

THE SECRET HISTORY OF
**WONDER
WOMAN**
JILL LEPORE

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Yale University Manuscripts and Archives

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COMICS INDEX



Display ad, *Ms.* magazine, 1972

Between 1941 and 1948, Wonder Woman appeared in four different comic books: *All-Star Comics*, *Sensation Comics*, *Comic Cavalcade*, and *Wonder Woman*. Between May 8, 1944, and December 1, 1945, a Wonder Woman comic strip appeared in newspapers distributed by King Features. A complete run of all of these comic books and strips is held in the DC Comics Archives, at 1700 Broadway, New York.

Many of the original Wonder Woman stories are reproduced in two anthologies published by DC Comics. Wonder Woman comic-book stories from December 1941 to September 1946 are available in William Moulton Marston and H. G. Peter, *Wonder Woman Archives* (New York: DC Comics, Archives Editions, 1998–2012), 7 volumes, while stories from December 1941 to July 1943 appear in *The Won-*

der Woman Chronicles (DC Comics, 2010–12), 2 volumes. *The Wonder Woman Chronicles* includes Wonder Woman stories from *Comic Cavalcade*; these do not appear in *Wonder Woman Archives*. The publication of these two anthologies is ongoing, and not all of the Wonder Woman stories published during Marston's lifetime have appeared yet. Moreover, these anthologies lack advertising pages, and, importantly, they lack the four-page centerfold, "Wonder Women of History," that appeared in *Wonder Woman* and, later, in *Sensation Comics*, where it was more usually only two pages. *Wonder Woman: The Complete Newspaper Strips, 1944–1945*, is available from the Library of American Comics.

The best pictorial history of Wonder Woman comics is Les Daniels, *Wonder Woman: The Complete History* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000). A useful reference is Michael L. Fleisher, *The Original Encyclopedia of Comic Book Heroes*, volume 2, *Wonder Woman* (New York: DC Comics, 1976, 2007).

Many of Marston's original scripts survive, as does some original art by Harry G. Peter, much of which is held by private collectors. In 1970, Elizabeth Holloway Marston donated to the Smithsonian Institution's Dibner Library a number of original Wonder Woman scripts, chiefly typescripts authored by William Moulton Marston, including a typescript for one of the newspaper strips.¹ Holloway had contemplated selling these materials to collectors in 1968 and in 1969 still had cartons of scripts in her possession.² Joye Hummel Murchison Kelly, who worked with Marston from 1944 to 1947, had kept, for decades, eighteen scripts, along with a diary she kept from 1946 to 1947, recording which scripts she wrote and which scripts she typed for Marston that year. I visited and interviewed Kelly at her home in 2014. Later that year, she generously donated these and other Wonder Woman materials to the Smithsonian.

A number of Wonder Woman scripts written by Marston but never published in his lifetime were published between 1969 and 1974, after Elizabeth Holloway Marston brought them to light. Some of these unpublished scripts are discussed in Roy Thomas, "Queen Hepzibah, Genghis Khan, and the 'Nuclear' Wars!" *Alter Ego* #23 (April 2003), 4–17.

Who wrote what is often murky in the early history of comics.

Writers, artists, story editors, and editors generally all contributed to the storytelling. This was less the case with Marston, who wielded a great deal of control over the writing of Wonder Woman scripts, especially between 1941 and 1944. Attributions of authorship date, for the most part, to research conducted in the 1960s and 1970s by comic historian Jerry Bails, who created an index of comic-book figures from the so-called golden age. Bails sent questionnaires to dozens of writers, artists, and editors and their heirs, including Elizabeth Holloway Marston. The most easily searchable set of this and subsequent data is the Grand Comics Database, an online reference wiki, at www.comics.org. Not all the attributions in the Grand Comics Database are accurate. In particular, several 1940s stories credited to Robert Kanigher cannot possibly have been written by him. Earlier researchers expressed different doubts. In 1974, Karen M. Walowit, a Berkeley graduate student writing a dissertation on Wonder Woman, questioned the attribution of particular scripts to Joye Hummel (then Joye Murchison).³ “Her Ph.D. thesis is brilliant,” Holloway wrote of Walowit in 1976. “I think she is the only human being who has read and understood every word Bill Marston ever wrote.”⁴ Walowit’s work is very well researched, but she relied on information provided chiefly by Holloway and by Marjorie Wilkes Huntley, and understated Hummel’s role.

