

YOUR STORY

One of the reasons I think the research and findings about Mary Magdalene are so important to women of today is that she never had a chance to ‘tell her own story.’

No, she wasn’t a prostitute. That rumor and falsehood can be attributed to a sermon Pope Gregory gave in 591. His description gave fodder to all the many stories to come. Hollywood certainly loved to frame their movies around this woman of ill repute.

A woman of demons? Even that reference to her has been shown to mean something totally different than what we think of ‘demons’ today.

Most importantly, it has become evident that she was one of the women who financed the disciples and was in fact, a leader in the early days of establishing Christianity. The fact that she is mentioned by name more than any other woman in the New Testament is an indicator of her importance.

Sadly, only 48, out of the 98 women referred in the entire Bible are mentioned by name. I always wondered why so few and who were those left out?

The painstaking and deliberate research of many scholars, especially Harvard theologian, Dr. Karen King and another giant of her time, biblical scholar, Dr. Jane Schaberg brings to light a new understanding of this woman. Both women risked their tenure and standing in their respected communities, even their careers to tell a different story of the Magdalene. The work of other equally educated and renown philosophers, authors and scholars continue to support the new findings. The Magdalene’s real story is one that is fascinating and tragic.

In the Dawn of Everything, a New History of Humanity, authors David Graeber and David Wengrow, tell us that women contributed more to the societies of prehistory than was previously thought. From play farming to creating new civilizations, they were significant. Their concepts are fascinating and most of all, make sense.

Throughout the ages, women have been ‘written’ out of history or their stories modified to a point that they would never be recognized for their contributions.

It’s one thing if a woman chooses that path, such as the authors who wrote under an alias as a man, so their works would have credibility or the painter who allowed husband to have all the recognition of her work.

It’s interesting to me that only in the past decade are we learning about the women who made their husbands or partners famous, women who were just as smart and talented, but never acknowledged. Only now are their contributions coming to light. Only recently, that we hear of the Black women mathematicians who were behind the success of NASA.

Too often, women simply aren’t mentioned, their contributions minimized or worse, overlooked.

So, who is telling your story? Are you living someone else's version of who you are, or what you should be or do? Have the labels of mother, wife, daughter, sister, employee, coworker become the story of you? Or is there another story of you? The dreamer you, the creator you, the courageous you. What will be known about you in the decades ahead?

There's a saying that if you don't tell your own story, someone else will. In business, that statement is modified to say...If you don't tell your story, your competitors will, and you won't like their version!

There's no better time than during Women's History Month to decide that you'll be the one to tell your story.

No one else has lived your life, no one else knows the breathtaking depth of your dreams or been awakened by your nightmares. There's only one you.

Your story is too important to leave to anyone else.

Karen Leigh King is a historian of religion working in the field of Early Christianity, who was the first woman to become the Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard University, in the oldest endowed chair in the United States (1721). Author of many publications and books, including *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala and Jesus and the First Woman Apostle*.

Jane Dewar Schaberg (1938–2012) was an American biblical scholar who served as Professor of Religious Studies and of Women's Studies at the University of Detroit Mercy from 1977 through 2009. She is author of *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene* and many other works.

Women who were not recognized for their contributions

Mileva Einstein, scientist, who may have been the true researcher of Albert Einstein's work
Margaret Keane, Big Eyes Artist, whose husband took credit for her work
Artemisia Gentileschi, Italian painter (1620) whose work long overshadowed by rape story
Rosalind Franklin, Pioneered DNA Research, assumed to be a research assistant
Barbara McClintock revolutionized genetics, never acknowledged

Women authors writing under male pseudonyms:

Alice Mary Norton / Andre Norton. ...
Alice Bradley Sheldon / James Tiptree, Jr. ...
Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin / George Sand. ...
The Brontë Sisters / Currer, Acton, and Ellis Bell. ...
Mary Ann Evans / George Eliot. ...
Joanne Rowling / J.K. Rowling / Robert Galbraith.
Louisa May Alcott / A.M. Branard
Karen Blixen / Isak Dinesen
Nora Roberts / J.D. Robb