

#1306628 in Books 2001-08-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 1.00 x 1.00 x 1.00l, Binding: Misc.

Supplies96 pages | File size: 37.Mb

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(Mobile library) Wonder Woman Masterpiece Edition: The Golden Age of the Amazon Princess

## **Wonder Woman Masterpiece Edition: The Golden Age of the Amazon Princess**

Les Daniels : Wonder Woman Masterpiece Edition: The Golden Age of the Amazon Princess before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wonder Woman Masterpiece Edition:

## The Golden Age of the Amazon Princess:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. SHE WAS THE FIRST AND ONLY WONDER WOMAN By Edward Lee Like "Superman: The Golden Age" and "Batman: The Golden Age", this book shows in countless illustrations exactly what the Golden Age of Comics was all about. As a Baby Boomer, I have seen the various incarnations of WONDER WOMAN and for some reason, the artwork of H. Peters, the first artist to draw WW, the original artwork continues to stand out to show the true inventiveness of the character. If you are a comic book collector or simply someone who enjoys reading WW comic books, this is the perfect book for you. If you enjoy reading about ORIGINS OF COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS of the 1940s, this book is for you. It was for me. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Loine Live Wonder Woman! By Adele I mistakenly wrote the review for this book under the book for Jill Lapore's book about Wonder Woman. I can't find a way to change that. In any case, I love both books and find them complements to each other. This one is full of the original comic which I was glued to as a kid eon's ago. Read both of them if you are a Wonder Woman fan. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Informative about the heroine of little girls! By D. E. Cheney Interesting but not the depth of the LePore book about Wonder Woman and her creators.

As beautiful as Aphrodite, strong as Hercules, wise as Athena, and swift as Mercury, the much-adored Wonder Woman is celebrated in this long-awaited Masterpiece Edition. This incredible collection pays tribute to the Golden Age of Wonder Woman in two ingenious formats: a compact, inexpensive, trade edition, and a larger, more deluxe collector's edition. Both contain an exclusive 8-1/2-inch action figure of Wonder Woman, circa 1941, and a lavishly illustrated hardcover book chronicling the origins and early history of the Amazon Princess. The Wonder Woman figure is available only in these editions, and it authentically replicates the heroine as she appeared in her earliest days--complete with star-spangled cloth skirt, golden bracelets, and detachable magic lasso (the one that can make a man forget everything). The larger collector's edition also contains a faithful color reproduction of the very first Wonder Woman comic book. Both editions will be treasured by fans of the woman who wants to "change your mind--and change the world!"

.com There can't be many people who haven't heard of Wonder Woman, arguably the first female superhero and one of the "big three" (the others being Batman and Superman). She was created by Dr. William Moulton Marston, who also invented the lie detector, as an antidote to masculine comic book adventures, drenched in violent testosterone-fueled imagery and portraying women as helpless weaklings who had to rely on the men to untie them from the train tracks in the nick of time. Wonder Woman was certainly no weakling. Dressed in stars and stripes, armed with bullet-deflecting bracelets and a magical lasso, and flying around in an invisible jet, she had no qualms about saving her boyfriend Steve Trevor from certain doom each issue while dealing a swift blow to the odd Nazi soldier as well. However, most people who aren't die-hard comic fans will have only memories of the camp and kitschy 1970s TV show, starring the leggy and beautiful Lynda Carter (who also contributes the book's foreword). As compelling and faithful as this small-screen adaptation was, there is so much more to the WW mythology than that, as Les Daniels admirably proves in this gorgeous hardback volume. It features lots of covers and extracted scenes from the comic books, from her earliest appearance to her latest 1990s image changes, and plenty of photographs of the plethora of WW merchandise created over the years. And for those of you old enough to remember the TV show, the lyrics of the infamous theme song are also here in all their star-spangled glory. This is a wonderful, nostalgic journey through the life and times of the first lady of superheroes and a real appreciation of WW's staying power and campy cult status. Beautifully packaged, absorbingly written, and wonderfully illustrated, this is a must-have for comic fans. --Jonathan Weir, .co.uk From Library Journal With a classy and entertaining touch, Daniels delivers the goods on the comic world's most enduring female lead D from her unique creator (the unconventional Dr. William Moulton Marston, credited with inventing the lie detector and a champion of women's world dominance) and the early issues' bondage scenes to her resurgence as one of DC's "big guns" in the 1990s and beyond. The author of numerous comics histories, Daniels here covers 50-plus years of history and character evolution with a light, informative tone, respectful of the accomplishment but never blindly adoring. Tracing Wonder Woman's growth affords Daniels an opportunity to comment on comic history and the evolution of women's role in society over the same time period, making for insightful reading. Moreover, this lavishly illustrated work is just plain fun and would make a great addition to any public library's comics, popular art, or popular culture section. Libraries should also consider Daniels's Superman: The Complete History (Chronicle, 1998), Batman: The Complete History (Chronicle, 1999), Marvel: Five Fabulous Decades of The World's Greatest Comics (LJ 10/1/91), and DC Comics: Sixty Years of the World's Favorite Comic Book Heroes (LJ 12/95), which together offer readers a fairly rich overview of the comics' history. D Chris Ryan, New Milford, NJ Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. These days we devour super-sized meals, ogle strutting supermodels and experiment with superconductivity. But once upon a time there were only superheroes. Murmur their names, and from out of memory's deep emerge lazy summer afternoons spent on covered porches with a bottle of

