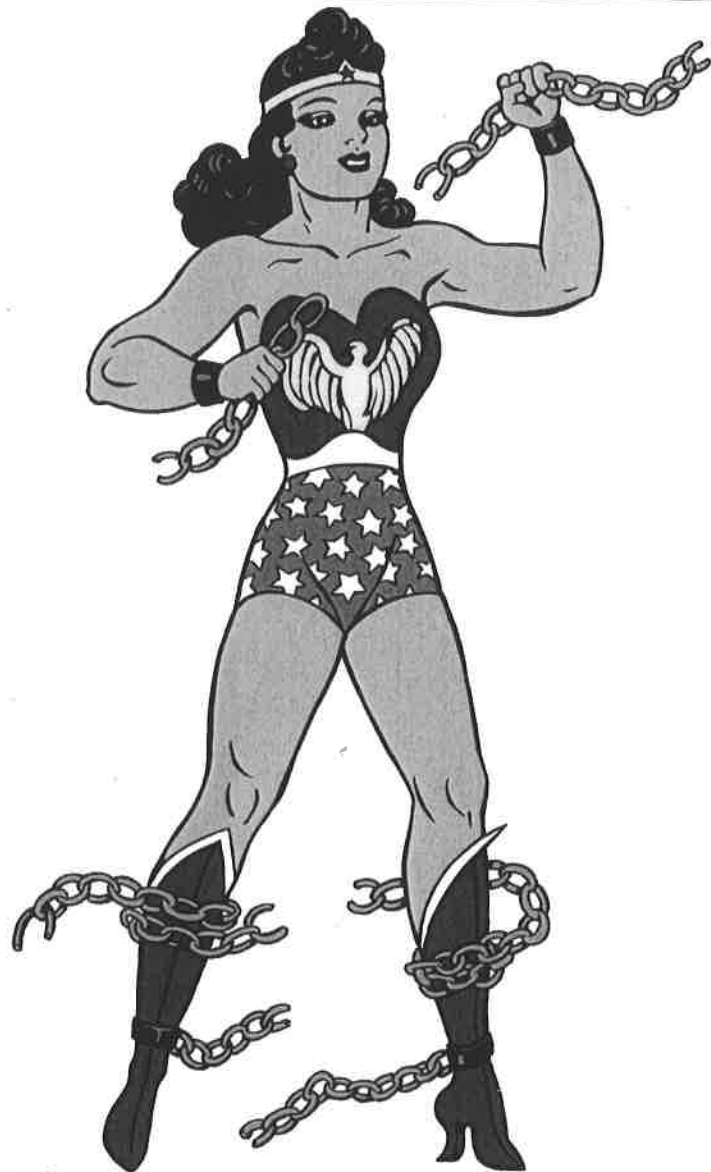


EVERY WONDER WOMAN STORY IN EXACT CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER!



DC
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THE WONDER WOMAN™

CHRONOLOGICAL COLLECTION

VOLUME ONE

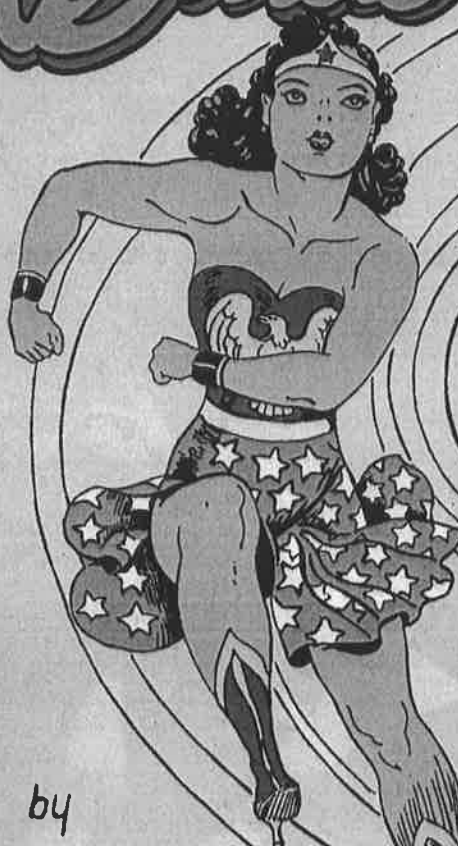
First appearance of Wonder Woman

All-Star Comics #8 October, 1941

Introducing

Wonder Woman

TRADE MARK APPLICATION PENDING



AT LAST, IN A WORLD TORN BY THE HATREDS AND WARS OF MEN, APPEARS A WOMAN TO WHOM THE PROBLEMS AND FEATS OF MEN ARE MERE CHILD'S PLAY—A WOMAN WHOSE IDENTITY IS KNOWN TO NONE, BUT WHOSE SENSATIONAL FEATS ARE OUTSTANDING IN A FAST-MOVING WORLD! WITH A HUNDRED TIMES THE AGILITY AND STRENGTH OF OUR BEST MALE ATHLETES AND STRONGEST WRESTLERS, SHE APPEARS AS THOUGH FROM NOWHERE TO AVENGE AN INJUSTICE OR RIGHT A WRONG! AS LOVELY AS APHRODITE—AS WISE AS ATHENA—WITH THE SPEED OF MERCURY AND THE STRENGTH OF HERCULES—SHE IS KNOWN ONLY AS **WONDER WOMAN**, BUT WHO SHE IS, OR WHENCE SHE CAME, NOBODY KNOWS!

