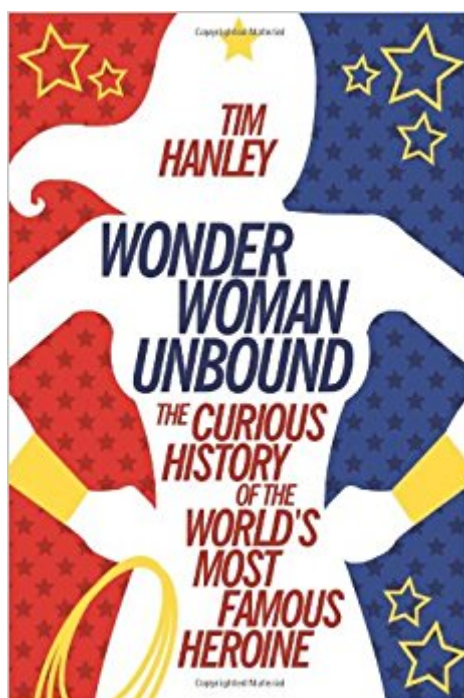


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Wonder Woman Unbound: The Curious History Of The World's Most Famous Heroine



Synopsis

2015 Amelia Bloomer Project List This close look at Wonder Woman's history portrays a complicated heroine who is more than just a female Superman with a golden lasso and bullet-deflecting bracelets. The original Wonder Woman was ahead of her time, advocating female superiority and the benefits of matriarchy in the 1940s. At the same time, her creator filled the comics with titillating bondage imagery, and Wonder Woman was tied up as often as she saved the world. In the 1950s, Wonder Woman begrudgingly continued her superheroic mission, wishing she could settle down with her boyfriend instead, all while continually hinting at hidden lesbian leanings. While other female characters stepped forward as women's lib took off in the late 1960s, Wonder Woman fell backwards, losing her superpowers and flitting from man to man. Ms. magazine and Lynda Carter restored Wonder Woman's feminist strength in the 1970s, turning her into a powerful symbol as her checkered past was quickly forgotten. Exploring this lost history adds new dimensions to the world's most beloved female character, and Wonder Woman Unbound delves into her comic book and its spin-offs as well as the myriad motivations of her creators to showcase the peculiar journey that led to Wonder Woman's iconic status.

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Customer Reviews

With Superman and Batman more popular than ever thanks to successful film franchises, Hanley turns an eye to Wonder Woman, the most famous female superhero. Created in 1941 by William Moulton Marston, an academic whose research helped invent the lie detector test, Wonder Woman

was a mighty who reflected Marston's beliefs that a female-dominated world would be a more peaceful one. Even as Wonder Woman took on Nazis and mad scientists, Hanley notes that the prevalence of bondage in the original comics adds a sexualized element and complicates Marston's assertions that men should submit to women. Nonetheless, Wonder Woman remained a feminist and a fetishist until the 1950s, when censure and societal pressure made her more domestic. The Lynda Carter-fronted TV show brought Wonder Woman to the silver screen as a tough and dynamic heroine, but she has since been eclipsed by her male counterparts as her comics have grown stale and attempts to bring her back to the screen have floundered. A lively and important examination of a key feminist icon. --Kristine Huntley

