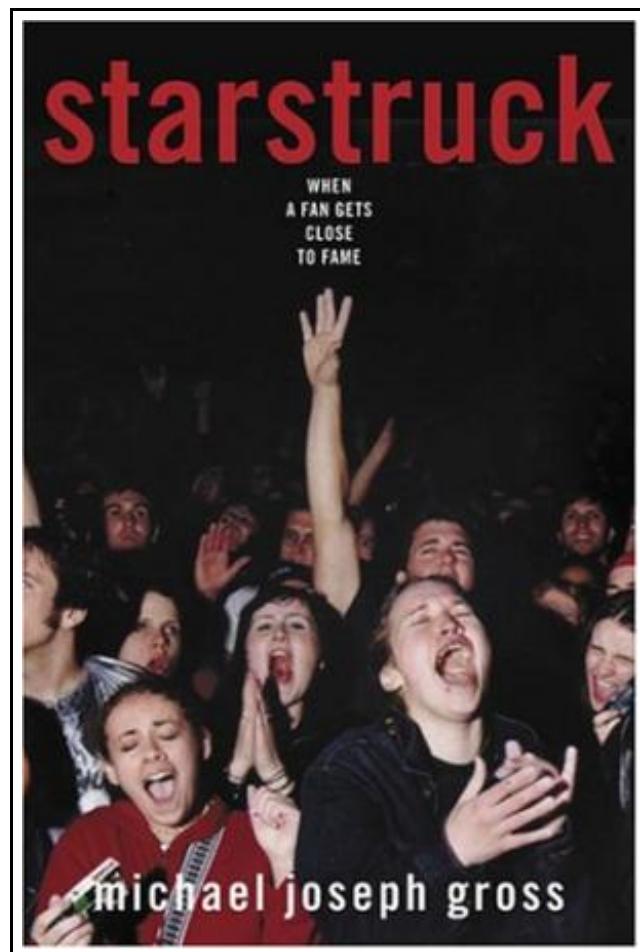


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New York, New York, U.S.A.: Bloomsbury Pub Plc USA, New York, New York, U.S.A., 2005. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. From Publishers Weekly: As a youngster, Gross collected autographs, and although his passion for that hobby faded as he got older, his fascination with celebrity remained. Now a journalist (he's written for the New York Times, the Boston Globe and other publications), he explores the star system from both sides of the velvet rope. Gross interviews fans, collectors, celebrities and publicists in an effort to paint a broad portrait of changing celebrity culture. For instance, as a teenager in the 1980s, Gross enjoyed a personal correspondence with screen goddess Olivia de Havilland. Now, such personal access is rare: professional hounds get stars to autograph headshots, which they then sell on eBay. These pros can earn six figures a year, while minor celebrities, like 1950s and '60s actor Shirley Jones, charge \$20 a pop for in-person signatures at signing conventions. Star power is a construct, explains Gross. Like an anthropologist trained in Hollywood culture, he understands the positive and negative results of adulation. Although his childhood collecting allowed him "to believe that I mattered," he concludes that the star images he worshiped were, in the end, damaging. They delivered "false idols whose lives present impossible standards for the rest of us." Gross's writing is honest and humane, and his book is an entertaining look at modern celebrity culture. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist: In a world where an increasing number of people are becoming famous for doing nothing more than starring in a reality show, the topic of the lure of celebrity has never been more relevant. Gross' book provides an enthralling look into the mentality of...

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