TO BEGIN THE STRANGE HISTORY OF "WONDER WOMAN," LET US GO OUT OVER THE SEA AND FOLLOW IN THE WAKE OF A PLANE, ENTIRELY OUT OF GASOLINE! AS WE WATCH, IT FLOUNDERS HELPLESSLY IN THE SKY, AND FINALLY CRASHES ON THE SHORES OF AN UNGHARTED ISLE SET IN THE MIDST OF A VAST EXpanse OF OCEAN...

by
CHARLES MOULTON

BURSTING FROM THE SURROUNDING FOLIAGE, TWO BEAUTIFUL FIGURES RACE TOWARD THE WRECKED PLANE.

LOOK, PRINCESS, A STRANGE PLANE!

WELL, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? COME ON, LET'S SEE IF ANYONE IS HURT!



2

PRINCESS, IT'S—IT'S—

A MAN! A MAN ON PARADISE ISLAND! QUICK! LET'S GET HIM TO THE HOSPITAL.



3

CARRYING THE YOUNG WOMAN TO THE STREETS OF ANCIENT



SUDDENLY, HE ENTERS THE

MOTHER! Y



LEAVING THE DOCTOR SEE

WHAT HAS THAT YOU AT TH



CARRYING THE FULL GROWN MAN AS IF HE WERE A CHILD, THE YOUNG WOMAN STEPS THROUGH THE FOLIAGE AND ENTERS THE STREETS OF A CITY THAT FOR ALL THE WORLD SEEMS TO BE BORN OF ANCIENT GREECE!



A MAN!

HOW DID HE GET HERE?

SOMEONE TELL THE QUEEN THERE'S A MAN ON PARADISE ISLAND!

AT THE HOSPITAL —

IS HE ALL RIGHT? WILL HE LIVE?

I DON'T KNOW. HE'S HAD A CONCUSSION. WE WON'T KNOW ANYTHING FOR DAYS. I WONDER WHAT THE QUEEN WILL DO WITH HIM. HE CAN'T BE MOVED.



SUDDENLY, HIPPOLYTE, THE QUEEN, ENTERS THE HOSPITAL ROOM...



MOTHER!

THE QUEEN!

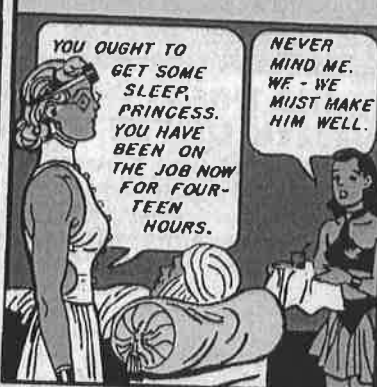
I HEARD THAT THERE WAS A MAN HERE, BUT I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. WHO IS HE?

HIS PLANE CRASHED ON THE BEACH OF THE ISLAND THIS MORNING. THE PRINCESS AND MALA BROUGHT HIM HERE. I FOUND THESE PAPERS IN HIS POCKET.

"CAPT. STEVEN TREVOR, U.S. ARMY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE." "HMM. WE CAN'T LET HIM DIE. SEE THAT HE GETS THE BEST OF ATTENTION. KEEP HIS EYES COVERED SO THAT, IF HE SHOULD AWAKE, HE WILL SEE NOTHING! HAVE HIS PLANE REPAIRED, FOR HE MUST LEAVE AS SOON AS HE IS WELL! KEEP ME INFORMED OF HIS PROGRESS!"



IN THE ENSUING DAYS, THE PRINCESS, THE QUEEN'S ONLY DAUGHTER, IS CONSTANTLY AT THE BEDSIDE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MAN, HELPING — WATCHING —



YOU OUGHT TO GET SOME SLEEP, PRINCESS. YOU HAVE BEEN ON THE JOB NOW FOR FOURTEEN HOURS.

NEVER MIND ME. WE - WE MUST MAKE HIM WELL.

LEAVING THE PRINCESS TO WATCH OVER THE INJURED PILOT, THE DOCTOR SEEKS AUDIENCE WITH THE QUEEN...