"I've never seen more information about Wonder Woman than in Wonder Woman Unbound! Author Tim Hanley tells us everything we've never asked about Wonder Woman because it simply never occurred to us: from her mythic Golden Age origins through her dismal Silver Age years as a lovesick romance comic character, and worse yet, when she lost her costume and powers in the late 1960s. Our favorite comic's saga becomes upbeat again with the 1970s advent of Gloria Steinem and Ms Magazine, and Lynda Carter's unforgettable portrayal of her on television. And it's all told with a dollop of humor, thanks, Tim!"- Trina Robbins, author of Pretty in Ink, North American Women Cartoonists from 1896 to 2013 "Wonder Woman is the sum of her parts, and all of those parts should be examined thoroughly—something this book does very well." —Bust "A lively and important examination of a key feminist icon." —Booklist "There's plenty here for Wonder Woman fans; Hanley writes with clarity and enthusiasm, and he's got a fine eye for the goofy absurdities of comic-book narratives..." —Salon.com — "An entertaining and informative read. [Hanley] helpfully situates his subject in the universe of superhero comics and ably describes what made her seem unique and powerful to readers in her early years." —Library Journal — "Bondage, polyamory, lab coats, comic books, feminism: this story has everything. It's weird and complicated, but at least it has a good interpreter in Hanley." —Chicago Reader "...the author offers a compelling and insightful consideration of a cultural icon that has endured and engaged with the culture for many decades without ever truly being known. A richly detailed, often-surprising work of comic-book scholarship." —Kirkus "A useful companion history that's good at placing the character in the setting of her comic-franchise peers." —New York Review of Books

I am thoroughly enjoying this book! I first attempted to read *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* after hearing a podcast by the author. I couldn't make it more than 3% into the book with the terrible, Tarantino style storytelling. This book is much better in my opinion and faces the contradictory nature of Wonder Woman's creator (ie: being a feminist and progressive, yet still sexualizing women for the pleasure of heterosexual men). This book reveals exactly why I never liked traditional comic books as a kid, and even why I actively disliked Superman (he treated Lois like crap, openly insulted her, and sabotaged her career multiple times) and most other comic heroes that my guy friends adore. The author also sprinkles in the history of the entire comic book genre to let readers know what was going on at any given time, and how it evolved. If you want to learn more about Wonder Woman, comics, and the sociological state of the country that spawned them, definitely take the time to read this.

Weirdly, for somebody who reads a lot of comics and almost exclusively sticks to female led titles or group titles featuring my favorite female leads, I haven't read much Wonder Woman. I'm familiar with her from the DC Bombshells series and have read some of her New 52 run, but that's it. I think in a lot of ways this book was more interesting to me because of that, but I would have enjoyed it either way. It was interesting to read this a few years after it was published, because I think things have improved for female superheroes since it was written. I've really enjoyed both of Hanley's books - would love to read a book by him on Barbara Gordon!

I want to give this a 4.5 since I am somewhere in the middle between these two. This is a well researched and thoughtful book... When I bought it, I expected basically a rehash of some of the stories through the characters long history. But what I got was so much more - a deep and deeply affecting history of the character and it's reflection (Or abandonment) of feminism throughout the latter half of the 20th century and first part of the 21st century. It's excellent. I am unsure if I agree with all of Tim Hanley's conclusions - and I am sure there are others that will agree with me on that - but it cannot be denied that Hanley has put in the rigorous work to argue his ideas pretty conclusively. Highly recommended!

Single character studies can be tricky but Hanley excels in this entertaining and smart look at Wonder Woman. Readers not familiar with the character will find it accessible and a great entry point for learning more about the history of women comic book characters and the unusual circumstances surrounding Wonder Woman's entry into American pop culture.

This book is such an interesting exposé on such a famous hero. And not just discussing her attributions but also other women in comics and even critiquing the males that society reveres. This book borders a master's thesis and I recommend this to anyone who is fascinated by comic books, the industry, Wonder Woman and most importantly, feminists.

I am a huge Wonder Woman fan. I remember the 70's TV show, but really didn't know much else about the character. This book tells of all the changes the character made through the years. How she was created by Marston, and his views on feminism and psychology. About Wonder Woman's influence on the Women's Liberation movement in the 60's and 70's. The book mainly focuses on how Wonder Woman was presented in the comics, but goes beyond that to discuss the character's influence on the rest of society. I learned a lot from it.

He never mentions the Justice League on cartoon network. Also there was no mention of why in the tv show Wonder Woman could be rendered powerless by removing her magic belt, something never mentioned in the comics. Other than that this is a good critique and history of the character and comics in general.

I thought Haley was not writing about what he said he was writing about.

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