



Wonder Women!

THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES

traces the fascinating birth, evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman and introduces audiences to a dynamic group of fictional and real-life superheroines fighting for positive role models for girls, both on screen and off.

Duration: 55 minutes.

Appropriate for middle school, high school, college and adult audiences.

“A nuanced critique of gender and heroism in popular culture...”

—Mary Celeste Kearney, Media Studies, University of Texas at Austin

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Educational sales:

New Day Films
NewDay.com/Films/WonderWomen.html

[**WonderWomenDoc.com**](http://WonderWomenDoc.com)

Critical Acclaim

“★★★★★ The film is filled with interviews with a multitude of smart, eloquent women explaining what should be evident but is so not: Girls need super heroes because they need to know that their gender is not an obstacle. If you have a daughter, it is a moral imperative that you show her this film as soon as possible.”

Jessica Baxter, Film Threat

“Channels all of the excitement of reading a comic book into an exhilarating and captivating historical account of the evolution of the media’s first *true* Girl Power figure, Wonder Woman. More importantly, the film compellingly documents the importance of strong mediated role models for girls. I will absolutely show this in my college-level classes.”

Sharon R. Mazzarella, Professor of Communication Studies, James Madison University

“WONDER WOMEN! is the first film to recognize the importance of comic book characters in providing strong, active role models for girls and women. This film fills a void in popular culture critiques that will inspire both girls and women, and enable lively classroom discussions about the profound influence of media in shaping notions of what women can be and do.”

Caroline Heldman, Associate Professor of Politics, Occidental College

“*Wonder Women!* hits us right where it counts, offering a nuanced critique of gender and heroism in popular culture as well as a powerful dose of Vitamin F(eminism) for the undernourished. Guevara-Flanagan’s film reveals the complicated negotiations girls and women face as we attempt to achieve confidence, strength, and agency in a society often at odds with those goals. Yet it also inspires through its evocative images, upbeat soundtrack, and richly contextualized history of American superheroines – including the everyday wonder women and action girls in our midst.”

Mary Celeste Kearney, Associate Professor of Media Studies, University of Texas at Austin, and author of *Girls Make Media*

“I thought I knew Wonder Woman, but Kapow! Bam! In true superhero fashion, this film delivered a knock-out blow to my simple set of assumptions. Great as a way to introduce ideas and initiate discussion about gender, feminism, girls, activism. I would use it as a way to ground conversations about gender and power, media impact on girls, media activism, and social constructions of femininity.”

Lyn Mikel Brown, Professor of Education, Colby College, and author of *Packaging Girlhood*

“This film makes a great addition to the women’s and gender studies classroom. Who knew that the depiction of Wonder Woman paralleled the pursuit of women’s rights throughout the twentieth century? This provocative lens on U.S. women’s history promises to engage students, while pushing them to think critically about the current depiction of strong and empowered women in the media. Drawing together central themes within the fields of women’s and gender studies – beauty, body, sex, power, violence, and media – this film will assist teachers in demonstrating the relevance of feminist criticism to the media-saturated, celebrity-obsessed, and digitally-enhanced culture in which our students live.”

Desiree Henderson, Director of Women’s and Gender Studies Program and Associate Professor of English, University of Texas at Arlington

“This important film provides an unparalleled perspective on the enduring power of Wonder Woman in popular culture. Dynamic animations kapow this archetype beyond comic books into the living systems of post-millennial girl power. The result? A truth-telling lasso capturing decades of Wonder Woman's superheroic impact on the collective imagination.”

Kathleen Sweeney, Media Studies Faculty, The New School for Public Engagement, and author of *Maiden USA*

“A delicious journey through decades of popular culture [that] interweaves the evolution of women superheroes, from the original Wonder Woman comic through Charlie's Angels, Buffy, Riot Grrrls and beyond, and the history of modern feminism. It's a vivid demonstration of the complex relationship between creators and consumers of popular culture.”

Patricia Aufderheide, Director of the Center for Social Media, Professor of Communication, American University

“Turns what could've just been a flat history of a comic book character into a brief study of female empowerment in the last century.”

Angela Watercutter, Wired.com

“If you're like me, or one of the other 400 women mouthing ‘Yes! Yes!’ during the screening, then WONDER WOMEN! will be candy for your inner feminist. WONDER WOMEN! is so technically developed that its arguments stand out, bold and clear.”

Joelle Pearson, Austin Woman Magazine

“Four-color images of the golden age Wonder Woman *pop!* on the silver screen, lending visual support to the testimony of Gloria Steinem and others about the impact that images of this powerful female had on them. The film makes a moving case for the necessity of heroic women in pop culture, never more affectingly than when a fourth-grade girl who's teased at school tells how this fantasy figure in star-spangled shorts inspires her to never give up.”

Robert Faires, Austin Chronicle

"Instead of a static essay on a comic book character, director Guevara-Flanagan broadens the scope to give the superhero angle its proper historical and societal perspective. WONDER WOMEN! fills a niche in feminist collections."

Ellen Druda, Library Journal

"Appropriate for all age groups, and would be especially useful in media and women's studies classes."

Ann Weber, School Library Journal

“WONDER WOMEN! takes a fresh look at the complex topic of feminism through the lens of the comic book hero. The result is a thoroughly engaging documentary that makes you think.”

Brandon Cabezas, High School History Teacher

“A very entertaining and informative documentary on the history of feminism in America based on the iconic superhero, Wonder Woman. A great resource for History, English and Theater classes.”

Jim Siering, High School Theater Teacher

Synopsis

WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES traces the fascinating birth, evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman and introduces audiences to a dynamic group of fictional and real-life superheroines fighting for positive role models for girls, both on screen and off.

