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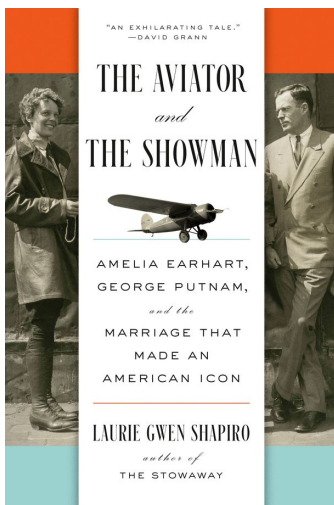
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A CBS Sunday Morning Summer Book Report Pick and named a Best Book of July by *New York Times* and *Town and Country*

The Aviator and The Showman:

Amelia Earhart, George Putnam, and the Marriage that Made an American Icon

Laurie Gwen Shapiro



Praise for THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN

“A deep-dive into this complicated heroine... In her book, Shapiro, a journalist, lists at length Earhart’s many landmark accomplishments, all of which required immense courage. She was the first female aviator to traverse the Atlantic Ocean. The first woman to fly nonstop solo from one North American coast to the other. And the first person to fly solo across the Pacific. That said, Shapiro reveals in painstaking detail that Earhart’s storied career did indeed involve many reckless and publicity-seeking adventures... thanks to the near-deprived ambitions of her husband.” —*New York Times Book Review*

“A vibrant account of the courtship and union of the famous pilot and her publisher husband whose intrusive management of his wife’s career may have cost her life... Shapiro dexterously untangles the Gordian knot of their entwined passions, shared ambitions and business bottom lines... a lavish, layered narrative that doubles as a primer on early aviation and the birth of blockbuster publishing. Shapiro captures the thrill of a leap into the unknown—recalling the works of Jon Krakauer and Sebastian Junger.” —*Los Angeles Times*

“A scintillating new biography ... captures the strong-willed Earhart ... in a propulsive narrative peppered with intoxicating background details ... reveals what other biographers missed ... an exciting, well-written account that offers new insight into a historical figure many people think they know but really don’t.”
—*Washington Post, Sunday Review*

“An exciting new book... that has already created a buzz.” —*Chicago Tribune*

“As Laurie Gwen Shapiro shows... this free spirit owed much of her success to the complicated ministrations of a man... a strategic ally who could propel her stalled magnificent career ambitions forward and provide an escape from financial instability.” —*Wall Street Journal*

Everyone knows how Amelia Earhart died. Her tragic death has been a source of endless fascination for media since her last flight, a history-making endeavor to be the first woman to circumnavigate the world. In the decades that followed, Amelia quickly became a figure of myth and legend, a woman whose death held far greater fascination for the world than the life she lived and her marriage to book publishing titan George Putnam. Award-winning journalist Laurie Gwen Shapiro noticed this glaring omission in our cultural perception of Amelia and decided to remedy this. Cue **THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN: Amelia Earhart, George Putnam, and the Marriage that Made an American Icon** (Viking; on sale: 7/15; ISBN: 9780593295915), the first major new look at Amelia's life in over two decades. Through years of intensive research across the US and Canada, delving into hidden archives, forgotten tapes, and other previously undiscovered marginalia of Amelia's storied life, Shapiro redefines who she was and the marriage that helped shape the twentieth century.

In 1928, a young social worker and hobby pilot named Amelia Earhart arrived in the office of George Putnam, heir to the Putnam & Sons throne and hitmaker on the hunt for the right woman for a secret flying mission across the Atlantic. A partnership—professional and soon otherwise—was born.

THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN unveils the untold story of Amelia's decade-long marriage to George, offering an intimate exploration of their relationship and the pivotal role it played in her enduring legacy. Despite her outwardly modest and humble image, Amelia was fiercely driven and impossibly brave, a lifelong feminist and trailblazer in her personal and professional life. George, the so-called "PT Barnum of publishing" was a bookselling visionary—but often pushed his authors to extreme lengths in the name of publicity, and no one bore that weight more than Amelia. Their ahead-of-its time partnership supported her grand ambitions—but also pressed her into more and more treacherous stunts to promote her books, influencing a certain recklessness up to and including her final flight.

