

the Queen's path



STACEY SIMMONS, Ph.D.



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A REVOLUTIONARY
GUIDE TO WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
AND SOVEREIGNTY



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**Whether a stay-at-home mom or
a high-powered corporate executive,
every woman strives to be Queen of her own life**

Women have a wholly different route to authority, independence, and freedom than men. It's the path to sovereignty—the ability to direct and claim full ownership of their lives. In **THE QUEEN'S PATH: A Revolutionary Guide to Women's Empowerment and Sovereignty**, Dr. Stacey Simmons, through years of meticulous research, shaped by her personal experiences, and validated through her work as a licensed psychotherapist, deftly lays out the one true route for women to reclaim every aspect of their lives, from work to motherhood, for themselves.

THE QUEEN'S PATH is a newly discovered archetypal journey that exposes a bitter lie at the heart of women's everyday experience. Taking this revolutionary route allows a woman to choose her own embodied sovereignty over either her safe submission or her dedicated rebellion. Through a rich tapestry of fairy tales, films, television, and the lives of her patients, Dr. Simmons reveals an ancient pattern hidden in plain sight for over a thousand years.

Designed to help anyone codify their journey, achieve sovereignty, and define their own destiny, **THE QUEEN'S PATH** supports every form of storytelling, in every creative domain, by helping professionals—from writers to psychologists—think in revolutionary ways about women-driven narrative, the inner journey, and character.



Among the issues Dr. Simmons addresses are:

- How the Hero's Journey (and its derivative The Heroine's Journey) are exclusionary of real-women's experiences.
- The difference between sovereignty, which is achieved, and equality, which is "given."
- Why the simplistic Good Girl/Bad Girl distinction is a trap, and how to undo it from the inside out and claim sovereignty
- The conflation of personal choice with structural gulag. Most women think that they are failing, when in fact, it's a systemic problem affecting every woman you know.
- The cultural phenomena that have driven our understanding of contemporary archetypes—from the burning of witches to the rise of tradwives.

THE QUEEN'S PATH

By Stacey Simmons

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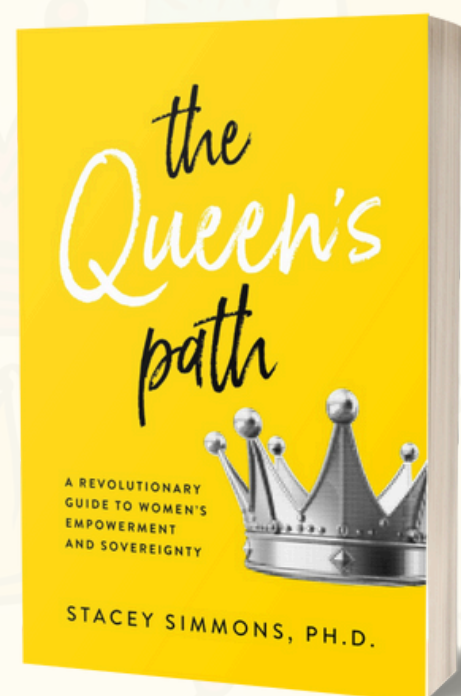
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STACEY SIMMONS

Stacey Simmons, MA, PhD, LMFT is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Certified Psychedelic Therapist. Her clinical practice focuses on helping creative professionals with everything from early trauma to creative blocks. After a debilitating few years being haunted by nightmares, Stacey left a career in entertainment to become a psychotherapist. She is a clinical supervisor at Hope Therapy Center in Burbank, California. Stacey is a leader in women's spirituality, having co-founded a church for Wiccans in her native New Orleans. She engages with spiritual seekers on Tik Tok as The Witch Mom @WitchDaily, where she has over 300,000 followers.

She is a volunteer researcher with The Integrative Psychiatry Clinic at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA, as well as an affiliate researcher with the TranceScience Research Institute in Paris, France. She holds a PhD from the University of New Orleans and a master's degree from Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California.



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Q&A WITH STACEY

Why did you write THE QUEEN'S PATH?

