



Marilyn Monroe

By Barbara Leaming

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Marilyn Monroe By Barbara Leaming

Barbara Leaming's Marilyn Monroe is a complex, sympathetic portrait that will forever change the way we view the most enduring icon of America sexuality. To those who think they have heard all there is to hear about Marilyn Monroe, think again. Leaming's book tells a brand-new tale of sexual, psychological, and political intrigue of the highest order. Told for the first time in all its complexity, this is a compelling portrait of a woman at the center of a drama with immensely high stakes, a drama in which the other players are some of the most fascinating characters from the worlds of movies, theater, and politics. It is a book that shines a bright light on one of the most tumultuous, frightening, and exciting periods in American culture.

Basing her research on new interviews and on thousands of primary documents--including revealing letters by Arthur Miller, Elia Kazan, John Huston, Laurence Olivier, Tennessee Williams, Darryl Zanuck, Marilyn's psychiatrist Dr. Ralph Greenson, and many others--Leaming has reconstructed the tangle of betrayal in Marilyn's life. For the first time, a master storyteller has put together all of the pieces and told Marilyn's story with the intensity and drama it so richly deserves.

At the heart of this book is a sexual triangle and a riveting story that has never been told before. You will come away filled with new respect for Marilyn's incredible courage, dignity, and loyalty, and an overwhelming sense of tragedy after witnessing Marilyn, powerless to overcome her demons, move inexorably to her own final, terrible betrayal of herself. Marilyn Monroe is a book that will make you think--and will break your heart.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This extraordinarily thoughtful book by Barbara Leaming, a literary star among movie-star biographers, offers the last thing you'd expect in a book on Marilyn Monroe: new information from verifiable sources. Sure, lots of the tragedy is familiar: an abused, confused girl from an orphanage with a mother in a madhouse rises from sexual party favor for homely showbiz men to the movie superstar who pushes them around, until she crashes, a victim of self-loathing and drug addiction.

The thing about a tragedy is that its heroine isn't a victim--she's responsible for her fate. Leaming does scholarly spadework, digging up hard facts from sources like UCLA's 20th Century Fox collection and the diary-like first drafts of Arthur Miller's semiautobiographical work, and she makes sense of Monroe's motives. She even apparently solves Monroe's suicide with clues from the star's psychiatrist's letters in the Anna Freud collection. Her last overdose may have happened just because her shrink went to dinner with his wife and she felt abandoned.

But until pills killed her, Monroe wasn't a candle in the wind. She burned with ambition and knew how to craft a persona and play power games--with moguls and with the commie-busters hounding her husband Miller. Leaming plausibly analyzes the Miller-Monroe-Elia Kazan love/hate triangle, sizes up the Kennedy connection, busts her acting coach Lee Strasberg as "chillingly mercenary," and deftly shows just how her life entangled her art, film by film.

This book has a woman's touch: it's a work of sharp intellect and emotional insight unclouded by lust or star worship. --*Tim Appelo*

From Publishers Weekly

Thirty-six years after Marilyn Monroe's death (at the age of 36), Leaming, prolific celebrity biographer, picks through the bones and neuroses of the ultimate Hollywood icon. More than 200 books have been written on the subject; only a few biographies (namely, Donald Spoto's revisionist *Marilyn Monroe: The Biography*) have managed to humanize the fragile actress, who has long since been subsumed by her own mystique. Leaming's relentlessly morose and stand-offish portrait, by contrast, places Monroe on a downward spiral from birth. Beginning in 1951, the book backtracks briefly, skimming over her childhood, early marriage, status on the party-girl circuit and early screen debut. Relying on letters, memos, other biographies and a paper trail from Twentieth Century-Fox, Leaming relays the precise dates when Monroe signed contracts, called in sick, filmed for half a day, etc. It's an approach that does little to explain Monroe's dynamic screen presence, her warmth and charm. The absence of new interviews here is most noticeable in passages detailing Monroe's marriages to Joe DiMaggio and Arthur Miller. Both husbands remain enigmas on the page. However, secondary characters (such as Lee and Paula Strasberg and longtime agent Charles Feldman) are often vividly etched. If Monroe enjoyed any good friendships or happy experiences making films, they're not presented here. Leaming's real contribution is the coverage of the HUAC blacklisting trials and its effects on the men in Monroe's life. As interesting as these details may be, however, they overwhelm the book and, even worse, shove Marilyn from the spotlight. 32 pages of photos not seen by PW.

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From Library Journal

The author of a number of big biographies of big stars, e.g., Katharine Hepburn (LJ 4/1/95), Leaming digs into the scandals surrounding Monroe's life and death.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Terry Tyrrell:

Hey guys, do you want to find a new book to see? Maybe the book with the headline Marilyn Monroe suitable to you? The actual book was written by popular writer in this era. The particular book untitled Marilyn Monroe is one of several books that will everyone read now. This particular book was inspired many men and women in the world. When you read this e-book you will enter the new shape that you ever know prior to. The author explained their plan in the simple way, consequently all of people can easily to understand the core of this e-book. This book will give you a lot of information about this world now. To help you to see the represented of the world on this book.

Patricia Vasquez:

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