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## Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D.

**Goddesses in Everywoman**  
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### **Why have a 20th Anniversary Edition of *Goddesses in Everywoman*?**

It provides an opportunity for another generation of women to see themselves in the light of goddess-archetypes which are powerful personality shapers. These goddesses determine what deeply motivates and fulfills us — and they differ in different women.

### **What goddesses do you write about?**

Most of their names will be familiar: Aphrodite, Athena, Artemis, Demeter, Persephone, Hestia, and Hera — the goddesses of classical Greek mythology, which are archetypal patterns in us. When a woman makes an intuitive connection between the characteristics, symbols and myths of a particular goddess and herself, the Aha! that results is empowering and revealing of her own strengths and susceptibilities.

### **Were you surprised that your book became a best seller?**

I'm a psychiatrist and a Jungian analyst, my definition of myself hadn't included "best selling author." When it came out and immediately appeared on the San Francisco Best-Seller list and stayed there for many weeks, I was surprised and of course, very pleased. Then when it came out in paperback and sold over a half-a-million copies, and I kept hearing from women all over the United States that it changed their lives for the better, I realized that writing was a means to bring what I know from doing depth psychology work to readers. It keeps being discovered and translated by foreign publishers. This year it will be published in China: So far, it's been translated into fifteen languages.

### **In your new Introduction, you write about being surprised that it had a spiritual impact.**

The original subtitle was "A New Psychology of Women" which it was. I did not anticipate that it would become a major influence in women's spirituality or a goddess spirituality movement. It wasn't my intention.

### **Why do you suppose that your book about women's psychology would have a spiritual impact?**

What is personally deeply meaningful feels sacred. An Artemis woman (shorthand for this being her predominate archetype) feels spiritually close to nature, her cathedral may be a forest. A woman with a strong maternal instinct is like Demeter the mother of Persephone whose meaning is found in motherhood. She feels fulfilled in pregnancy or with her infant at her breast. When this archetype is central to a woman who can't become pregnant or loses her child, the grief is tremendous. Another woman, with a different active archetype may know she doesn't want children and have difficulty feeling she is a normal or psychologically healthy woman, when in fact she is. There is diversity among women, knowing so is very reassuring.

### **What is sacred for one woman is not for another?**

Definitely so. We can go through the motions or enact a role very well, and yet if the outer role does not have a deep connection with a corresponding inner archetype, it doesn't feel meaningful or sacred. A traditional marriage is a sacred commitment for a woman whose archetype is a Hera: If her husband is faithful to her, she feels complete. In contrast, a traditional marriage can feel oppressive and constricting to a "don't fence me in" Artemis, and like a resented abduction to an immature Persephone who was carried into it by the desires of a stronger personality.

### **How are you defining "archetype" and why is this important?**

The archetypal level of the psyche is what human beings share. C.G. Jung described it as the collective unconscious which I think of as like an aquifer, an underground river that is tapped into when we are deeply moved by emotion, when we dream, and through rituals that feel subjectively holy, sacred, and grace-filled. It's the reason that ancient myths fascinate us, and where symbols and archetypal patterns originate.

### **What about the Greek gods as archetypes?**

While the goddess-archetypes are usually the most influential in women, most women will find at least one of the god-archetypes is a strong part of herself. Mine for example, is Hermes the Messenger God — the archetype of the communicator who could go from lofty Mt. Olympus to the Underworld, and accompanied travelers. I have often commented that I should have written a fat book called Gods and Goddesses in Everyone. Instead, I wrote *Goddesses in Everywoman* and only after that thought to write *Gods in Everyman* which was published five years later. Knowledge of male archetypes is very helpful to women, especially those who are repeatedly drawn to in a series of men whose similarity is a particular archetype. Knowing the male archetypes helps women to understand their sons, husbands, fathers, lovers, friends. Just as men would learn a lot about the women in their lives through understanding the goddesses.

### **Do you now describe yourself primarily as an author or writer?**

Actually I don't, even though many people do and even though I think of myself now as someone who writes books — they all emerge

out of my work as a psychiatrist and Jungian analyst and from being a woman influenced by the women's movement who sees how culture affects everyone. I think that this has given me psychological binocular vision, through which I see how we need to become conscious of the expectations, limitations, and projections placed upon us from outside and about the powerful archetypes within us.

**What other books have you written?**

I have written nine books, all of which remain in print, with the latest being *Crones Don't Whine; Concentrated Wisdom for Juicy Women* and *Goddesses in Older Women: Archetypes in Women Over 50*. *Goddesses in Older Women* takes women who read *Goddesses in Everywoman* twenty years ago through menopause into what can be the most authentic and influential phase of their lives. Other titles: *Gods in Everyman*, *Ring of Power*, *Close to the Bone: Life-Threatening Illness and the Search for Meaning*, and *The Millionth Circle*.

This is a big anniversary year for me as an author. Besides a 20th Anniversary Edition of *Goddesses in Everywoman: Powerful Archetypes in Women*, I have two other anniversary editions. 2004 is the 25th Anniversary Edition of *The Tao of Psychology: Synchronicity and the Self* and the 10th Anniversary Edition of *Crossing to Avalon: A Woman's Midlife Quest for the Sacred Feminine*. If an astrological reading turns out to be true, this will be a very big year for me to be an influence — which is most imaginable through my writing. We shall see!