



## A Mythic Life: Learning to Live our Greater Story

*Jean Houston*

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## **A Mythic Life: Learning to Live our Greater Story** Jean Houston

Bob Woodward made Jean Houston national news in the summer of 1996 when he revealed her working friendship with Hillary Clinton. Mrs. Clinton, Woodward reported, connected most enthusiastically with Dr. Houston and anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson when they met with the Clintons at a Camp David retreat that also included presentations by Marianne Williamson, Anthony Robbins, and Stephen Covey. Dr. Houston subsequently consulted regularly at the White House, especially helping Mrs. Clinton with her bestselling book *It Takes a Village*.

The tabloid press had a field day, but the sensationalistic coverage only revealed how out of touch the popular media are with the profound role that advanced psychology and spirituality play in people's lives today. Jean Houston is at the cutting edge of the work on realizing the fullness of our human potential, which is as mainstream and pervasive in our culture as computer technology.

*A Mythic Life* presents Jean Houston's real story and her true teaching. Here she draws on her personal history and vast cultural knowledge to show how we can experience in our own lives the greater human story that is revealed by myths and discover our real potential.

## **A Mythic Life: Learning to Live our Greater Story Details**

Date : Published October 11th 1996 by HarperOne (first published 1995)

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Author : Jean Houston

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## **From Reader Review A Mythic Life: Learning to Live our Greater Story for online ebook**

### **Jeanie says**

I saw Jean Houston at a conference and just loved her and love her more after reading the book. What a special person! The book was fun to read and explains a lot of her processes in working with groups. She has had some mystic experiences that are fun to read about.

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### **Sarah says**

Jean's story is amazing.

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### **David Melbie says**

I read this the first time back in 1997 when I was in living in Las Vegas by myself that summer. I remember being very moved then, too! As she calls it herself, it is a metabiography. --From *A Reader's Journal*, by d r melbie.

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### **Andrea Avalon says**

Her autobiography. Inspiring and expanding. Definitely one of the books that changed me. Recommended to me by Joshua Diess who I went to college with in LaGrande. Where is he now? I miss that crazy Phish lovin intellectual.

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### **Elise Jensen says**

I think most people who read a lot will say that there are certain books that changed their lives. I suppose, in all honesty, I have to say that when I read this book, I was at a sort of "crossroads" time anyway, so my life was changing with or without it.

Still, that said...

This book changed my life.

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### **Marques says**

Wonderful reading! A semi-autobiography chronicling life events as they pertain to relationships with

archetypes and mythic entities found throughout history and geography. I found many moments where I felt the author was speaking directly to me.

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### **Christopher says**

Jean continues to astound me.

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### **Lena Cox says**

A Mythic Life is the memoir of Jean Houston. Houston is a world leader in personal and social transformation. She anachronistically weaves the reader through her dreams, her conversations, her childhood, and her adulthood. With each thread of her weaving, she describes events in her life and how each event or fractal led to her path as a spiritual teacher. Her memoir draws parallels to how people have important past events that help them blossom and fulfill their present lives.

Houston's childhood involved moving often, some years several times in one school year. The moving taught her to observe, adapt, and join groups. Perhaps it was this constant out-siderness that allowed her to pause, even as a child, to see how people interact with each other and to learn how to employ optimal ways for people to work together. She shares her revelations that directed her to help people and communities deepen their creativity and their potential.

It's been Houston's pursuit to engage people and communities to exercise their full potential by spiritually reaching inwardly and outwardly. The text is full of wisdom nuggets like:

“Wounding often involves a painful excursion into pathos, we experience massive anguish, and the suffering cracks the boundaries of what we thought we could stand. And yet, time and again, I discover that the wounding pathos of our local stories contains the seeds of healing and even of transformation.”

and

“On her deathbed, Margaret [Mead] suggested to me that the answers lie not with economic or political initiatives but with a deepened citizenry. We can transform the world only by transforming ourselves, for what threatens our survival is not weaponry or technology but the people who use them.”

Her memoir requires an acceptance that life is experienced through many types of lenses and a bit of faith in the un-seeable. It's helpful to remember that Houston is a mystic. She believes in the energies and the essence that lie within people and that tie people to their ancestors.

I could have done without the second to the last chapter. She uses that chapter to break from the style of writing she used in the majority of the book to meld her love of cooking with her philosophy on improving the human condition. The chapter lacked the pace and fluidity of the previous chapters. It's my only complaint in an otherwise interesting read.

Her writing led me to further books, including her friend Joseph Campbell's The Hero with a Thousand Faces. His book was on my shortlist to read because it's a must-read text for writers; yet from Houston's

point of view and the conversations she shares that she had with Campbell, his famous text has a spiritual edge. In Houston's opinion, Campbell's book reveals the archetypes of spirits present in a multitude of myths and stories. Joseph Campbell was one of many of Houston's more famous friends. Her social circle also included anthropologist Margaret Mead and politician Hilary Clinton.

A Mythic Life is not a summer vacation read. Choose a time to read it when you have time to contemplate her message and her life. For an immensely creative woman, her memoir's cover is dull (dark tan with white writing); luckily the content is not.

More reviews at <http://pagecravings.com>

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### **Ladory says**

I listened recently to Jean Houston's online presentation on finding one's purpose in life. She was actually presenting her online course at \$400 per person. Since I'm not interested in taking any more self-improvement or self-exploratory courses, I decided to read her book instead. So I got the book from my local library.

I did not read this entire book. I only read about half. I had difficulty getting into it. When Ms. Houston was telling stories, she seemed like she was very impressed with her father's antics, as well as with herself for the famous people she met. When she was expounding on her teachings, much of her writing style was on the professorial side and not down-to-earth enough for me. I do have a degree in philosophy and I have been a life-long student. So I have read my share of professorial-style writings and I'm just done with it. I prefer to read things that speak to the common person. They are much easier for me to retain at my age (almost 62). I suppose I should appreciate being intellectually challenged but I'm just not anymore--not for this book, anyway. I'm studying French and world history and that's enough for now along with my full-time job at a national scientific laboratory. I'm sure this book would appeal to spiritual seekers, people who want to go deeper into themselves, or people who have not discovered their purpose yet, so I do not mean to be discouraging. I read someone else's review who said this was a life-changing book. I applaud that. It's just at my age and given my long experience with spiritual seeking, I'm pretty settled with who and where I am, and what I'm doing here.

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### **Elizabeth says**

What an amazing woman!

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### **Sarah says**

Intermittently interesting, but a bit of a slog. I'd much rather see the author speak than read her books and didn't finish this.

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**Greta Stough says**

This woman is really cool--she seems to live at least three levels above I do. I must learn her secrets...

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**Laura K says**

Exhausting. I am going to try one of her other books that isn't quite as "heavy" because I am interested in the subject matter and what she has to say.

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**Rachel says**

I am really enjoying this book, though it is not my normal fare. I connect to some of Jean's ideas, and though I don't always agree with her techniques, I very much appreciate her over-all message.

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**Jeff says**

This was a very easy to read autobiographical book. I may have a bias towards the sychronistic leanings of the author, which may not appeal to everyone! In any case, it kept my attention until I ran out of pages.

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