Orange Crush and a bag of Fritos, weekly bike rides to the revolving wire racks in corner drug stores and, of course, our increasingly daring leaps, from picnic tables and brick fireplaces, with an old sheet fluttering from 9-year-old shoulders: "I can fly, I can fly." And we could -- if only during that moment when we flexed our knees and pushed off into the air. Then, for one blissful second, we were commensurate with our dreams. But, ah, those names, how they thrilled and fed our imaginations: the Flash, Green Lantern, Green Arrow, Aqua-Man and Hawkman, the Mighty Thor, and a little later the Silver Surfer, Spiderman and the X-Men. To the ignorant eyes of parents, our carefully tended stacks of 20, 50 or 200 issues of Action Comics, World's Finest, Detective Comics, Marvel Comics and so many others merely appeared to tell the same story, again and yet again: A gaudily costumed crime fighter battles a seemingly unbeatable enemy -- sometimes the oddly loquacious alien from another planet or dimension, sometimes the white-coated mad scientist with his destructo-ray, often (and best of all) the monstrous result of some laboratory experiment gone horribly wrong. Never such innocence again. Nowadays, comics have grown up and taken steroids: They are swarthy, mean, perverse, complex, adult. They even require specialized stores -- like X-rated videos -- and aspire to literature. "Graphic novels" can be intricate and wonderful -- ask any student of Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* or look at the pastiche brilliance of Alan Moore's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* -- but they would likely frighten or puzzle the children who lingered for hours over the early adventures of Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman. Three oversized histories now document the life and times of these most durable of all the comic-book legends. Les Daniels's cleanly written text reveals not only the artistic, business and marketing decisions that have made Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman recognizable round the world, but also the ways in which each of their comics differs from the others in style and tone. Superman's adventures, for instance, were nearly always laced with humor and frequently relied on slightly screwball situations: For instance, Mr. Mxyzptlk -- the impish troublemaker from the future -- and Lois Lane's niece Susie Tompkins generally treated the Man of Steel as either an amusing buffoon or a playtime doll. Bizarro -- the simple-minded partial clone of Superman, who resembled a crystallized Frankenstein's monster -- provoked endless chaos without being truly threatening. The entire reporting cast of the *Daily Planet* often tended to be exploited just for laughs: wide-eyed Jimmy Olsen, love-struck Lois Lane, even gruff editor Perry White with his favorite ejaculation, "Great Caesar's ghost!" By contrast, Batman dealt with obsession in all its forms (a theme underscored in Tim Burton's two Batman films). Bruce Wayne transforms himself into a caped crusader to avenge the brutal death of his parents. But his opponents are even more seriously damaged individuals, usually driven to crime by psychological trauma: the Joker, who yearns to be acclaimed the world's greatest comedian; Two-Face, who struggles with a Jekyll-and-Hyde personality after his disfigurement; Cat-Woman, a mousy secretary who escapes repression by releasing her inner tigress. Wonder Woman is, of course, the supreme avatar of that particular myth. The ludicrously bespectacled Diana Prince is actually an princess, at ease with her physical strength and beauty. She grew up in a world -- Paradise Island -- where sisterhood was truly powerful (and telepathic to boot). As a result, she presented a usable role model for the girls who would eventually spearhead the feminist movement of the 1970s. (Compare Xena and Buffy in the 1990s.) In some ways, Wonder Woman, though popular as a comic book, actually found her true identity in dark-haired, busty Lynda Carter, star of the television series. Nearly all the comics touched on, usually obliquely, the issue of sex: Indeed, Batman's adventures sometimes resembled a fetishistic daydream of skintight leather and rubber. But TV's Wonder Woman could often seem beyond sexuality, utterly serious and focused, hardly aware of that low-cut metallic breastplate and the bounty it scarcely contained. Daniels covers the "complete history" of these three modern myths, from their inception to their latest incarnations. For instance, he touches on the influence of pulp-magazine heroes like the Shadow and Zorro on the creation of various super crime fighters, and also stresses the widespread inspiration of Douglas Fairbanks's acrobatic film stunts. But no mere nostalgist, he sympathetically delves into the camp TV shows, blockbuster movies and highly revisionist 1980s interpretations of the Man of Steel, the Dark Knight and the warrior-princess. I do think Daniels might have stressed more fully the pervasive influence of science fiction on all these comics. There were, for instance, several popular novels of the 1930s on the theme of supermen -- e.g., Philip Wylie's *Gladiator* (1930) and Olaf Stapledon's *Odd John* (1935). Moreover, he actually refers to Murray Leinster, Edmond Hamilton and Otto Binder but without pointing out that these are honored figures not only in the history of comic books but even more so in the development of sf. All this said, Daniels offers plenty of shrewd insights: "The Joker became the model for other Batman bad guys who were to follow: a seemingly endless parade of tormented, avaricious lunatics who would sacrifice anything to earn a place in the moonlight. A peculiarly American form of expressionism developed, in which characters lived surrounded by countless emblems of their obsessions, treated crime as a series of publicity stunts, and dressed up in crazy costumes as they struggled to dominate the night. Some critics have suggested that Batman was a more realistic hero than Superman because the former had no incredible powers, but Superman's stories generally followed the logical patterns of science fiction. Batman's world, by contrast, was sheer fantasy, featuring multiple maniacs striving to turn their dreams and nightmares into concrete reality, with only a man dressed as a bat to say them nay." It's important to stress how good Daniels's text is, if only because the illustrations and layout of these three volumes display so much eye-popping, gosh-wow, full-color razzle-dazzle. Chip Kidd, the highly regarded designer, created the look of these books, and no page is like any other. He enlarges single images, plays with type size, reprints entire stories, reproduces