It started as a master's thesis. I knew there was more to it, but I struggled with it. Was it just a story model? Was it a real experience in people's lives? I had started to see it everywhere and I was confused. I was trying to figure out if I was inserting it into my clients' stories- like when you notice that half the cars on the freeway are the same as the one you recently bought- Was I just obsessed? Or was it real? I cooked up some food, and invited some friends and colleagues over to help me figure it out. One of my friends from grad school left early completely overcome. She sent me an email later explaining that I had given her a key to a life-long mystery. This revelation profoundly upset her, and made her see how she had been torn between her true nature and her family's expectations her whole life. Her story showed me how important it was. The story of the Divide and ultimately sovereignty wasn't an either/or... it was in stories and it haunted the unconscious in real women's lived experience. I broke down in tears, realizing how important the discovery was, and what a big difference it could make. It was profoundly humbling.

The vocabulary in TQP is fascinating. You introduce many new terms but also play with the meanings of existing words like sovereignty. Why was it necessary to invent/reinvent these words?

So many of the words we use have lost their gravity. In my therapy practice I ask my clients to get precise with their language. When words or concepts get mushy, or start to become hollow, we need new descriptions. Sovereignty is not a new word or concept, but it has typically been reserved for kings and/or nations. The UN changed that when it declared in 1948 that the rights of nations flowed upward from the sovereignty of a country's citizens. That really hit home for me. There are other women writers who have also reclaimed that and similar words. After my discovery I learned that Sharon Blackie reclaimed the word, sovereignty too, and another colleague of mine had a very similar thesis about women's lives, she called it "regency".

You define two competing archetypes in the book—the MISOR and the MIPE. How do these two types differ from the "traditional" good girl/bad girl labels?

Ohhh- they aren't competing at all! They're complements, though we often place them in competition with one another! The MISOR stands for Maiden In Search of Relationship, she's who we would normally associate with the Good Girl- but she's not always a good girl. She's the one who follows the social norms. She's protected by culture, she adheres to the standards. She is both Sleeping Beauty and Regina George. The other, the MIPE or Magical, Isolated, Powerful, and Endangered is the "other" woman. She's the typical "bad girl" she's the outsider, the one who doesn't follow convention. Her magic isn't always actual magic, it's usually something that separates her from the social norms- she's smart, beautiful, powerful, athletic, or yes... magical. She's both Maleficent and Janis Ian. The secret is they're both traps- meant to keep women comparing ourselves to a standard rather than following our own desires.

If you could choose only one “trap” to avoid on the queen’s path, what would that be and why?

The presumption is that either the MISOR or the MIPE is the end goal, or that one is a better way than the other to come into sovereignty. The experience of being divided is the real trap. The whole thing keeps women from our sovereignty, balancing on whether or not we are enough, if people like us, if we’re doing X, Y, or Z thing right. I learned the hard way that there is no version of submission that will bring a woman to sovereignty. You cannot submit yourself free. You can submit yourself SAFE, and that is what women are doing most of the time. So I suppose the thing to be on the lookout for is always that thing in us that tells us that submission is natural, and that there is an ideal. The reality is that submission is a choice, and can be a tactic, but it is not natural. So beware the trap that tells you that submission is natural, and that natural is the same as good. And as part of that beware any person, system, or expectations that tell you what the ideal YOU is. Sovereignty is figuring out for yourself, and loving that version, whether she fits in or not.

Who do you think are some well-known examples of women who are leading sovereign lives or are at least on the Queen’s path?

Oh SO MANY modern Queens! I’m just going to rattle off the first dozen or so as they come to mind: Beyoncé Knowles for sure! Superstar Taylor Swift, Michelle Obama, Malala Yousafzai, Oprah Winfrey, Rachel Maddow, Shonda Rhimes, Former PM of New Zealand Jacinda Arden, Colleen Hoover, Dolly Parton, Former Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin, Jennifer Anniston, Maya Angelou, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Justice Katanji Brown Jackson, Justice Elana Kagan, Margot Robbie, Director Greta Gerwig, Director Gina Price Bythewood... there are MANY! This is a list of recognizable queens, but there are just as many queens in my life and yours who aren’t famous. Fame and fortune aren’t prerequisites to sovereignty!

