



The Wonder Woman Chronicles, Vol. 1

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Beginning a new Chronicles series starring the world's most recognized female super-hero, Wonder Woman!

This volume reveals Wonder Woman's origin and the story of how she found her role in "man's world." Along the way, she battles saboteurs and the mysterious Dr. Poison and visits the School for Spies.

The Wonder Woman Chronicles, Vol. 1 Details

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Download and Read Free Online The Wonder Woman Chronicles, Vol. 1 William Moulton Marston , Harry G. Peter (Illustrator)

From Reader Review The Wonder Woman Chronicles, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Jani says

Sometimes the first examples of a genre do not age well, after all, the followers have the opportunity to learn from past mistakes and take the strengths of the original to a new level thus watering the effect that the originators have. At other times, the first seeds are sown at a time when growth is restricted by the times, perhaps just not even giving the original a chance to fulfil its potential. While both of these factors are true to a point to the first Wonder Woman comics collected into these volumes, the chronicle also proves the potency the character had from the very start and how it was used in a way that has rarely been seen since.

Wonder Woman was created as a feminist character and it shows from the very start. It is, in fact, a wonder how feminist these stories dating from 1942 are. The first female superhero to get its own comic book not only offers a strong female rolemodel in which part she has been made into an icon far surpassing her readership since, but also brings attention to gendered power structures and promotes feminist agenda in an open way. While many of its contemporaries (for example, Superman) seem quite lame from the modern perspective, at least as a feminist hero, Wonder Woman was at the top of her game from the very start.

Of course, even Wonder Woman was a product of her time and context, in this case WWII and post-first wave feminism: while she is a feminist character, there are still troublesome aspects to her. However, if read with a grain of salt and knowledge of the context, this chronicle presents one of the strongest starts to a superhero's career as was seen in the American mainstream of the early to mid-twentieth century. It is not just the feminism, the stories also carry interesting undertones and are not always as naive as, again, some of its contemporaries'. While the stories might not be as riveting to a modern reader as some of the newest stories, the collection clearly demonstrates the strength and relevance of these "ancient" comics.

Nathan Dehoff says

Wonder Woman was not technically the first female superhero, but she was the first to become an enduring character in the world of comics, which even now is largely a super sausage fest. I think it's fair to say that Marston, a psychologist, lawyer, and inventor of the systolic blood pressure test that was instrumental in the polygraph, had feminist beliefs, although some of it doesn't hold up all that well in modern times. He was obsessed with bondage, and the fact both the heroine and other characters are constantly being tied up fed into his own fantasies. It's also interesting to note that, in the character's original origin story, her reason for leaving her home and coming to the United States was that she had a crush on a dude. When Major Steve Trevor crashes on Paradise Island (it wasn't called Themiscyra until the eighties), she takes him back to the States and takes a job as an Army nurse and secretary to be near him. She actually switches places with an existing nurse who has the same first name and a quite similar appearance. So the career of a feminist icon and embodiment of truth started with her moving halfway around the world to be with a guy she barely knew and committing fraud. There's also a weird mix of Diana taking advantage of men's expectations about women (shades of the Biblical Jael and Judith here) and actually wanting to conform to the stereotypes. As Lois Lane is more interested in Superman than in Clark Kent and Jane Foster in Thor over Donald Blake, Trevor favors Wonder Woman over Diana. Another recurring character is Etta Candy, an overweight college student who's obsessed with candy. To her credit, she's actually quite competent when she needs to be, but the whole idea of the fat chick being used as comic relief isn't all that enlightened. (I just suddenly wondered

if Melissa McCarthy is going to play her in the upcoming movie.)

Most of the stories here involve Diana fighting Nazi spies, which isn't too surprising in a wartime comic. These espionage accounts can become awfully convoluted, like when a Japanese spy pretends to be a Burmese elephant handler in a circus. Wonder Woman also takes on women's working conditions in retail and high milk prices. Her bullet-defecting bracelets and invisible plane (not yet a jet plane) were around since her very first appearance, while her lasso didn't show up until a few issues in. Oddly, this was retconned a few issues later to say she had the lasso on her first trip to the States. And I don't know if her spinning around to change her clothes was original with the 1970s television series or what, but here there are a few panels of her doing that manually.

