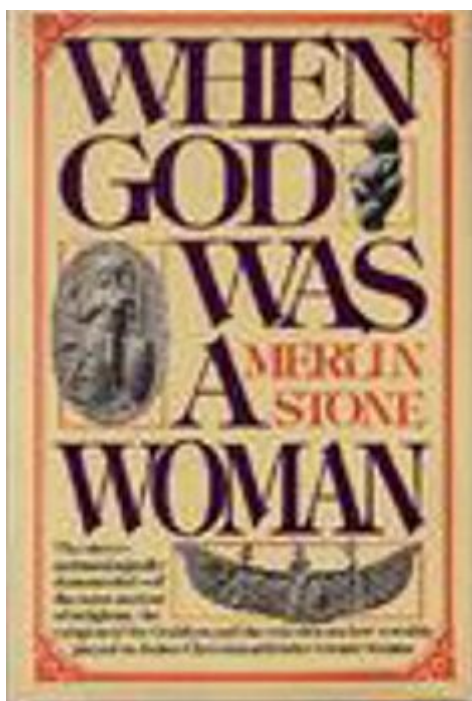


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# When God Was A Woman



## Synopsis

Here, archaeologically documented, is the story of the religion of the Goddess. Under her, women's roles were far more prominent than in patriarchal Judeo-Christian cultures. Stone describes this ancient system and, with its disintegration, the decline in women's status.

## Book Information

File Size: 4380 KB

Print Length: 322 pages

Publisher: Doubleday (May 9, 2012)

Publication Date: May 9, 2012

Sold by: Random House LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B0083DJYIK

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #153,300 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #20

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology >

Anthropology #29 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions,

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## Customer Reviews

The history of our society, our religions, and our gender roles is vital to understanding ourselves and our world. Things are not the way we have been told they were. The truth may well shock and anger you. We are becoming used to conspiracy theories and revisionist history surfacing in an almost constant stream these days. Much real history has been destroyed or distorted, and much we simply never knew. Spin doctors throw an immense amount of PR garbage in our faces to try and manipulate us into their camps. It is difficult to know whom to trust, particularly regarding emotionally loaded issues like religion and sex. Merlin Stone has written a very good book about the history of gender roles in Western society and the part religion plays in forming these roles. She also gives us insight into the nature of laws regarding sexual behavior and marriage, a subject of considerable

interest right at the moment. The book is very well documented with quotes attributed and citations listed in the bibliography. While the subject of populations in remote historical times can be quite dry when treated in detail, Stone manages to maintain a high degree of academic depth while remaining very readable and accessible. The book is well organized and leads one through the evidence to her very rational conclusions. She draws on vast amounts of archeological and historical data, and her arguments are convincing. The information in this book correlates well with information I have seen from other sources in my investigation of why religions and governments put so much time, money, and energy into criminalizing sexual behavior.

This is a really good book. ... having read quite a bit of other stuff on proto-Jewish, pre-monotheistic religions, I confirm that the author does stick to pretty well-known facts. She bases her argument primarily on a few (pretty-well established) facts, namely: - that (visibly female) goddess images are \*the\* oldest religious imagery to have been discovered, - that animistic religions with large local pantheons abounded for most of human history, - that the Jewish pentateuch was written in the context of other contemporary religions, and - that it is an easy jump to believe that prior to the advent of animal domestication/ husbandry the relationship between men and pregnancy was probably not well understood/known. She uses these main pieces of evidence as well as scholarship on pre-historic religions to build a (very convincing) argument that once upon a time when people thought women possessed some magic ability that allowed them to reproduce alone (via parthenogenesis and sans l'homme), femaleness was worshipped. So, people had no clue where babies came from, men were seen as pretty much useless and inheritance was a purely matrilineal affair. Then, ta da, a big bad monotheistic religion (proto-judaism) came along and said "Forget this stuff about men being useless! No, in fact, the Man is the creator of ALL! And what's more, the woman is born of the man -- contrary to all appearances. And we've got proof, just read this book we wrote called Genesis!" So, her book is about this; how did we get to this impasse? How did men manage to turn the common sense of the preceding millennia on its head? And how has this situation managed to persist for thousands of years (3 thousand to be exact)? Where did monotheism come from?

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