In the inventory below, stories written by Joye Hummel Murchison Kelly are marked JHMK. Stories attributed to Robert Kanigher are marked RK. In a handful of cases, Frank Goodwin replaced Harry G. Peter as Wonder Woman’s artist; these are marked FG. Following Wonder Woman’s initial appearance in *All-Star Comics*, Marston did not write the episodes of the Justice Society in which Wonder Woman appeared. Most of those stories were written by Gardner Fox, marked below as GF. I do not know for certain who wrote any of the “Wonder Women of History” stories that appeared in *Wonder Woman* and later in *Sensation Comics*. With that exception, in this list, all stories were written by William Moulton Marston and all art was created by Harry G. Peter, unless otherwise indicated.

Some comic-book stories were published with titles, but many were not. In many cases, story titles used in anthologies and databases refer to titles assigned by the editors of anthologies and compilers of databases, decades after the stories were written. In some cases, these titles

are different from titles given in original scripts. For stories originally published without a title, I have used the title used on the script, if the script survives; if no script survives, I have used the title assigned in the Grand Comics Database.

The dates published on the covers of comic books—the “cover dates”—were generally about three months ahead of the actual date of publication. A comic book whose cover dated it as April–May 1942 may have first appeared on newsstands in February 1942. Marston appears to have submitted his scripts about three to six months ahead of the cover date. For instance, Marston’s draft for *Wonder Woman #1*, cover date Summer 1942, is dated April 18, 1942. His draft for *Sensation Comics #25*, cover date January 1944, is dated May 13, 1943. Some scripts lingered for years rather than months. Another of Marston’s scripts, for *Comic Cavalcade #25*, cover date February–March 1948, is dated August 23, 1946. Some stories written by Marston were published years after his death.

A useful source for identifying the lag between the design of an issue and its cover date is Marston’s diary. “Gaines’s office—finished art WW 8,” he wrote in his diary for Friday, July 30, 1943, adding, “Pete’s office WW8 roughs completed.” *Wonder Woman #8* had a cover date of March 1944 and a release date of, approximately, December 1943, which would suggest that the design might have been completed about four months ahead of distribution.⁵ Joye Hummel’s 1946–47 diary is similarly illuminating: it makes clear that she, too, was at that point writing well in advance of publication. Hummel resigned within months of Marston’s death in 1947, but stories written by her were published into 1949. My inventory ends with the publication of the last scripts known to have been written by either Marston or Hummel.

ALL-STAR COMICS		
I have not listed numbers of <i>All-Star Comics</i> in which Wonder Woman makes no appearance at all or where she appears in a panel or two but has either no lines or one throwaway line. In all of the stories listed here, Wonder Woman is a character, although in many of them she makes only a very brief appearance.		
#8	Dec. 1941–Jan. 1942	Introducing Wonder Woman
#11	June–July 1942	The Justice Society Joins the War on Japan (GF)
#12	Aug.–Sept. 1942	The Black Dragon Menace (GF)
#13	Oct.–Nov. 1942	Shanghaied into Space! (GF, rewritten by WMM)
#14	Dec. 1942–Jan. 1943	Food for Starving Patriots! (GF)
#15	Feb.–Mar. 1943	The Man Who Created Images (GF)
#16	Apr.–May 1943	The Justice Society Fights for a United America (GF)
#17	June–July 1943	The Brain Wave Goes Berserk (GF)
#19	Winter 1943	The Crimes Set to Music (GF)
#21	Summer 1944	The Man Who Relived His Life (GF)
#24	Spring 1945	This Is Our Enemy! (GF)
#31	Oct.–Nov. 1946	The Workshop of Willie Wonder (GF)
#34	Apr.–May 1947	The Wiles of the Wizard (GF; WW drawn by Irwin Hasen)
#35	June–July 1947	The Day That Dropped Out of Time (written by John Broome; WW drawn by Irwin Hasen)
#36	Aug.–Sept. 1947	5 Drowned Men (writer unknown; WW drawn by Irwin Hasen)
#37	Oct.–Nov. 1947	The Injustice Gang of the World (RK; WW drawn by Irwin Hasen)
#38	Dec. 1947–Jan. 1948	History's Crime Wave (GF; WW drawn by Carmine Infantino)
SENSATION COMICS		
#1	Jan. 1942	Wonder Woman Comes to America
#2	Feb. 1942	Dr. Poison
#3	Mar. 1942	A Spy in the Office
#4	April 1942	School for Spies
#5	May 1942	Wonder Woman Versus the Saboteurs
#6	June 1942	Summons to Paradise
#7	July 1942	The Milk Swindle
#8	Aug. 1942	Department Store Perfidy
#9	Sept. 1942	The Return of Diana Prince
#10	Oct. 1942	The Railroad Plot

