



Marilyn: Norma Jeane

By Gloria Steinem

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Gloria Steinem's insightful and uniquely sensitive account of Hollywood's brightest star from the Golden Age

Few books have altered the perception of a celebrity as much as *Marilyn*. Gloria Steinem reveals that behind the familiar sex symbol lay a tortured spirit with powerful charisma, intelligence, and complexity.

The book delves into a topic many other writers have ignored—that of Norma Jeane, the young girl who grew up with an unstable mother, constant shuffling between foster homes, and abuse. Steinem evocatively recreates that world, connecting it to the fragile adult persona of Marilyn Monroe. Her compelling text draws on a long, private interview Monroe gave to photographer George Barris, part of an intended joint project begun during Monroe's last summer. Steinem's *Marilyn* also includes Barris's extraordinary portraits of Monroe, taken just weeks before the star's death.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

This latest in the flood of books about Marilyn Monroe comes from feminist-journalist Steinem. Steinem admits that as a teenager she walked out on the movie *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* because she was embarrassed at Monroe's performance/persona. Now admiring of her subject, Steinem spends little time on Monroe's films but instead concentrates on her personality, believing it, along with her appearance, to be responsible for her status as a cultural icon. Occasionally Steinem's prose is too purple, but for the most part the book serves well as an even-handed introduction to the Monroe phenomenon. Barris's numerous photographs are attractive but somewhat repetitious, as they apparently were taken at just a few sessions. Fortunately, some photos from additional sources are used to depict other aspects of Monroe's life. John Smothers, Monmouth Cty. Lib., Freehold, N.J.
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About the Author

Gloria Steinem (b. 1934) is an American feminist, activist, writer, and editor who has shaped debates on gender, politics, and art since the 1960s. Steinem was born in Toledo, Ohio. Cofounder of *Ms. Magazine* and a founding contributor of *New York* magazine, Steinem has also published numerous bestselling nonfiction titles. Through activism, lectures, constant traveling as an organizer, and appearances in the media over time, Steinem has worked to address inequalities based on sex, race, sexuality, class, and hierarchy. She lives in New York City.

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