advertisements, movie stills, toy collections and just about anything else pertinent to the iconology. As a result, each of these glossy colorful paperbacks seems part chronicle, part comic book and part collector's catalogue. Thus Kidd has made sure that in their layout these dossiers exemplify the exuberance and imaginative daring of the classics they celebrate. These are, finally, tantalizing cultural scrapbooks, and as such they remind us of how much our pop myths have reflected the mores and anxieties of their times, whether the 1930s, the 1960s or the present. Superheroes certainly feel as American as jazz, baseball and the Fourth of July -- and their espoused values have traditionally been those that matter to most Americans: determination, self-sacrifice, a desire to protect and help the underdog, an essential, deep-down goodness. Yet note that all of these virtues have been questioned, quite legitimately, by the latest generation of artists who have reinterpreted Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman. We are currently far more wary of homegrown vigilantism, and we know all too well that being a superpower, like possessing super powers, may not suffice in the 21st century. Indeed, every contemporary comics hero repeatedly, even neurotically, questions the troubling relationship between might and right. Superman's own willingness "to fight the never-ending battle for truth, justice and the American Way" still seems, nonetheless, a soul-stirring, admirable credo, especially on this day of family picnics and evening fireworks. And yet even the most patriotic citizen might look out on the world and sadly pause over that one distinctly disheartening word: "never-ending." --The Washington Post