

Marilyn Monroe

To many, Marilyn Monroe is a legend: the sex goddess, the dumb blonde, the pinup who became a Hollywood star. But, to those who were alive in her era, Marilyn Monroe is a tragedy.

Although also known as Norma Jean Baker, her real name was Norma Jean Mortenson. She was born on June 1st, 1926, in Los Angeles. She never knew her father and grew up with her grandparents. She married a man named Jim Dougherty in 1942 [*she was 16*] and seemed on her way to a normal life. She worked in a weapons factory during the war, but she soon started posing for pinup pictures. It wasn't long before she left Dougherty for men she could use to make her ambitions come true.

It was when she was hired by Twentieth Century Fox in 1946, after meeting a Fox scout, that her name was changed to Marilyn Monroe. She was fired from Fox in 1947, but that enabled her to shoot *Love Happy* with the Marx Brothers and *The Asphalt Jungle*, directed by John Houston, for MGM. Then she was rehired by Fox, where she did *All About Eve*. Her first big part was in *Don't Bother to Knock* in 1952. Marilyn, the Star, was born that year, when she shot *Monkey Business* and *Niagara* (1952,1953). Then came really big hits such as *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *How To Marry a Millionaire*, and *River of No Return*.

In 1954, Marilyn Monroe married baseball star Joe DiMaggio, but they were divorced a few months later. Biographers note that DiMaggio was the only man who really loved her. He was always there for her during the tough times, even after their divorce, and would have liked to have had her leave Hollywood all together.

The following year, Marilyn did *The Seven Year Itch* and then moved to New York. It was here that she met Arthur Miller. She converted to Judaism and married Miller on July 1st, 1956. And yet, her life didn't get better. By now, she was using a lot of medications and always had therapists and doctors with her during film shoots. She returned to Hollywood to shoot *Bus Stop* in 1956 and *Some Like It Hot* in 1959, her two best movies, but she she didn't get along with her co-workers (Don Murray in *Bus Stop*, and Tony Curtis in *Some Like It Hot*)...perhaps further indications that off the set Marilyn's life was not going well.

The shooting of *Let's Make Love* wasn't any better, and she had an affair with actor Yves Montand at the same time. After *The Misfits* (1960), Fox forced her into doing *Something's Got to Give* in 1962. Marilyn frequently showed up late or not at all and was fired. At the time, she was apparently having an affair with President Kennedy. She was about to restart *Something's Got to Give* when she was found dead in her room from an overdose of barbiturates. Suicide was declared as the official reason of death, but many over the years have suspected that it was murder.

Joe DiMaggio took care of the funeral, and he didn't admit any Kennedys to it. [<http://www2.int-evry.fr/%7Ehug/mmbioa.html>]