WHAT HAS HAPPENED THAT YOU DISTURB ME AT THIS HOUR? IS THE MAN—

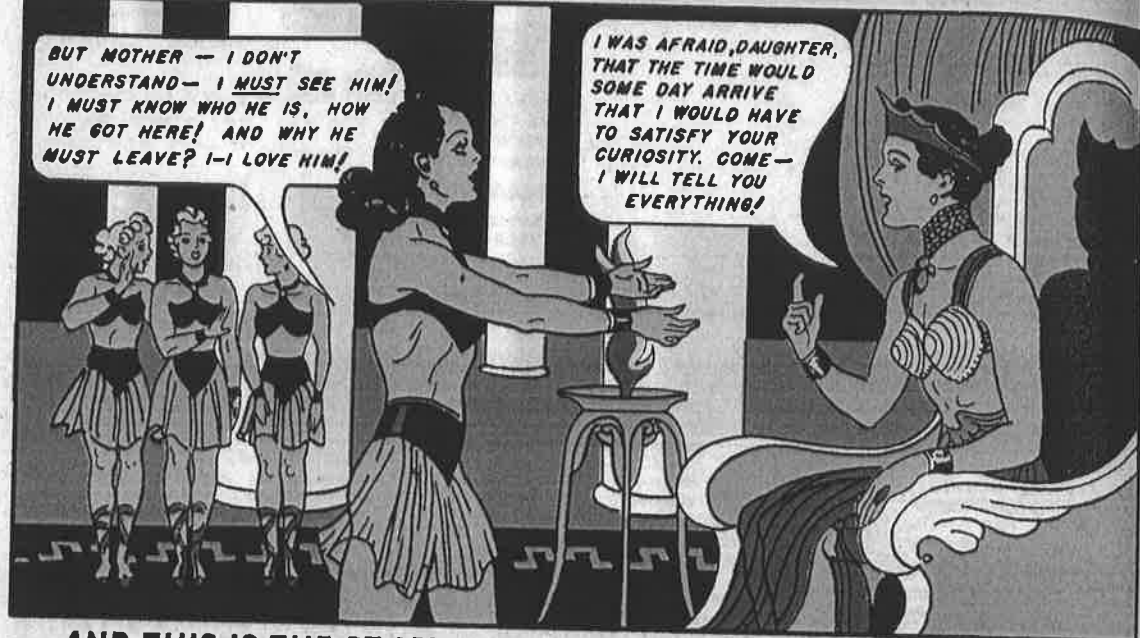
NO, HE IS ALIVE. IT IS THE PRINCESS I AM WORRIED ABOUT. I DON'T THINK SHE OUGHT TO BE ALLOWED IN THE HOSPITAL ANYMORE. SHE ACTS RATHER STRANGELY ABOUT THAT MAN.

SO SHE IS IN LOVE? I WAS AFRAID OF THAT! YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT, DOCTOR. I SHALL TAKE STEPS IMMEDIATELY.



THAT WOULD BE WISE. IT'S FOR THE CHILD'S OWN GOOD.

AND SO THE PRINCESS, FORBIDDEN THE PLEASURE OF NURSING THE ONLY MAN SHE CAN REGALL EVER HAVING SEEN IN HER LIFE, GOES TO HER MOTHER, HIPPOLYTE, THE QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS.



AND THIS IS THE STARTLING STORY UNFOLDED BY HIPPOLYTE, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS, TO THE PRINCESS, HER DAUGHTER!

In the days of Ancient Greece, many centuries ago, we Amazons were the foremost nation in the world. In Amazonia, women ruled and all was well. Then one day, Hercules, the strongest man in the world, stung by taunts that he couldn't conquer the Amazon women, selected his strongest and fiercest warriors and landed on our shores. I challenged him to personal combat—because I knew that with my MAGIC GIRDLE, given me by Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, I could not lose.



And win I did! But Hercules, by deceit and trickery, managed to secure my MAGIC GIRDLE—and soon we Amazons were taken into slavery. And Aphrodite, angry at me for having succumbed to the wiles of men, would do naught to help us!



Finally our submission to men became unbearable—we could stand it no longer—and I appealed to the Goddess Aphrodite again. This time not in vain, for she relented and with her help, I secured the MAGIC GIRDLE from Hercules.

With the MAGIC GIRDLE in my possession, it didn't take us long to overcome our masters, the MEN—and taking from them their entire fleet, we set sail for another shore, for it was Aphrodite's condition that we leave the man-made world and establish a new world of our own! Aphrodite also decreed that we must always wear these bracelets fashioned by our captors, as a reminder that we must always keep aloof from men.



And so many days found Para here to bui its fertile at-tation—its here is r hatreds, no we remain I retain the have the pe long as w selves to I men! We Wonder W



That we dite—and promise to here safe That is go and as



Come, Magic S talk about by Athen dom, just Hercules! dise Islar Magic S able to and is goi and even futurel

That is why this American must go and as soon as possible!



that I have gained from this Magic Sphere that I have taught you, my daughter, all the arts and sciences and languages of modern as well as ancient times!

[illegible]

IN THE QUEEN'S SOLITUDE, THE SPIRITS OF APHRODITE AND ATHENA, THE GUIDING GODDESSES OF THE AMAZONS, APPEAR AS THOUGH IN A MIST...

HIPPOLYTE, WE HAVE COME TO GIVE YOU WARNING. DANGER AGAIN THREATENS THE ENTIRE WORLD. THE GODS HAVE DECREED THAT THIS AMERICAN ARMY OFFICER CRASH ON PARADISE ISLAND. YOU MUST DELIVER HIM BACK TO AMERICA — TO HELP FIGHT THE FORGES OF HATE AND OPPRESSION.

YES, HIPPOLYTE, AMERICAN LIBERTY AND FREEDOM MUST BE PRESERVED. YOU MUST SEND WITH HIM YOUR STRONGEST AND WISEST AMAZON — THE FINEST OF YOUR WONDER WOMEN! — FOR AMERICA, THE LAST CITADEL OF DEMOCRACY, AND OF EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN, NEEDS YOUR HELP!

