

Book Review:

Fierce Woman: Wake Up Your Back Ass Self
By Rhoda Shapiro
(Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications,
2019).

Reviewed by Jennifer Rose

Fierce Woman is like a new phase feminist manifesto for the spiritual woman's consciousness of the New Age. Author Rhoda Shapiro gives a critique of patriarchal society, and redefines woman as Goddess! Referencing the "Shakti" (divine feminine energy) of Yoga/Hindu tradition, she seeks to provide in each chapter of her book, a self-help roadmap with easy to understand and practice exercises for, really, spiritual practices) toward All woman's self-empowerment.

"As a woman, you are a universe unto yourself, vast, mystical, ever unfolding. A vibration of.

ferocious love and fierce insight... A goddess in all forms: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Your every cell is encoded with vibration, linking everything that you are to the power of the Cosmos!

Fierce Woman is more than just a mere self-help book for women, or a recap of the same old obvious antidotes and psycho-babble about boosting self-esteem, learning coping skills, or dealing with trauma and surviving abuse (or gender/sexual violence under patriarchy). No, Shapiro goes deeper into a critical analysis of certain aspects of patriarchy and its destructive effects on both/all genders, on humanity as a whole, and on our animal spirit brothers and sisters, which ultimately has an adverse material effect on the various interconnected/interdependent ecosystems and life-forms within the biosphere of the Living Earth!

"As we continue to destroy ecosystems — to suck the life-force out of our oceans, rivers, valleys, forests, and snowcapped mountains — as we continue to drill for oil and threaten the lives of entire species of animals, we shatter our connection to Mother Earth."

Shapiro gives a poignant and much needed critical look at the true scope of the problem of the patriarchy, which she redefines as more than a women's issue:

"[Patriarchy] doesn't just deny women of their natural expression. It also denies men of their own expression as well... has driven men to scoff at revealing emotions, at nurturing others, and appearing vulnerable. But these are human qualities."

"The patriarchy is not just anti-woman, its intent is ~~anti-woman~~ - reaching that. It is against humanity as a whole. It is a

system that feeds off the energy of disempowerment.

In other words, it's a system of oppression and slavery. It's a system of authoritarianism, colonialism, fascism, genocide, injustice, militarism, Nazism, police and prisons, State-sanctioned terror/torture violence, and war without end!

Patriarchy gave birth to imperialism and white supremacy. Patriarchy also gave birth to the monotheism of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam! Patriarchy became systemized and consolidated its power as the dominant social philosophy through the Church of Rome — with its erasure of pre-Christian cultural identities, and pagan traditions, forced conversions, the Inquisitions, and Witch Hunts. The matriarchal cultures and Mother-Goddess cult of the Neolithic Age, and of the Amazons, or other ancestral folk religions of humanity, which held sacred ALL Life, Mother Nature, and particularly women!

In Fierce Woman, Rhoda Shapiro has given us all some answers and exercises in each chapter. (Of this new Womanist Manifesto!) She urges women (and men/humanity) to explore the divine feminine "Shakti" (Sanskrit meaning "energy" or "power") — the Goddess — which exists within ALL of us, within our bodies, minds, and hearts/spirits. Shakti is the power that creates, sustains, and destroys our material universe, according to Hindu traditions.

In conclusion, we are exhorted with a heartfelt urgency to:

"Tap the dynamic and divine power of Mother Nature, and feel the way that she connects to your own feminine being."



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Jennifer Rose, E23852
Solinas Valley State Prison
P.O. Box 1050
Soledad, CA 93960

Blog: ~~www~~ betweenthebars.org/blogs/490/
Email: nosie.anarchy@gmail.com