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#11	Nov. 1942	Mission to Planet Eros
#12	Dec. 1942	America's Guardian Angel
#13	Jan. 1943	Wonder Woman Is Dead
#14	Feb. 1943	The Story of Fir Balsam
#15	Mar. 1943	Victory at Sea
#16	Apr. 1943	The Masked Menace
#17	May 1943	Riddle of the Talking Lion (FG)
#18	June 1943	The Secret City of the Incas (FG)
#19	July 1943	The Unbound Amazon (FG)
#20	Aug. 1943	The Girl with the Gun
#21	Sept. 1943	War Against Society (FG)
#22	Oct. 1943	The Secret Submarine
#23	Nov. 1943	War Laugh Mania
#24	Dec. 1943	The Adventure of the Pilotless Plane
#25	Jan. 1944	Adventure of the Kidnappers of Astral Spirits
#26	Feb. 1944	The Masquerader
#27	Mar. 1944	The Fun Foundation
#28	Apr. 1944	The Malice of the Green Imps
#29	May 1944	Adventure of the Escaped Prisoner
#30	June 1944	The Blue Spirit Mystery
#31	July 1944	Grown-Down Land
#32	Aug. 1944	The Crime Combine
#33	Sept. 1944	The Disappearance of Tama
#34	Oct. 1944	Edgar's New World
#35	Nov. 1944	Girls Under the Sea
#36	Dec. 1944	Battle Against Revenge
#37	Jan. 1945	The Invasion of Paradise Island
#38	Feb. 1945	Racketeers Kidnap Miss Santa Claus
#39	Mar. 1945	In the Clutches of Nero
#40	Apr. 1945	Draska the Deadly
#41	May 1945	The Octopus Plants (JHMK)
#42	June 1945	Peril on Paradise Island (RK)
#43	July 1945	Three Pretty Girls (JHM)
#44	Aug. 1945	Chains and Bracelets (RK)
#45	Sept. 1945	In the Enemy's Hands (RK?)
#46	Oct. 1945	The Lawbreakers' League

#47	Nov. 1945	The Terror of the Tycoon Club
#48	Dec. 1945	The Midget Mystery (JHMK)
#49	Jan. 1946	The Mystery of Lake Iceberg (JHMK)
#50	Feb. 1946	The Case of the Girl in Braces
#51	Mar. 1946	The Crime of Boss Brekel (RK)
#52	Apr. 1946	The Brand of Madness (JHMK)
#53	May 1946	The Case of the Valiant Dog (JHMK)
#54	June 1946	The Treachery of Fiendo (JHMK)
#55	July 1946	The Bughuman Plague (JHMK and WMM)
#56	Aug. 1946	Anti-Atomic Metal
#57	Sept. 1946	The Hatchet of Death (JHMK)
#58	Oct. 1946	The Bog Trap
#59	Nov. 1946	The Blue Snow Man (JHMK)
#60	Dec. 1946	The Ordeal of Queen Boadicea
#61	Jan. 1947	The Million Dollar Tennis Game
#62	Feb. 1947	The Mysterious Prisoners of Anglonia
#63	Mar. 1947	The Wall of Doom
#64	Apr. 1947	The Adventure of the Little Cloud People (JHMK)
#65	May 1947	Treachery in the Arctic (JHMK)
#66	June 1947	Prisoners of Cops and Robbers
#67	July 1947	The Secret of the Bar-L Ranch
#68	Aug. 1947	The Secret of the Menacing Octopus
#69	Sept. 1947	Mystery Behind A, B, C
#70	Oct. 1947	The Unconquerable Women of Cocha Bamba
#71	Nov. 1947	The Invasion of the Sun Warriors (JHMK)
#72	Dec. 1947	The Menace of the Blue Seal Gang (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Louisa May Alcott
#73	Jan. 1948	The Witches' Trials (JHMK)
#74	Feb. 1948	The Adventure of the Undersea Cowboys (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Mary Lyon
#75	Mar. 1948	The Return of Shaggy the Lephrechaun (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Rosa Bonheur
#76	Apr. 1948	Murder Referees the Round (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Margaret Brent
#77	May 1948	Tress's Terrible Mistake (JHMK)
#78	June 1948	The Mistress of Masquerade (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Dr. Mary E. Walker