YES, APHRODITE, YES, ATHENA, I HEED YOUR CALL. I SHALL FIND THE STRONGEST AND WISEST OF THE AMAZONS. SHE SHALL GO FORTH TO FIGHT FOR LIBERTY AND FREEDOM AND ALL WOMANKIND!

AND SO THE AMAZON QUEEN PREPARES A TOURNAMENT TO DECIDE WHICH IS THE MOST CAPABLE OF HER SUBJECTS...

BUT MOTHER, WHY CAN'T I ENTER INTO THIS TOURNAMENT? SURELY, I HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT —

NO, DAUGHTER, NO! I FORBID YOU TO ENTER THE CONTEST!

THE WINNER MUST TAKE THIS MAN BACK TO AMERICA AND NEVER RETURN, AND I COULDN'T BEAR TO HAVE YOU LEAVE ME FOREVER!

THE GREAT DAY ARRIVES! FROM ALL PARTS OF PARADISE ISLAND COME THE AMAZON CONTESTANTS, BUT ONE YOUNG CONTESTANT INSISTS ON WEARING A MASK...

IF YOU ARE ALL READY, LET THE TOURNAMENT BEGIN — AND MAY THE BEST MAIDEN WIN!

THE TESTS BEGIN! FIRST... THE FOOT RACE! A TRAINED DEER SETS THE PACE, AS THE DEER EASILY OUTFRONS THE PACK, SUDDENLY THE SLIM MASKED FIGURE DARTS FORWARD, HER LEGS CHURNING MADLY...

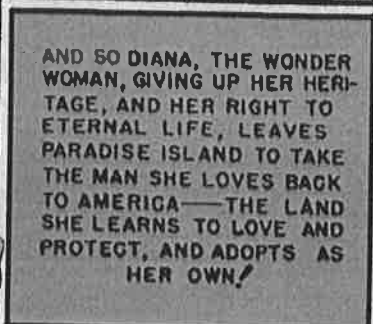
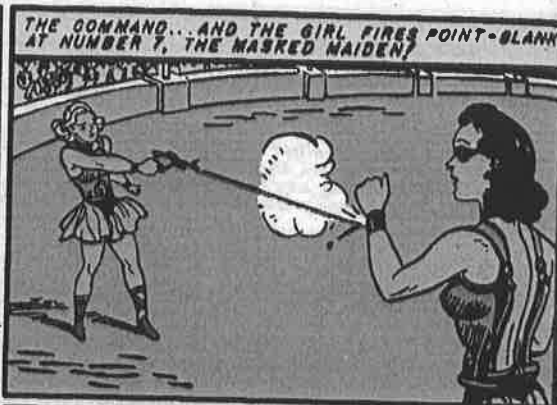
AND NOT ONLY CATCHES UP WITH THE DEER — BUT PASSES IT!

AS THE TESTS OF STRENGTH AND AGILITY GO ON THROUGHOUT THE DAY, MORE AND MORE CONTESTANTS DROP OUT WEARILY, UNTIL NUMBER 7, THE MASKED MAIDEN, AND MALA — NUMBER 12 — KEEP WINNING EVENT AFTER EVENT... UNTIL EACH HAS WON TEN OF THE GRUELLING CONTESTS!

AND NOW A DEADLY HUSH BLANKETS THE AUDIENCE. THE QUEEN HAS RISEN...

