

Speaking of Jane Roberts: Remembering the Author of the Seth Materials

Susan M. Watkins

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There is a generation of metaphysical readers who recall Roberts who channeled the spirit entity, Seth, in the '60s and '70s. The author of this book studied and philosophized with Jane Roberts for more than sixteen years and proceeds to explore her mentor as a human being with all foibles bared.

Roberts regularly taught psychic or ESP classes, besides writing novels, nonfiction, poetry, and the Seth material. She was extremely creative in her own right and productive at that. Because of the Seth involvement, her life direction and possibilities changed. Channeling of spirit entities was a whole new game in those years. The public often reacted suspiciously and "her work met with much ridicule," wrote her husband Rob.

Antagonism shows up in this teacher/student relationship, "...on one hand I sought her approval and on the other wanted to be free of its judgment," states Watkins. The underlying theme of judgment revolves around Roberts pushing Watkins to be a writer "with a capital 'W.'" The author reveals the personal aspects of Roberts and tries to make sense of her own self in relation to their past together. Watkins succinctly describes her karmic friend: "[I saw Jane as] compassionate, intellectually adroit, gifted with a wonderful 'what the hell' playfulness, she was at the same time the most serious, intensely focused person I ever knew, sometimes bluntly so." Watkins researches aplenty and comes up with various quotes from other sources. Included are thirty-five pages of thorough endnotes.

For the avid reader of Seth material, Roberts was always an eccentric mystery. Now, for better or worse, her vulnerabilities are unveiled, and readers will find she is much more complex than the anointed role of Seth's conduit. A major portion of her energy dealt with her chronic condition of debilitating arthritis. Roberts died from complications of this disease in September 1984.

Through this memoir, Watkins works out her own emotional issues with Roberts. The reader is left with a sense of sadness and admiration for the courageous life of Jane Roberts.

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