#79	July 1948	Land of Mirrors (JHMK)
#80	Aug. 1948	The Swinging Scimitar (RK)
#81	Sept. 1948	When Treachery Wore a Green Shirt (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Clara Schumann
#82	Oct. 1948	Brain Pirates from the Inner Moon World (JHMK)
#83	Nov. 1948	The Sinister Olympics (RK) Wonder Women of History: Ellen E. Richards
#84	Dec. 1948	Bottle Cast Up By the Sea (attributed to Sheldon Mayer) Wonder Women of History: Selma Lagerlof
#85	Jan. 1949	The Girl Who Wanted to be an Amazon (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Anna Pavlova
WONDER WOMAN		
#1	Summer 1942	Wonder Woman Goes to the Circus Wonder Woman of History: Florence Nightingale Wonder Woman Versus the Prison Spy Ring The Greatest Feat of Daring in Human History
#2	Fall 1942	The God of War The Earl of Greed Wonder Woman of History: Clara Barton The Duke of Deception The Count of Conquest
#3	Feb.–Mar. 1943	A Spy on Paradise Island The Devilish Devices of Baroness von Gunther Wonder Women of History: Edith Cavell The Secret of Baroness von Gunther Ordeal of Fire
#4	Apr.–May 1943	Man-Hating Madness Mole Men of the Underworld Wonder Women of History: Lillian D. Wald The Rubber Barons
#5	June–July 1943	Battle for Womanhood Etta Candy and Her Holliday Girls Mars Invades the Moon Wonder Women of History: Susan B. Anthony The Return of Dr. Psycho
#6	Fall 1943	Wonder Woman and the Cheetah The Adventure of the Beauty Club Wonder Women of History: Madame Chang Kai-shek The Conquest of Paradise

#7	Winter 1943	The Adventure of the Life Vitamin America's Wonder Women of Tomorrow Wonder Women of History: Joan of Arc The Secret Weapon Demon of the Depths
#8	Spring 1944	Queen Clea's Tournament of Death The Girl with the Iron Mask Wonder Women of History: Sister Elizabeth Kenny The Captive Queen
#9	Summer 1944	Evolution Goes Haywire Wonder Woman vs. Achilles The Freed Captive
#10	Fall 1944	Spies from Saturn Wonder Women of History: Juliette Low The Sky Road Wonder Woman's Boots
#11	Winter 1944	The Slaves of the Evil Eye The Unseen Menace The Slave Smugglers Wonder Women of History: Julia Ward Howe
#12	Spring 1945	The Winged Maidens of Venus (JHMK) The Ordeal of Fire (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Helen Keller The Conquest of Venus (JHMK)
#13	Summer 1945	The Icebound Maidens (JHMK) The Mystery Maid (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Sojourner Truth Slaves in the Electric Gardens (JHMK)
#14	Fall 1945	Captured by Leprechauns (JHMK) The Gentleman Killer Strikes Again (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Abigail Adams The Conquest of Shamrock Land (JHMK)
#15	Winter 1945	The First Battle of Neptunia (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Evangeline Booth The Masters of the Water (JHMK) In the Killer's Cage (JHMK)
#16	Mar.–Apr. 1946	The Secret of the Dark Planet (JHMK) The River of Liquid Fire (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Marie Curie King Pluto's Revenge (JHMK)
#17	May–June 1946	Wonder Woman and the Winds of Time (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Emma Willard The Redskin's Revenge (JHMK) Subterranean Death (JHMK)