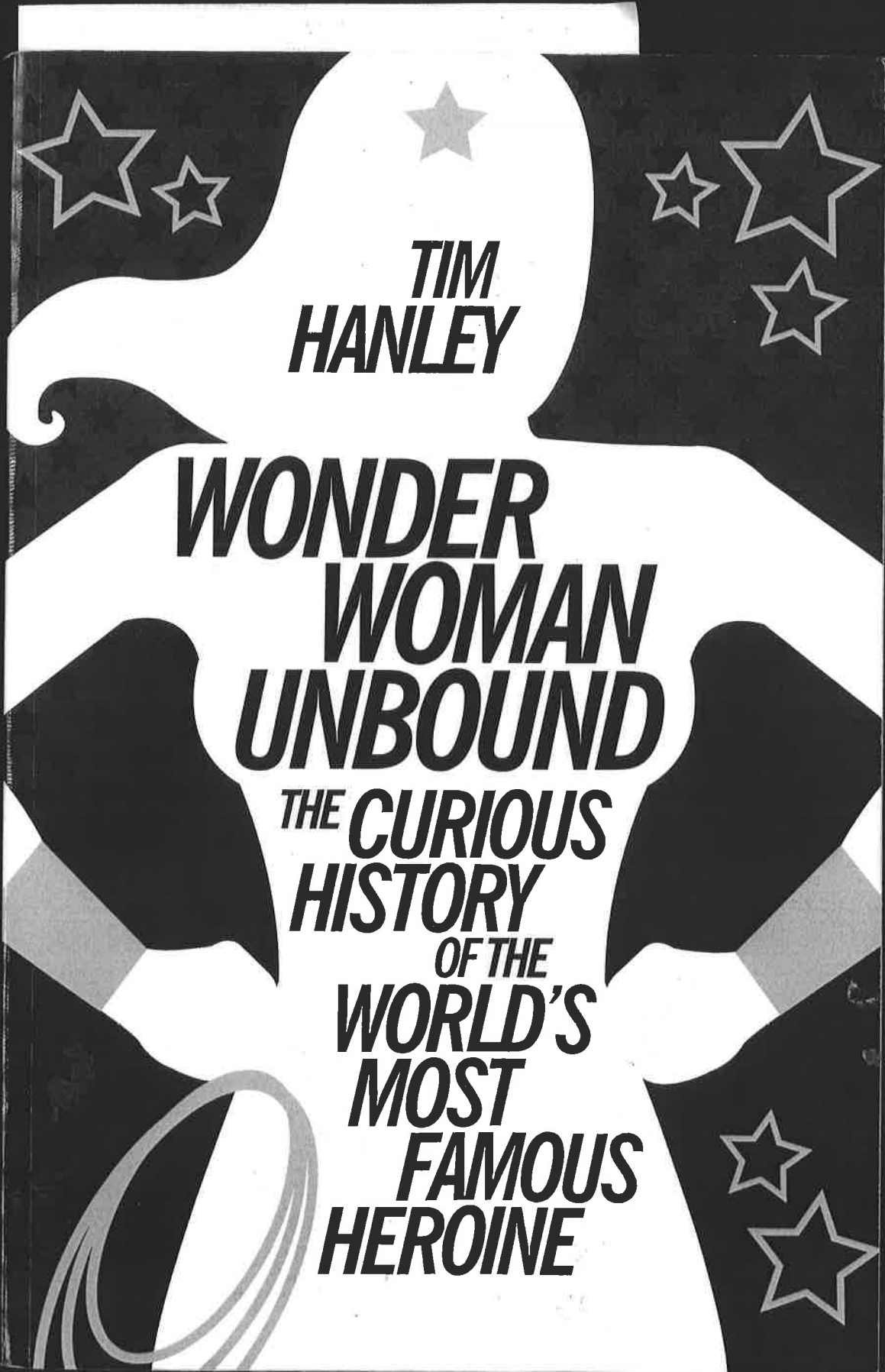
BULLETS AND BRACELETS! BULLETS AND BRACELETS! BULLETS AND BRACELETS! BULLETS AND BRACELETS! BULLETS AND BRACELETS!

CONTESTANTS 7 AND 12. YOU ARE THE ONLY SURVIVORS OF THE TOURNAMENT! NOW YOU MUST GET READY FOR THE 21ST, THE FINAL AND GREATEST TEST OF ALL — BULLETS AND BRACELETS!



The newest the D magaz

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**TIM
HANLEY**

**WONDER
WOMAN
UNBOUND**

**THE CURIOUS
HISTORY
OF THE
WORLD'S
MOST
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Summary: "With her golden lasso and her bullet-deflecting bracelets, Wonder Woman is a beloved icon of female strength in a world of male superheroes. But this close look at her history portrays a complicated heroine who is more than just a female Superman. 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 as well as her modern incarnations 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"— Provided by publisher.

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The Utopian Alternative

Origin stories are an integral part of superhero comic books, repeated and referenced so often that they've become as iconic to the characters as the logos on their chests. Some origin stories have remained the same from the very beginning: in every telling of Batman's origin, Bruce Wayne witnesses the murder of his parents when he's a boy and dedicates his life to fighting crime. Other origin stories changed when new characters took on the mantle of an established hero: the original Golden Age Flash, Jay Garrick, gained superspeed by inhaling hard water vapors, while the Silver Age Flash, Barry Allen, gained the same powers from electrified chemicals.

Unlike the Flash, Wonder Woman remained the same character, but unlike Batman, each of her incarnations had its own distinct origin story.* Her first came from her creator, William Moulton

*Wonder Woman was relaunched in 1987 during DC Comic's companywide reboot following *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, an event meant to streamline fifty years of DC's continuity into one simple universe, and has been rebooted several times since.

THE GOLDEN AGE

Marston, a man whose lofty goals made him stand out among his fellow comic book creators in the early 1940s. He wanted to impart to his readers a specific message about female superiority. Most of the first superheroes had origins rooted in some sort of tragic event that motivated their crime-fighting career. Wonder Woman, on the other hand, was rooted in a feminist utopian vision. Her mission was not to resolve tragic personal issues but to help facilitate a coming matriarchy. Marston rejected the conventions of the burgeoning superhero genre and set up Wonder Woman as a new, unique brand of hero.

end here for this page

The Golden Age

The beginning of the comic book industry wasn't anything auspicious; publishers had a lot of paper and wanted to keep the presses running, so in the early 1930s they began reprinting newspaper comic strips as comic books. One of these new publishers was National Allied Publications, founded by Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson in 1934. National's first series was *New Fun*, which premiered in February 1935. It was the first comic book to have only new material, most of which was written by Wheeler-Nicholson himself. National launched a second series with an even less imaginative title, *New Comics*, in December 1935. But Wheeler-Nicholson didn't have enough money to finance his third series, *Detective Comics*, so he turned to Harry Donenfeld, a publisher and distributor who headed the Independent News Company.

