



# Women from the Ankle Down: The Story of Shoes and How They Define Us

By Rachelle Bergstein



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Rachelle Bergstein brings readers along on a unique and delightful romp through the history of shoes, the women who wear them, and the profound impact they have on our lives.

*Women from the Ankle Down* includes interviews and cameos with influential figures ranging from Lisa Mayock of Vena Cava to Oscar Award–winning costume designer Patrizia van Brandenstein, from Doc Martens historian Martin Roach to Fashion Institute of Technology museum director Valerie Steele; from Marilyn Monroe and Jane Fonda to Salvador Ferragamo and Christian Dior; from Judy Garland to Wonder Woman.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“A fleet-footed social history.” (**Liesl Schillinger**, *New York Times*)

“A lively look at the history of stilettos, sneakers and sundry other leather- and rubber-soled objects of swoon.” (**Olivia Barker**, *USA Today*)

“If style defines the woman, and shoes a woman’s style, then ooh la la, here’s the definitive history and guide—everything from Chinese bound feet to Ferragamo, from Hollywood favorites to running up one’s credit card on the sine qua non of fashion.” (**Mireille Guiliano**, author of *French Women Don’t Get Fat*)

“If you could glimpse the passing parade of the last hundred years or so from behind a slightly raised curtain, you’d have a pretty good idea of what’s going on in this richly anecdotal history of shoes.” (**Amanda Lovell**, *More Magazine*)

“Every woman who loves her shoes should read this book—hell—every man who loves women’s shoes should read this book....Informative, interesting, and just plain fun.” (*New York Journal of Books*)

“[Bergstein’s] entertaining book wears its research as lightly as a pair of strappy sandals.” (**Tricia Springstubb**, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*)

“Fun.” (**Susannah Calahan**, *New York Post*)

“At last someone has dared to probe one of the most mystifying phenomena in our culture: what’s the deal with women and shoes? Rachelle Bergstein starts from the ground up and tells us—with wit and brio—a lot about society from an unusual and original perspective.” (**Ron Rosenbaum**, author *The Shakespeare Wars* and *How the End Begins: The Road to a Nuclear World War III*)

“As a woman who walks, I’ve often wondered why I don’t wear more sensible shoes. Now I know. Rachelle Bergstein has written a compulsively readable history: it won’t keep you from buying an absurdly uncomfortable and expensive pair, but it will make you understand why you’re doing it.” (**Ruth Reichl**, author of *Garlic and Sapphires*)

“[An] engaging, toe-to-heel study....From flats a la Audrey Hepburn, Keds and white go-go- boots, Tommy-era platforms, and Jane Fonda’s Reebok Freestyles, to Sex and the City’s pricey Manolo Blahniks and Jimmy Choo’s, Bergstein ably runs the gamut of styles over the decades...” (*Publishers Weekly*)

“An illuminating study of the history of women’s shoes in the 20th century....Wickedly provocative.” (*Kirkus*)

“An entertaining journey through the social history of shoes and the people who have worn them....Well-written and well-referenced....Recommended to all fashion followers as well as those who enjoy the ankle-down approach to studying our high-end material culture.” (**Holly Hebert**, *Library Journal*)

“Engaging....A charmingly interwoven story of the past 100 years, detailing a bit of the psychology behind

different styles as well as the fame that drives the fates of a variety of soles and heels.” (*Booklist*)

#### From the Back Cover

What is it about a pair of shoes that so enchants women of all ages, demographics, political affiliations, and style tribes? Part social history, part fashion record, part pop-culture celebration, *Women from the Ankle Down* seeks to answer that question as it unfolds the story of shoes in the twentieth century.

The tale begins in the rural village of Bonito, Italy, with a visionary young shoemaker named Salvatore Ferragamo, and ends in New York City with a fictional socialite and trendsetter named Carrie Bradshaw. Along the way it stops in Hollywood, where Judy Garland first slipped on her ruby slippers; New Jersey, where Nancy Sinatra heard something special in a song about boots; and the streets of Manhattan, where a transit strike propelled women to step into new cutting-edge athletic shoes. Featuring interviews with designers, historians, and cultural experts, and a cast of real-life characters, from Marilyn Monroe to Jane Fonda, from Gwen Stefani to Manolo Blahnik, *Women from the Ankle Down* is an entertaining, compelling look at the evolution of modern women and the fashion that reflects—and has shaped—their changing lives.

#### About the Author

Rachelle Bergstein, the author of *Women from the Ankle Down*, works at a literary agency in New York. She lives with her husband and their son in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### **William Fugate:**

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book eligible Women from the Ankle Down: The Story of Shoes and How They Define Us? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have different opinion?

##### **Christopher Barry:**

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##### **Deidra Hird:**

This Women from the Ankle Down: The Story of Shoes and How They Define Us is great book for you

because the content that is certainly full of information for you who always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. That book reveal it facts accurately using great organize word or we can point out no rambling sentences in it. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only offers you straight forward sentences but hard core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having Women from the Ankle Down: The Story of Shoes and How They Define Us in your hand like getting the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous one. We can say that no book that offer you world in ten or fifteen tiny right but this publication already do that. So , this can be good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. occupied do you still doubt in which?

**Edgar Villanueva:**

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