#18	July–Aug. 1946	The Return from the Dead (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Hannah Adams The Drugged WAC (JHMK) Ectoplasmic Death (JHMK)
#19	Sept.–Oct. 1946	Invisible Terror (JHMK) Wonder Woman of History: Elizabeth Blackwell The Witchdoctor’s Cauldon (JHMK) In the Lair of the Death Ray Criminals (JHMK)
#20	Nov.–Dec. 1946	The Terrors of the Air (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Lucretia Mott The Rage of Redbeard (JHMK) The Pirates’ Galley Slave (JHMK)
#21	Jan.–Feb. 1947	The Mystery of Atom World (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Annie Oakley The Tide of Atomic Fire (JHMK) Ruler of the Atom World (JHMK)
#22	Mar.–Apr. 1947	The Color Thief Wonder Women of History: Sarah Bernhardt The Island of Evil Jealousy Visits the Winged Women of Venus
#23	May 1947	Siege of the Savage War Maidens Wonder Woman and the Coming of the Kangas The Vanishing Mummy
#24	July–Aug. 1947	Tutine, the Tutor of Destruction Wonder Women of History: Maria Mitchell Challenge of the Mask
#25	Sept.–Oct. 1947	The Curse of Montezuma Siege of the Rykornians (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Dolley Madison Who’ll Adopt Teasy? (JHMK) The Judgment of Goddess Vultura (JHMK)
#26	Nov.–Dec. 1947	Speed Maniacs from Mercury (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Carrie Chapman Catt The Mistress of the Beasts (JHMK) The Golden Women and the White Star (JHMK)
#27	Jan.–Feb. 1948	The Secret of the Kidnapped Dummy (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Sacagawea The Legend of Rainbow and Stardust The Mystical Power of Idea Forms
#28	Mar.–Apr. 1948	Villainy Incorporated Trap of Crimson Flame (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Elizabeth Barrett Browning In the Hands of the Merciless

#29	May–June 1948	Ice World's Conquest (JHMK) Tale of the Tigers Wonder Women of History: Dorothea Lynde Dix The Treasure Hunt (JHMK)
#30	July–Aug. 1948	The Secret of the Limestone Caves (JHMK) Wonder Women of History: Nellie Bly The Song of the Sirens (RK) A Human Bomb (RK?)
COMIC CAVALCADE		
<p><i>Comic Cavalcade</i>, like <i>All-American Comics</i>, was a compendium: "A Galaxy of America's Greatest Comics." It featured Wonder Woman, the Flash, Green Lantern, Scribbly, Mutt and Jeff, and more. Wonder Woman's stories were always the first, and she was always featured on the cover. Only the first volume of <i>Comic Cavalcade Archives</i> has been published. It reproduces issues 1 through 3. Some Wonder Woman stories from <i>Comic Cavalcade</i> are included in <i>The Wonder Woman Chronicles</i>, but not all.</p>		
#1	Dec. 1942–Jan. 1943	Mystery of the House of the Seven Gables
#2	Spring 1943	Wanted by Hitler, Dead or Alive (FG)
#3	Summer 1943	The Invisible Invader
#4	Fall 1943	The Purloined Pressure Coordinator
#5	Winter 1943	Mystery of the Crimson Flame
#6	Spring 1944	The Mystery of Countess Mazuma
#7	Summer 1944	The Vulture's Nest Etta Candy and Her Holliday Girls
#8	Fall 1944	The Amazon Bride
#9	Winter 1944	The Subsea Pirates
#10	Spring 1945	The Great Blue Father
#11	Summer 1945	The Cheetah Returns (JHMK)
#12	Fall 1945	Rebellion on Paradise Island (JHMK)
#13	Winter 1945	The Underwater Follies (JHMK)
#14	Apr.–May 1946	The Severed Bracelets
#15	June–July 1946	Flaming Fury (JHMK)
#16	Aug.–Sept. 1946	The Battle of Desires
#17	Oct.–Nov. 1946	The Valkyries' Prey
#18	Dec. 1946–Jan. 1947	The Menace of the Rebel Manlings (JHMK)
#19	Feb.–Mar. 1947	The Battle for Eternal Youth
#20	Apr.–May 1947	The Buddha Wishing Ring
#21	June–July 1947	The Siege of the Flying Mermaids
#22	Aug.–Sept. 1947	The Captives of Saturnette
#23	Oct.–Nov. 1947	Siege of the Iron Giants (JHMK)

#24	Dec. 1947–Jan. 1948	Empress of the Sea-Brigands
#25	Feb.–Mar. 1948	Hatred of Badra
#26	Apr.–May 1948	Deception's Daughter (RK)
#27	June–July 1948	Anti-Electric
#28	Aug.–Sept. 1948	The Sinister Countess Hatra
#29	Oct.–Nov. 1948	Machine of Schemes (JHMK)
[Unused Script: *The Cheetah's Thought Prisoners]		
<i>THE BIG ALL-AMERICAN COMIC BOOK</i>		
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