There's a fair amount of Greek mythology incorporated into the story, although there are some liberties taken with the source material, and Marston mixes up Greek and Roman names. Hercules' theft of Queen Hippolyte's magic girdle, which was one of his twelve labors, is central to the Amazons' withdrawal to their own island utopia. Apparently they're extremely long-lived while they stay there, and the same Hippolyte is still the ruler. Diana is her daughter, but rather than being born in the normal way, she was made of clay and animated by Aphrodite. The giant kangaroos that the Amazons ride are apparently new with the comic, but they're pretty cool.

Pam says

An interesting read, definitely a different era. Amazing that such a strong female character was created back then, even though her motives are driven by love at the first sight of a man (the first man she ever saw in fact, who also happened to be unconscious).

Got to love statements like "But Etta, if you keep getting fatter you'll never catch a man!" Lol.

Jen says

Totally awesome. Love the old school art and the old school ideals. Am I a bad feminist if I find it charming? Love it, I bought this for an art project but now I think I'm going to have to buy the second volume...

Stephen Heverin says

I wanted to get to know more about Wonder Woman, she was not one of the comics I read growing up, and really only knew of her from cartoons and the TV show. And as Viscini says, go back to the beginning. So I did. The main driver for picking this up is that I have a young daughter, so I want her interested in comics, but I also want her to have a base in strong female characters. This is a great introduction to her character in starting from the beginning and all of the traits you see in Wonder Woman and Diana Prince actually hold true in the TV show. It also shows a period in time in American history. Highlighting stereotypes, both good and bad. And how comics were leveraged in bolstering or supporting national pride and support for the fight against the Nazi's and Japanese. If these stories are to be believed, America's shores were besieged with spies hell bent on trying to destroy America from the inside.

Even with the gender stereotypes, Wonder Woman stands out, and her alter ego Diana leverages her undervalued position to play into helping her. One character, Etta Candy, while also stereotyped as "fat", I have really grown to like her and her character. If they ever finally get to put a real Wonder Woman movie on the big screen, it would be great to see her character represented.

Overall a great read from several perspectives. I can't wait to start the next one.

Anna says

Who knew early Wonder Woman was so sexist? Like, I expected some sexism, but I really wasn't expecting my heroine to help a woman get back to her husband and stay with him and then help the husband with his job when said husband CHAINS WOMAN TO STOVE. Literally. You cannot make this shit up.

In light of that, Wonder Woman championing "women's" causes specifically and doing her weird blessing of "may you always be faithful to your sweethearts" seems relatively benign.

Still, it's early Wonder Woman! The beginnings of one of my favorite superheros! The first superheroine I ever got to know! She's epic, she does push some boundaries, and it's always good to see where things began. I really liked the comics, and I enjoyed them. So four stars despite the chaining of women to stoves by husbands who we're apparently still supposed to root for???. Yeah, I still don't get it, but I'll let it go. Etta Candy may be my new hero, though. I never knew early Wonder Woman had an entire women's college marching band helping her out. And though the initial joke of them only joining to "catch a man" was disappointingly sexist, they are a dream girl power squad in my book.

Gary Butler says

3rd book read in 2013.

Number 104 out of 295 on my all time book list.

Follow the link below to see my video review:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzV7xY...>

Jodi says

I don't even know where to begin with this gem. Part of me wants to talk about the amazing comic where Wonder Woman wants to save America's children from a lack of milk (where will out great country be in 20 years without milk for our children?!). Part of me wants to start by investigating the real hero of these comics, Etta Candy (she literally does all the hard work). And what about the great turns of phrase peppered throughout and now all but forgotten. I muttered lines out loud to myself in disbelief and delight, laughing with the pleasure of hearing some of these awesome utterances.

To be honest, I could only handle one comic at a time. While these are amazing mirrors into an odd subculture of the past, I often found myself cringing at various events. Although I was also pleasantly surprised at some of the more progressive parts (maybe, sadly, progressive even for today). Still, an

awesome adventure through one of comic book history's greats.

Jennifer says

The art is a strange mashup with Wonder Woman drawn in clear almost frozen lines to emphasize her ethereal beauty and all the other characters are drawn with a thick manic line, reminding me of painters like Dix and Schiele. It is almost like she is an alien simultaneously living in another dimension. The storylines are wild to the extent that you would never want to use this to explain the differences between men and women. I have no idea how to rate this, there is so little to compare it to!

