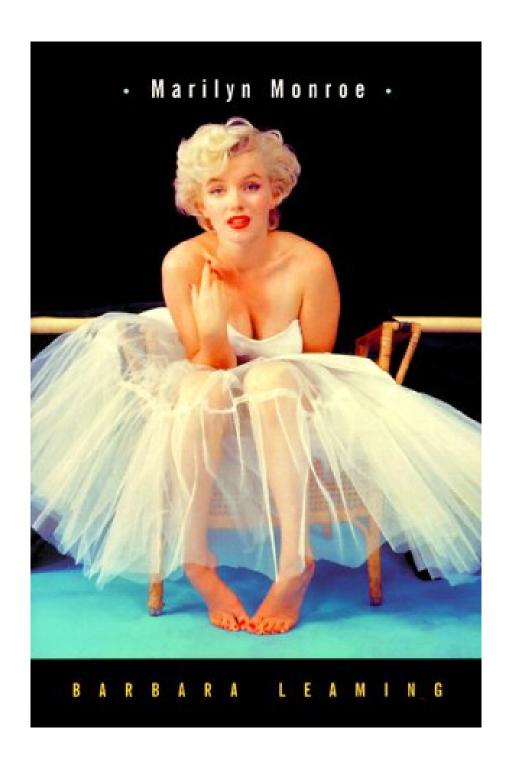


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The thing about a tragedy is that its heroine isn't a victim--she's responsible for her fate. Leaming does scholarly spadework, digging up hard facts from sources like UCLA's 20th Century Fox collection and the diary-like first drafts of Arthur Miller's 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

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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.

Sales Rank: #199216 in BooksBrand: Brand: Three Rivers Press

Published on: 2000-02-29Released on: 2000-02-29Original language: English

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• Dimensions: 9.16" h x 1.30" w x 6.08" l, 1.61 pounds

• Binding: Paperback

• 480 pages

#### **Features**

• Used Book in Good Condition

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Most helpful customer reviews

37 of 40 people found the following review helpful. disappointing.

By Elizabeth Roberts-Zibbel

Don't buy this biography of Marilyn Monroe if you are at all curious about her thoughts and feelings, details of her personal life, or her mysterious death. However, if you want to read hundreds of pages all about Marilyn's battles with 20th Century Fox studios, her dissolved partnership with Milton Greene, and how she spent her money, then this is the book for you. Leaming's primary source was Marilyn's extensive file at Fox, which leads to an extremely disappointing and impersonal look at a dynamic icon. I recommend \_Legend\_ by Fred Lawrence Guiles instead, though non-conspiracy fans tend to prefer the Donald Spoto biography.

Either is preferable to this one.

20 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

No one respected Marilyn,

By V. VanCamp

least of all Marilyn! Here was a sad and tragic woman who just wanted to be loved, but even when she was loved, she was unable to believe it or accept it. This book is so sad and heartbreaking. It left me wanting to comfort the little girl inside Marilyn Monroe. She longed for respect, but also did not believe she deserved it. Marilyn should have had therapy when she was a young girl. By the time she was in therapy, it was too little, to late.

This book is fascinating. I loved that Barbara Learning gave us a lot of details, because it helped me to really get a feeling for Marilyn and her life. I also enjoyed reading about other people such as Arthur Miller, Joe DiMaggio, Elia Kazan and Lee & Paula Strasberg. (To name just a few!) This book gives you a very clear picture of Hollywood and all of its selfish, greedy and self-oriented people.

This book makes me feel that Marilyn did not get a fair shake in this world. It is also apparent, though that Marilyn made some big mistakes that hurt her badly. She was a lost girl and she needed help and guidance that she never really got. Most of the people she received 'help' from had their own agendas and so their 'help' focused more on them than it did Marilyn. There was a huge part of Marilyn that never grew up. She was fragile and was unable to stand the harshness of this world, and so, she self-destructed.

Excellent book - sad book - intriguing book - absolutely worth reading!

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Marilyn Monroe As You've Never Seen Her Before!

By Jo Manning

Neither sensational, nor scandalous, nor trashy, Leaming's extremely well-documented tome concentrates on Marilyn Monroe's struggles with her studio, 20th Century Fox, and her relationship with the various men and women in her professional life (agents, producers, directors, partners, etc.) and in her personal life (boyfriends, husbands, ex-husbands, mentors, psychiatrists, acting teachers, etc.) Monroe wanted to be in charge of her own career, but was perceived by many (notably Daryl Zanuck)to be talentless and emptyheaded. She was anything but talentless and empty-headed, but it was an uphill battle trying to convince those in the positions of helping or hindering her career. Her growing paranoia (there was mental illness in her family and Learning says she feared she was next in line) and her increasing performance anxieties finally did her in, and she was fired by the studio. Her reputation as someone who was difficult to work with and undependable made producers leery of hiring her. Growing ever more dependent on her acting teachers (the Strasbergs) and her psychiatrists (Marianne Kris and Ralph Greenson) and drinking and doping to excess most probably led to her suicide. She'd attempted to kill herself several times before. Her relationship with her husbands Joe DiMaggio and Arthur Miller is explored in a fascinating new way. All you ever thought you knew -- from the tabloids and the gossip columns -- may have just skimmed the surface of the complex reality. A must-read for anyone interested in the Marilyn Monroe phenomenon, the big Hollywood studios, and the movie biz in general. Leaming's research and documentation are truly impressive. Essential for any library/personal movie collection.

See all 75 customer reviews...

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