



Gloria Steinem at news conference,
Women's Action Alliance, January 12, 1972

Gloria Steinem

Gloria Marie Steinem (born March 25, 1934) is an American feminist icon, journalist and women's rights advocate. She is the founder and original publisher of *Ms.* magazine.

Early life

Steinem was born in Toledo, Ohio. Her mother, Ruth Nuneviller, was of part German descent. Her Jewish-American father, Leo Steinem, was a traveling antiques dealer (with trailer and family in tow) and the son of immigrants from Germany and Poland. The family split in 1944, when he went to California to find work while Gloria lived with her mother in Toledo. As a child in Toledo, she cared for her ill mother and helped support the family. She also had a sister named Susanne.

Gloria Steinem attended Waite High School in Toledo, then graduated from Western High School in Washington, D.C.

She attended Smith College, where she remains active. In 1963 she was employed as a Playboy Bunny at the New York Playboy Club to research an article that exposed how women were treated at the clubs.

Political awakening and activism

After conducting a series of celebrity interviews, Steinem eventually got a political assignment covering George McGovern's presidential campaign, which led to a position in a New York magazine. Her 1962 article in *Esquire* magazine about the way in which women are forced to choose between a career and marriage preceded Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* by one year. She became politically active in the feminist movement, and the media seemed to appoint Steinem as a feminist leader of sorts. Steinem brought other notable feminists to the fore and toured the country with lawyer Florynce Rae "Flo" Kennedy, and in 1971, cofounded the National Women's Political Caucus as well as the Women's Action Alliance. In 1972, she helped start the feminist *Ms.* magazine and wrote for the magazine until it was sold in 1987. In 1991 Gloria Steinem founded Choice USA. The magazine was bought by the Feminist Majority Foundation in 2001, and Steinem remains on the masthead as one of six founding editors and serves on the advisory board. Contrary to popular belief, Steinem did not coin the feminist slogan "A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle."

Steinem cofounded the Coalition of Labor Union Women in 1974, and participated in the National Conference of Women in Houston, Texas in 1977. She became *Ms.* magazine's consulting editor when it was revived in 1991, and she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993.

In a 1998 press interview, Steinem weighed in on the Clinton impeachment hearings when asked whether President Bill Clinton should be impeached for lying under oath, she was quoted as saying, "Clinton should be censured for lying under oath about Lewinsky in the Paula Jones deposition, perhaps also for stupidity in answering at all."

More recent life

In the 1980s and 1990s, Steinem had to deal with a number of personal setbacks, including the diagnoses of breast cancer in 1983 and trigeminal neuralgia in 1994.

According to two *Frontline* features (aired in 1995) and *Ms.* magazine, Steinem became an advocate for children she believed had been sexually abused by caretakers in day care centers (such as the McMartin preschool case).

On September 3, 2000, at age 66, she married David Bale, father of actor Christian Bale. The wedding was performed at the home of her friend Wilma Mankiller, formerly the first female Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Steinem and Bale were married for only three years before he died of brain lymphoma on December 30, 2003, at age 62.

Canadian singer-songwriter David Usher penned a song titled "Love Will Save The Day," which includes sound bites from Steinem speeches. The song's opening contains her statement, "It really is a revolution," and the ending breaks for the quote, "We are talking about a society in which there will be no roles other than those chosen or those earned; we are really talking about humanism." In the credits of the movie *V for Vendetta*, this last speech is also quoted.

List of works

- *The Thousand Indias* (1957)
- *The Beach Book* (1963)
- *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* (1983)
- *Marilyn: Norma Jean* (1986)
- *Revolution from Within* (1992)
- *Moving beyond Words* (1993)