

AUTHOR'S REFLECTION ON WRITING *THE BLAME*

Q: *What made you write this book? When did you first realize you needed to tell this story?*

A: During my schooling for my double bachelor's degrees in anthropology and history, I always chose to uncover hidden stories involving women for my papers. The more I researched, the more I found—tucked away in footnotes, buried in archives. It was as if these women were falling from the sky into my lap. I collected them and started writing, but it was on January 1, 2025, when the women of NASA were erased from the website, that I felt the anger rise. That's when I began polishing my draft in earnest, determined to create this book.

Q: *You dedicate this to your daughters and granddaughters. How has being a mother/grandmother shaped this work?*

A: It is important to me that I leave this world a better place for them and for all women, but being a mom and grandma made this work urgent. They are still young and up against a world that is not changing as fast as I would like. This book is my way of arming them with knowledge and showing them that they stand on the shoulders of countless silenced women who fought before.

Q: *What was the most shocking discovery you made during your research?*

A: Connecting the dots from the past to the present—seeing all the overlapping arcs—truly shocked me. Throughout history, we've just called it something else. Witch hunts are still going on. First they burned women, then they institutionalized us, now they blame us for using Tylenol and causing autism. The method changes, but the pattern persists.

Q: *Were there women you wanted to include but couldn't? Why?*

A: I wanted to include more contemporary women globally and the real-time struggles happening right now. In part I did, but sometimes it's hard to know when to stop writing when the stories keep unfolding in real time. I wanted to show how the patterns continue and, in some ways, in some countries, are accelerating.

Q: *What was it like reading the Malleus Maleficarum? How do you process such violent historical texts?*

A: It was deeply disturbing, like reading most historical documents written against women. The fact that they codified persecution in writing—made it legal to harm women—is unnerving. But we see similar patterns in how the Bible, Koran, and Torah are still used today to justify control and violence. Processing these texts requires sitting with the horror and refusing to look away.

Q: *Why did you choose to include the poetic interludes alongside scholarly analysis?*

A: I am a storyteller first and foremost, and I didn't want to lose that just because this was a nonfiction history book. The content is heavy and difficult to process, so I wanted to give readers a break—a chance to see things through a different lens before moving to the next weighty section. Poetry allows breath.

Q: *Why is the book called “The Blame” rather than “The Erasure” or “The Theft”?*

A: I chose *The Blame* because while researching all these hidden histories, I literally asked myself: “If Eve and Helen were blamed for the fall of Eden and Troy, who else has been blamed?” In that moment, I realized why heresy, stolen genius, and violence against women has always been constructed as acceptable. Blame them first, then remove them from history. It all starts with blame.

Q: *The “Lost Chapter” bridge sections are unique. What inspired that structure?*

A: I knew that moving from one section to the next would raise questions about how history jumped from one issue to another. A “Lost Chapter” felt right, especially since so much of women’s history has been lost. These bridges connect the parts without creating additional heavy chapters. They also allow readers to breathe and decide for themselves how the patterns connect.

Q: *Did writing this book change you? How?*

A: I spent a lot of time crying, sitting in anger, wrestling with denial. Yes, this book changed me profoundly. I cannot unsee the patterns now. But I also carry a thousand women’s voices with me—their influence guides me through life, reminding me that I can do anything, that I have a purpose: to continue their work.

Q: *What do you hope readers will DO after finishing this book?*

A: I hope readers will choose one woman from these pages and research her further—or discover women not listed here and ask why they were erased. I hope they'll see the patterns and recognize them in their own lives. Most of all, I hope they'll know they have a voice in this world and use it to write women back into the storyline.

Q: *Have you experienced the Matilda Effect in your own life?*

A: Absolutely, in various forms. I still do, even as I write this book. Ask any woman—she would say yes. I remember when the #MeToo movement rose and men were shocked, saying, “Every woman I know is using the #MeToo hashtag—is this for real?” Yes. It’s always been real.

Q: *Why is this book urgent RIGHT NOW in 2025?*

A: It's urgent because the patterns need to stop. Bringing awareness to how long they've persisted is one way to break them. We're at a moment where erasure is happening in real time—on government websites, in legislation, in everyday life. If we don't name it now, we lose another generation of women to the footnotes.

Q: *What would you say to someone who thinks this is “just history” and doesn’t affect them?*

A: I would ask them to look at today's news. The patterns I trace in this book—from witch burnings to forced institutionalization to modern blame—are still unfolding. When women's contributions are erased from NASA's website in 2025, when women are still fighting for bodily autonomy, when we're blamed for everything from autism to economic collapse, it isn't history. It's now. History isn't something that happened—it's the blueprint for what's still happening. If we don't see the patterns, we can't break them.

Q: *If your granddaughters read this in 20 years, what do you hope will have changed?*

A: That there is an equal, safe, and equitable world for them—one where they can walk out the front door without fear and speak their truth without doubt. I hope they read this book and think, “How strange that women once had to fight for such basic things.” That's the world I'm working toward.

Q: *What gives you hope?*

A: The strength of my daughters and granddaughters. The fight that other women are waging in their own ways—whether in silence or on the picket line, during conflict or at work, in the confines of their homes or cubicles. We are still here. We are still fighting. That gives me hope.