Donenfeld was a fierce businessman with a less than reputable history. His associations with gangsters and the mob dated back to the Prohibition Era, and in the early 1930s he published lurid, erotic pulp magazines. This new partnership with Wheeler-Nicholson led to the creation of Detective Comics Inc., and *Detective Comics* debuted in March 1937. Detective Comics Inc. was soon renamed National Comics when the crafty Donenfeld forced Wheeler-Nicholson out of

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Captain America's primary weapon was a shield, and he could simply hit bad guys with it, throw it, or use it as a battering ram to plough through goons. He also tended not to intervene when villains were about to kill themselves. When Dr. Reinstein's assassin, dazed by a mighty punch from Cap, stumbled toward dangerous lab equipment, Captain America did nothing, and after the assassin was electrocuted he noted that there was "nothing left of him but charred ashes . . . a fate he well deserved." Later in that issue, the Red Skull rolled onto his own poison-filled hypodermic needle and died. Captain America's sidekick, Bucky, was appalled and asked Cap why he didn't do anything to stop it, to which Cap replied, "I'm not talking, Bucky."

Batman tended to "accidentally" kill villains. A strong punch would "unintentionally" send a bad guy reeling backward through a railing and into a vat of acid. A defensive maneuver "just happened" to flip a goon over the edge of a roof. A strong kick to stop a gun-toting villain from taking a shot "inadvertently" broke his neck. A gas pellet thrown into the cockpit of a plane "unwittingly" resulted in a fatal crash.

In the years following the dawn of the Golden Age, violence toned down and most superheroes developed codes of conduct for humanely dealing with villains. But it was in the first few years of this brutal environment that Wonder Woman was created.

Start Here William Moulton Marston and the Origins of Wonder Woman

William Moulton Marston was most definitely not a typical comic book creator. The majority of Golden Age superhero writers were young men: Jerry Siegel was twenty-three when *Action Comics* #1 premiered, Bill Finger was twenty-five when *Detective Comics* #27 hit the stands, and Joe Simon was twenty-seven when *Captain America Comics* #1 was released. Marston was forty-eight years old when Wonder Woman first appeared in *All Star Comics* #8. Superman's Joe Shuster, Batman's Bob Kane, and Captain America's Jack Kirby

were all twenty-three when their respective heroes debuted, but H. G. Peter, the established cartoonist Marston handpicked to draw Wonder Woman, was nearly three times the age of his counterparts.

Many of these young creators worked in comics in hopes of parlaying their work into a "real" job, like advertising, but Marston already had a job. In fact, he had several. Marston was thrice a graduate of Harvard University, earning a BA in 1915, a law degree in 1918, and a PhD in psychology in 1921. He taught at several universities, published books, worked as an advisor for a film studio in Hollywood, and regularly wrote articles for magazines like the *Rotarian* and *Ladies Home Journal*.

Before Wonder Woman, Marston was best known for helping to invent the lie detector test, or polygraph, which was based on his research in systolic blood pressure. He was both an academic and a bit of a huckster, using his lie detector for noble purposes by assisting in criminal trials while also appearing in ads for Gillette razors to definitively prove they were the superior brand. Outside of the lie detector, Marston's psychological work had lasting effects as well, and his DISC theory on human behavior is still widely used as a template for personality assessment tests today.

Marston dabbled in many fields, but all of his work was connected through the common theme of his focus on the untapped potential of women. Less than a decade after women gained the right to vote, Marston argued that they were in fact psychologically superior to men. In the 1920s and 1930s, women made only slight gains in the workforce, and often in jobs with little opportunity for advancement. Although they could now vote, in many states women continued to fight for years for the rights of full citizenship, like serving on a jury. Those interested in higher education often faced oppressive caps that severely limited the number of women allowed in postgraduate studies.* Nonetheless, in a 1937 interview

*For instance, many medical schools capped female enrollment at a ridiculously low 5 percent of students.

in the *New York Times*, Marston declared that women were poised to "take over the rule of the country, politically and economically" within the next hundred years.

Marston's high opinion of the innate power of women was likely influenced by the women he was closest to. He lived in an unconventional polyamorous relationship with two well-accomplished women, Elizabeth Holloway Marston and Olive Byrne, both of whom embodied the feminism of the day. Elizabeth, his wife, earned a BA in psychology from Mount Holyoke College, a law degree from Boston University, and a master's in psychology from Radcliffe College, an all-female subsidiary of Harvard, paying her own tuition for her law degree when her father refused to support her. She worked alongside Marston on his systolic blood pressure research, coauthoring the findings, and had jobs at universities, magazines, and in insurance, continuing to work even after she had children.*

Olive, Marston's domestic partner, was also well educated, and she had extremely close connections to the birth control movement. Her mother, Ethel Higgins Byrne, opened America's first birth control clinic in 1916 alongside Olive's aunt, Margaret Sanger, birth control's most famous advocate.[†] That Marston was the de facto son-in-law of such a pioneering feminist strengthened his own feminist leanings. He saw the women in his life achieve great things and thought that all women could do the same if given the chance.

In the late 1930s, Marston became the consulting psychologist for *Family Circle* magazine, and his article "Don't Laugh at the Comics" caught the eye of All-American Publications' publisher,

*Marston had two children with Elizabeth and two children with Olive. They all lived together as one family, and Marston and Elizabeth worked while Olive stayed home raising the kids and running the household.

