**Barbara G. Walker 1930- Wikipedia Dec 1 2015**

  

**Barbara G. Walker** (born July 2, 1930, in [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia,_Pennsylvania)) is a [U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) [author](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Author) and [feminist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist). She is an influential [knitting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knitting) expert and the author of several classic encyclopedic knitting references, despite "not taking to it at all" when she first learned in college.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-1) [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-skep-2) Other topics she has written about are [religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion), [cultural anthropology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_anthropology), [spirituality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirituality), and [mythology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mythology) from the viewpoint of [Pre-Indo-European](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic_Europe) [neolithic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic) [matriarchies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matriarchy).

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**Books**

**Knitting**

In the 1960s and 1970s, she authored several volumes of knitting references which have become landmarks for their comprehensiveness and clarity.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-3) Her Knitting Treasury series documents over a thousand different [knitting stitches](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knitting_stitches). Other books considered [mosaic knitting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosaic_knitting), for producing multicolored designs while knitting only one color per row, and constructing knitted garments from the top down rather than the usual bottom-up method used in [Western knitting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_knitting) tradition. Her legacy continues with the reprinting of most of her knitting books, starting in the mid-1990s, as well as the publication of new contributions to knitting literature.

**Feminism and skepticism**

She writes about both the problems with mainstream religion and how these have contributed to patriarchal societies and sexism.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-NJNOW-4)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-skep-2) In *The Skeptical Feminist: Discovering the Virgin, Mother, and Crone*, she writes about her belief that there is no god. However, she believes that people, and women in particular, can use the image of the [goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goddess) in their day-to-day lives. She often uses the imagery of the [Mother Goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Goddess) to discuss [neolithic matriarchies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistoric_religion). Her book *Woman's Rituals: A Sourcebook* is an attempt to show how she puts her "[meditation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation) techniques" into practice, and is meant as a guide for other women to do the same thing.

**Personal life**

She studied journalism at the [University of Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pennsylvania) and then worked for the [*Washington Star*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Star) in Washington, D.C. While serving on a local hotline helping battered women and pregnant teens in the mid-1970s, her earlier interest in feminism became heightened. She continued a personal study of comparative religions and feminist issues after she graduated [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-skep-2) which led to her writing *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (1983). [[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-NJNOW-4)

Walker describes herself as an [atheist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atheist). The American Humanist Association named her "Humanist Heroine" in 1993, and in 1995 she received the "Women Making Herstory" award from the New Jersey [NOW](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Organization_for_Women).[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_G._Walker#cite_note-NJNOW-4)

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**See also**

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