What do you hope people will take away from reading The Queen’s Path?

My hope is that women will read The Queen’s Path and find that they have more authority in their lived experience. The Divide tells women that everything that they are doing is wrong. And further, it makes us believe that our experiences are idiosyncratic- that they’re ours alone- we’re the only ones failing, we’re the only ones struggling... what’s wrong with me? The Queen’s Path shows that there is an archetypal model, and that our own unique journey has an archetypal underpinning. The hero’s or heroine’s journey only works for those who are born (or present) female if they FIRST achieve sovereignty.

Sovereignty means you own yourself first. That doesn’t mean you have to ascribe to feminism, it means you see your worth and honor it before you enter into any negotiations for power and authority. You NEVER come from the place of seeing yourself as “less than.” You always see that you have choice, power, and authority over your own being. Feminism is not the enemy, and to some degree, neither is patriarchy. The enemy is the Divide. The enemy is the hidden agenda that says that women are less. Women are subjects or objects. The enemy is the force that says that women are functions before we are people. That is the enemy. Sovereignty counters that. Sovereignty demands women’s humanity before any other “ism” and before any role. That is what I want for all women everywhere.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR THE QUEEN'S PATH

"In a field where it seems the stories are written by men; systemized and analysed by men; in relation to stories about men, for men, it is beyond refreshing to have Stacey Simmons' "Queen's Path" for screenwriters, therapists, and anyone who cares about gender and narrative. Insightful, intellectually engaging, surprising, and detailed it finally offers a different path through the story that does not have to follow on from the hero's tired, well-worn journey."

—**Professor Paul Wells**, Director of the Animation Academy, Loughborough University, Chair of the Association of British Animation Collections (ABAC), Part of the BFI, BAFTA and the UK's National Media Museum

"Finally, an analog to the Hero's Journey developed exclusively for women—not a derivation of the male monomyth, but a distinct, archetypal journey of her own. Stacey Simmons has distilled the uniquely feminine experience into a necessary storytelling tool for any writer seeking to accurately portray the female character and her arc, in both the real world and beyond."

—**Samuel C. Spitale**, author of *How to Win the War on Truth: an Illustrated Guide to How Mistruths Are Sold, Why They Stick, and How to Reclaim Reality*

"In the Queen's Path, Dr. Simmons has developed a powerful and insightful theory of female-centered narrative that is both highly academic and easily accessible. The members of The Writers Workshop were blown away; they not only found the theory helpful in constructing powerful fiction but also, for many of the female attendees, helpful in understanding their own life stories. The Queen's Path deserves to take its place alongside Campbell's Hero's Journey. It is as important to authors of all genders, writing in all genres.

—**Lorna Partington Walsh**, Director, The Writer's Workshop UK

"For millennia, we have been psychically trapped by the concept of the hero's journey as the only viable storytelling archetype. In ways subtle and less subtle, that has nudged our communal consciousness to continue on in the patriarchy – by prioritizing, elevating, and admiring only those traits, mind-pathways, and thought patterns most common to men. Stacey Simmons, with this work, liberates us from that paradigm. It is beyond thrilling to follow her mind and brilliance through an escape hatch and into a glittering field of what storytelling can be when the underlying structures are rearranged to accommodate and support feminine modalities."

—**Naomi McDougal Jones**, Filmmaker and Author of *The Wrong Kind of Women: Inside Our Revolution to Dismantle the Gods of Hollywood*

"I'm blown away by the ambition and the scale of *The Queen's Path*, this work is revolutionary for women-driven story. Women won't be relegated to second class citizenship in the halls of heroes any longer! The world needs *The Queen's Path*, and it needs it now!"

—**Steven Pressfield**, author of *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, *The War of Art*, and *A Man at Arms*.

"Every director and screenwriter in Hollywood is going to buy this book. It will take its place next to Chris Vogler's *The Writer's Journey*. I can't wait to assign it to my students."

—**Anne Hamilton**, Writer/Director, *American Fable*, Professor, University of Southern California Film School

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