[†]Ethel took the fall when the clinic was quickly shut down by the police, and the conditions of her release from prison demanded that she never be involved in such clinics again. Spared prosecution by her sister, Margaret Sanger was able to continue with the movement and eventually make birth control available to all women.

Max Gaines. The article discussed the growing popularity of comic books, praising Gaines in particular for the success of Superman, and Gaines hired Marston to be on All-American's editorial advisory board. Several parental and educational groups were upset about comics and thought they were harmful to children, arguing that they were too violent and kept children from reading "real" books. In response, many comic book publishers hired panels of experts in education and psychology to review and approve their books. In a 1943 article in *American Scholar*, Marston stated that "it seemed to me, from a psychological angle, that the comics' worst offense was their blood-curdling masculinity." In response, Marston pitched a female superhero to All-American editor Sheldon Mayer to give young readers an alternative to all of this male-dominated violence. Marston called her "Suprema the Wonder Woman," which Mayer wisely shortened.

Marston wrote his comics under the penname Charles Moulton, a combination of his and Gaines's middle names. H. G. Peter drew Wonder Woman's origin, as well as nearly every single Wonder Woman story until 1958, in three different series: *Comic Cavalcade*, *Sensation Comics*, and *Wonder Woman*. Not much is known about Peter, or what he thought about Marston's feminist themes, but his nearly two decades of drawing the character suggest that he wasn't particularly bothered by them.

Peter had a unique style that was notably different from the work of his younger peers at DC Comics. He had drawn cartoons for humor magazines and worked on a number of comic strips, and he had an old-fashioned, cartoonist technique. Many of the young artists on superhero comics drew female characters in a sexualized way, with made-up faces and exaggerated figures. Peter didn't much go for overstated figures or skimpy clothes, and his faces were pleasant instead of provocative. Because of Peter, when Wonder Woman debuted she looked unlike any other comic book woman on the newsstands, and this distinctive style gave consistency to her early adventures.

Marston thought that this female rule was fast approaching. In an article in the February 1942 issue of *Tomorrow* magazine, Marston wrote that "the future is woman's—as quickly as she realizes her present frustration, and her tremendously powerful potentialities [. . .] Women will lead the world." In his 1937 *New York Times* interview, he declared that "the next one hundred years will see the beginning of an American matriarchy—a nation of Amazons in the psychological rather than physical sense." Once World War II began, he argued that women's participation in the war effort would give them even more strength and speed up this coming matriarchy. Wonder Woman comics were his way to prepare young readers for this inevitable revolution.

Marston's editor, Sheldon Mayer, said that Marston "was writing a feminist book, but not for women. He was dealing with a male audience." Women were well on their way to taking over the world, and men needed to get out of the way. Marston stated, "these simple, highly imaginative picture stories satisfy longings that ordinary daily life thwarts and denies. Superman and the army of male comics characters who resemble him satisfy the simple desire to be stronger and more powerful than anybody else. Wonder Woman satisfies the subconscious, elaborately disguised desire of males to be mastered by a woman who loves them." The vast popularity of comic books offered a way to reach the malleable minds of America's male youth. Wonder Woman comics were essentially Marston's psychological theories masquerading as superhero adventures.

But his theories weren't without their flaws. A matriarchy maintains an unequal society, just with reversed roles, and Marston optimistically refused to entertain the idea that power would corrupt women as much as it did men. Furthermore, while the idea that women were superior to men was rare and progressive for its time, Marston's concept of gender relied on reductionist generalizations. The female aptitude for love was both maternal and sexual, reducing women to a Madonna/whore stereotype. Marston's theories

idealized women and sexualized their power, basically stating that they were better suited to rule solely based on their ability to fulfill the desires of the men they subjugated. There is a sort of fetishism inherent in Marston's theories that says much more about what Marston was into than about gender relations and feminism.

However, comic books aren't psychology textbooks. The sexual undercurrents in *Wonder Woman* were buried below the surface.* In a genre entirely reliant on idealized heroes, Marston's female idealization as embodied in Wonder Woman becomes much less problematic. Though inspired by DISC theory and the dubious implications therein, the nature of comic books simplified these messages. They were adventure stories for kids that presented simple, surface-level messages about a strong and capable heroine, and children flocked to the book.

Wonder Woman outsold *Superman* at times, with upward of five million kids reading each issue. The character was an instant success. She launched in the back of a team book already filled with established heroes, but started in three series of her own less than a year later. Given the widespread popularity of comics at the time, both boys and girls would have devoured her adventures. Marston may have had some complicated and problematic theories at play in his comics, but they worked primarily as pure superhero fun for Wonder Woman's legions of fans.

The Women of Wonder Woman *end here*

Although Marston and Peter were the primary forces behind Wonder Woman, the feminist message of the comics extended behind

*Marston's bondage fetishism was a constant subtext in *Wonder Woman* comics that had some dark implications, but to unlock it all requires a fairly intimate knowledge of Marston's other work. It would've been over the heads of the vast majority of comics readers.

Nonetheless, Roubicek was a key player at All-American, alongside Gaines and Mayer.