In this cinematic new account, Shapiro emphasizes Amelia's multifaceted human side, her struggles and her authentic aspirations, the truths behind her brave pursuits and the compromises she made to fit into societal expectations. Drawing from a trove of new sources, **THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN** is a gripping and passionate tale of adventure, colorful characters, hubris, and a complex and a vivid portrait of a marriage that shaped the trajectory of an iconic life.

More Praise for THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN

"[Shapiro's] appealingly flawed Earhart is high-minded and courageous but also overconfident and careless; Putnam, meanwhile, is a narcissistic and manipulative con man who once staged his own kidnapping for publicity. This nuanced reprisal of Earhart's life . . . makes her saga all the more captivating."

—*Publishers Weekly*, **STARRED and BOXED REVIEW**

"In the sprawling, cinematic *The Aviator and the Showman*, award-winning journalist Laurie Gwen Shapiro unfurls a tale of grand ambition, recklessness and courage." —*BookPage*, **STARRED REVIEW**

"Among the many biographies of Earhart, Shapiro's stands out with its melding of the aviator's story with that of her less famous husband. Fans of aviation history will find this an engaging read." —*Library Journal*

"The book isn't a dry biography or a rote retelling of history. It's a narrative in full, one alive with character and tension. A story with stakes... That is what Shapiro has so masterfully done in this book."

—*Pueblo Star Journal*

"Journalist Shapiro, unsatisfied with "whitewashed" biographies of Amelia Earhart, offers an evenhanded portrait of the iconic aviator, focusing on her relationship with publishing tycoon George P. Putnam... Capturing the tension and peril of early flying, Shapiro conveys, as well, Earhart's unflagging ambition and courage. [*The Aviator and the Showman* is] a sympathetic, well-researched biography."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"In this gossipy dual biography of aviator Amelia Earhart and her husband, publisher George Putnam, Shapiro sets out to right what she purports has been a biographical history of errors "about every single aspect" of Earhart's life and death. Drawing on archived records, diaries, and interviews with the couple and those who knew them, Shapiro crafts a narrative that is often surprisingly intimate about their thoughts and feelings." —*Booklist*

“Before reading *The Aviator and the Showman*, I thought I understood the story of Amelia Earhart. I could not have been more wrong. As Shapiro proves in this irresistible book, the full tale is so much more thrilling, inspiring, and outrageous than even the most ardent fan might imagine. Read it. It is a wild ride!”

—Candice Millard, *New York Times* bestselling author of *River of the Gods*

“In *The Aviator and the Showman*, Laurie Gwen Shapiro doesn’t give us a love story; she gives us something better—a compelling inside look at a complicated marriage that fundamentally changed the 20th century. In these pages, Amelia Earhart lives again.”

—Keith O'Brien, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Fly Girls* and *Charlie Hustle*

“Laurie Gwen Shapiro has dug deep into the archives and emerged with an exhilarating tale of the adventurous life of Amelia Earhart and the remarkable relationship that helped to forge her legend. Yet Shapiro goes even further—stripping away the myths and revealing something far more profound and intricate and true. *The Aviator and the Showman* is one terrific book.”

—David Grann, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Wager* and *Killers of the Flower Moon*

“We need myths... and there comes a time when we need to unpack them. This revelatory book – in effect a double biography, vivid, cinematic, exuberantly fond of its subjects yet intent on excavating truth from layers of mythmaking – reveals the machinations behind Putnam’s push to make Earhart an aviation star, and her willingness to assume that role.”

—Russell Shorto, bestselling author of *Taking Manhattan* and *The Island at the Center of the World*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Laurie Gwen Shapiro is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and journalist whose writing has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The Daily Beast*, *Slate*, and others. Shapiro is the 2021 winner of the Damn History Award for “The Improbable Journey of Dorothy Parker’s Ashes” for *The New Yorker* and gold medallion winner in the People Profiles category for the Silurian Press Club’s 77th annual Excellence in Journalism Awards. She is the author of *The Stowaway* a best seller and an Indie next selection. She is an adjunct professor of journalism at The NYU Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute in the graduate program.

THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN: Amelia Earhart, George Putnam, and the Marriage that Made an American Icon

By Laurie Gwen Shapiro

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or www.prh.com

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