Annie Raaen says

Haha, where to begin? First of all, I gave this four stars not because it's fantastically executed, but because of Marston's noble attempt at giving the comic world of the 1940's a strong female character. There have already been so much written about the bondage, the fat sidekick, the surreal Wonder Woman world, that I don't have much more to say other than I rather enjoyed the bondage and seeing an effective and happy fat sidekick. LOL

Bottom line, it's a really fun read, entertaining, surreal, and worth the time.

Daniel Cornwall says

This was fun, though I was sad to see that Wonder Woman finally got around to nagging Etta Candy about her weight. Overall I'm glad I read these comics. Wonder Woman was a more complicated character than most of us give her credit for.

Nicole Westen says

It's always interesting re-reading the original comics. Definitely a product of its time, and definitely written by a guy!

John Porcellino says

A few years ago I found out about the weird sexually-tinged origins of Wonder Woman and thought it sounded fascinating. (She was created by a guy who was into submission and female superiority and tried to spread his beliefs through these comics. Wha'???) So I picked this book up awhile back, but couldn't get through it. The art was fantastic, but the writing seemed kind of a slog to get through (who are these weird college girls who eat candy?!?! etc).

Just picked it up again, and this time I sank right into this incredibly bizarre and fascinating work. Again, the

art by HG Peter is amazing; gorgeous inky linework with an unsettling off-kilter quality. The (re)coloring is just fine, especially on the awesome sea-based scenes. But of course the really remarkable thing is that someone somewhere is tied up on damn near every page of this book! Wow.

Favorite scene is where Wonder Woman goes back to Paradise Island incognito and enters a contest where ladies ride giant kangaroos and compete to see how many "girls" they can lasso and hogtie. These comics are definitely out there, delightfully campy and weird. A fun read.

Samuel Valentino says

I had recently read The Secret History of Wonder Woman, so being able to find a collection of the original Marston comics was a bonus. After reading about the gender equality origins of the character, I wanted to see how it actually played out in the real comic, as opposed to the author's interpretation.

For the most part, it did. Wonder Woman is genuinely a strong woman character for the era, or any era really, but the more so for when it came out. There are some elements that date it to the time period, but surprisingly few, which was good to see.

Another thing that I liked is that Paradise Island, where she is from, may look like ancient Greece but is actually more technologically advanced than the rest of the world! I always wondered how they knew about how to block bullets, or even had an invisible jet. But now I know! As much as I liked the new Wonder Woman movie, the original comic makes a lot more sense than having them exist as an isolated ancient Greek society.

On the down side, sometimes the comics themselves weren't especially interesting, other than the premise. Some are good, but some were a slog to get through. But definitely interesting to read the original comic books of a great superhero character.

Raeann says

This gets three stars purely because it is the origin of Wonder Woman and it does a good job setting up the character and introducing her backstory. The Diana we meet here holds true to her morals and doesn't stray from her way of doing things, but she does have a strange way of viewing her alter-ego. Diana Prince eventually becomes some sort of rival to Wonder Woman, and it's a bit strange to read. The only time it comes into play is where Steve Trevor is concerned, turning Diana into a woman who only cares about getting her man. Was it frustrating? Of course. There is more to Diana than her feelings for Steve, and yet those feelings were the focus of much of the comics. But is it to be expected, seeing when this was written? Yes. Bearing that in mind, it's much easier to read about Steve-obsessed Diana.

There are a few fatal flaws in here that ruined an otherwise great collection. At one point Dan White chains Diana up in the kitchen, thinking she is his wife. This was just accepted and never addressed, which was disturbing. I was waiting for Diana to tell Mrs. White about her husband's behavior, but instead the White family got their happily ever after once Diana rescued the Mrs. The way characters of color were drawn was also a huge drawback. This collection is definitely a representation of the time during which it was written, and it serves as a reminder for where this type of media started. The pro-America and anti-Japan focus shows

where priorities were at the time, but it does not stop it from being an unfortunate aspect. The character of Etta Candy was another disappointment. She, literally, spends all her time eating candy. She's the "funny fat friend" stereotype, and while she is intelligent and stubborn and gets things done, it was a real shame to see her character reduced to a joke every other panel.

Bearing in mind the time during which this was written, I was able to focus on the positive aspects more than the drawbacks. Diana is clever and resorts to violence only when she's given no other choice. She's here to teach people and help people, and this shines through all the other flaws these comics have. That is what is most important to me. If Diana is still herself and does her best to better the lives of others, then she truly is Wonder Woman.