Although it's unlikely that Roubicek wrote *Wonder Woman*, there was another woman who definitely did. Joye Murchison was Marston's assistant from 1944 until his death in 1947. When Marston became ill with polio and later cancer, Murchison helped him write the comics, scripting several herself. Although she wasn't credited at the time, today her name is listed in reprints of the original stories and she is officially the first woman to ever write *Wonder Woman*.

On the art side, H. G. Peter was the sole credited artist on most of *Wonder Woman*'s early stories, but he worked with a studio full of artists. Peter took care of the layouts and the main characters, but other artists would help with side characters and backgrounds. There were a few women in the crew who helped Peter with the inking and occasionally some penciling, though the only name we know is Helen Schpens. Several issues were also lettered by Louise Marston, Marston's daughter-in-law.

Start here

Utopian Genesis and a New Approach to Crime Fighting

Before Steve Trevor came crashing in, Diana had never met a man or interacted with the outside world, and her entire existence was spent in an all-female utopia. Queen Hippolyte described Paradise Island by saying, "With its fertile soil, its marvelous vegetation—its varied natural resources—here is no want, no illness, no hatreds, no wars. [. . .] That is why we Amazons have been able to far surpass the inventions of the so-called manmade civilization! We are not only stronger and wiser than men—but our weapons are better—our flying machines are further advanced!"

The Amazons had divine benefits on top of their technological and societal superiority, including eternal life, so long as Hippolyte

retained her magic girdle.* The queen made it clear that their utopia would remain so long as “we do not permit ourselves to be again beguiled by men!” Paradise Island was a means for Marston to illustrate, albeit in fanciful form, the benefits of a female-ruled society.

In her early adventures, Wonder Woman was often described as possessing “the beauty of Aphrodite, the wisdom of Athena, the strength of Hercules and the speed of Mercury.” But these qualities applied to every Amazon. Hippolyte declared that the Amazons were “a race of Wonder Women!” Princess Diana wasn’t especially gifted among her Amazon sisters; in the tournament to decide the Amazon champion, all competed fiercely in the twenty-one grueling challenges, and all of them had the ability to be a Wonder Woman in the world of man. This athletic prowess wasn’t limited to Amazons either. In *Wonder Woman* #23, Queen Hippolyte spoke directly to female readers and stated, “You girls can develop strength and courage like our Amazon youngsters if you lead clean, athletic lives and realize the **true power of women!**”

Wonder Woman had no past tragedy to resolve, no anger or sorrow burning deep within her. Instead, she grew up in the world’s most idyllic environment and became a hero to help others and spread Amazon values. While a lot of superheroes had a sidekick to help them in their crime fighting, Wonder Woman developed an entire network of powerful women.

In America she had the Holliday Girls, the members of the sorority Beta [sic] Lambda at Holliday College. The Holliday Girls first appeared in *Sensation Comics* #2, when Wonder Woman took their marching band to distract a group of Nazi spies by having a dance.

*Mythologically speaking, Hippolyte’s girdle was a *zoster*, a belt that represented a warrior’s power and heroism. Hercules was tasked with taking Hippolyte’s girdle because it was the ultimate symbol of a leader’s power. To possess her *zoster* was absolute proof that he had conquered his foe. Marston appears to have had a similar take on Hippolyte’s girdle: all of the utopian aspects of the island were rooted in the queen possessing this symbol of power and would disappear if a man possessed this power. Usually only male heroes earned this symbol of power, and through violence, but Marston showed that this power in the hands of a woman equaled peace and utopia.

Once Wonder Woman gave the word, each Holliday Girl subdued her dance partner and handcuffed him. The Holliday Girls were led by Etta Candy, a rotund young woman who loved chocolates. Etta’s appearance was a stark contrast to the svelte, wasp-waisted women depicted in most comic books, and Etta was a brave and heroic leader who was always in the thick of the fight beside her friend Wonder Woman. Whatever the adventure, the Holliday Girls were involved. In fact, the Holliday Girls were more useful to Wonder Woman than the American military, often showing up to help her fight the Nazis or Japanese way before any soldiers arrived on the scene.

Wonder Woman’s Amazon sisters also helped her battle villains and defend the planet, fighting alongside her and providing her with advanced technology. The brilliant and inventive Amazons had knowledge that far surpassed what was available in the world of men. Wonder Woman regularly used the Amazons’ mental radio for contacting the Holliday Girls, Paradise Island, or Steve, and she also had access to their teleportation and time travel devices when the need arose.

When these women worked together, they were unstoppable. Although they regularly used force to stop villains, violence wasn’t the only option. Wonder Woman frequently tried to talk to criminals and show them that another path would be a better choice.

Wonder Woman’s general approach to women was to encouragingly point out their own strengths and set them free of the dominant men in their lives. When Marva, the wife and assistant of the evil Dr. Psycho, lamented that “Submitting to a cruel husband’s domination has ruined my life! But what can a weak girl do?” Wonder Woman told her to “get strong! Earn your own living—join the WAAACs or WAVES and fight for your country! Remember the better you can fight, the less you have to.”* Employment was always Wonder Woman’s first suggestion to help women gain independence.

*The WAAACs were the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, the women’s branch of the US Army. The WAVES were Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, a women’s branch of the US Navy.