From the birth of the 1940s comic book heroine, Wonder Woman, to the blockbusters of today, WONDER WOMEN! looks at how popular representations of powerful women often reflect society's anxieties about strong and healthy women.

WONDER WOMEN! goes behind the scenes with actors Lynda Carter (Wonder Woman) and Lindsay Wagner (the Bionic Woman), comic writers and artists, and real-life superheroines such as feminist icon Gloria Steinem, riot grrrl Kathleen Hanna, and others, who offer an enlightening and entertaining counterpoint to the male-dominated superhero genre.

Availability

WONDER WOMEN! received a national public television broadcast on April 15, 2013, on PBS's "Independent Lens" series.

WONDER WOMEN! is also available on DVD from New Day Films, a cooperative organization run by filmmakers to distribute their work to educators and public libraries. The price for the DVD is \$295 for colleges; \$95 for public libraries, middle schools, high schools and community groups; or \$85 for a short-term rental; the shipping cost is \$15.

The DVD features closed captioning, deleted scenes, and two versions of the movie: a 55-minute censored version for younger audiences, and a 55-minute uncensored version for more mature audiences. Also included with purchase or rental from New Day Films are comprehensive curriculum guides for middle school, high school or college students.

For courses in:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women's and Gender Studies• Girls' Studies• Media and Film History• Communication• Media Literacy• Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History• American Studies• LGBT Studies• Psychology• Education• Children, Youth and Families
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New Day Films
190 Route 17M, Suite D
Harriman, NY 10926
888-367-9154
NewDay.com/Films/WonderWomen.html

The DVD's ISBN is 978-1-57488-110-5.

WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES

is an independent documentary feature that looks at female superheroes, warrior princesses and other icons of women's empowerment in pop culture. Exploring our nation's long-term love affair with comic book superheroes, the film raises questions about the possibilities and contradictions of heroines within the genre. Reflecting our culture's deep-seated ambivalence toward powerful women—even in this so-called post-feminist era—women may be portrayed as good, or brave, or even featured as “action babes,” but rarely are they seen as heroes at the center of their own journey.

Tying the film together is the groundbreaking figure of Wonder Woman, the unlikely brainchild of a Harvard-trained pop psychologist. From Wonder Woman's original, radical World War II presence, to her uninspiring 1960s incarnation as a fashion boutique owner, to her dramatic resurrection by feminist Gloria Steinem and the women of Ms. Magazine, Wonder Woman's legacy continues today—despite the fact that she has yet to make it to the big screen.

The hero is a key archetype in Western culture, yet heroes have almost invariably been male and white. Twenty-eight centuries since Achilles—arguably the first superhero—the classic heroic archetype remains unaltered: displaying the so-called “masculine” virtues of strength, courage, assertiveness, leadership, physicality, and sometimes violence.

Why are these characteristics considered “heroic”? What happens when women engage in ways of thought and behavior traditionally confined to “masculinity”? Why do most superheroes show little or no talent for communication, family, or empathetic caring? Why aren't these values considered heroic, and how do our ideas about heroism reflect our culture's values?

In our era of increased plastic surgeries and emphasis on “looking good,” rather than acting powerfully, many psychologists, media and social critics have long decried the fact that women are bombarded with images of physical perfection and portrayals of their gender purely in terms of sexual attractiveness. It is time to counter this with some reflection on why our culture struggles with images of women triumphant beyond the domestic arena of relationships and family.

This film invites women and girls, men and boys, to consider how stereotypes in the comic art genre serve to limit our vision of women, while reinforcing some of society's deepest prejudices against them. Exploring how our highly visual culture places more emphasis on girls' and women's looks rather than on their deeds, WONDER WOMEN! urges women to claim the action genre—and media in general—as their own, if they want to change how they are represented.

A visually kinetic yet also warmly witty film, the film harnesses the voices of literary critics, women writers, classicists, philosophers, impersonators, collectors, feminists and fanatics to explore our very gendered notions of “heroism” and “power.”

Characters



Gloria Steinem, Feminist and Political Activist

American feminist, journalist, and social and political activist who became nationally recognized as a leader of, and media spokeswoman for, the Women's Liberation Movement in the late 1960s and 1970s, Steinem surprisingly also has a lot to say about Wonder Woman.



Lynda Carter, Actress (Wonder Woman)

Actress Lynda Carter discusses her performance as the title character on the 1970s television series "Wonder Woman," and how the experience has impacted her life. She also talks about why she feels the television character she helped to create has had such a profound and lasting impact on multiple generations of fans.



Lindsay Wagner, Actress (The Bionic Woman)

Actress Lindsay Wagner, most widely known for her portrayal of Jaime Sommers in the 1970s television series "The Bionic Woman," shares stories about her experience as one of the earliest televised female superheroes. Lindsay also talks about why she feels there exists a strong need for similar icons of female power for young men and women today.



Andy Mangels, Wonder Woman Collector & Wonder Woman Day Founder

Wonder Woman collector, scholar, activist and enthusiast, Andy is known throughout the comics industry as Wonder Woman's number-one fan. Founder of Wonder Woman Day – an annual fundraiser designed to raise money for battered women's shelters – Andy describes his devotion to

Wonder Woman as "almost religious." Andy's fanaticism begs the question: What can Wonder Woman tell us about the role sex and gender plays in feminism today?



Kathleen Hanna, Original Riot Grrl and Musician

Feminist activist, punk rocker and zine writer, Kathleen was the lead singer and songwriter of Bikini Kill, and later fronted Le Tigre. Kathleen reignited interest in feminism by a younger audience through her music and zines. She talks about using pop culture icons like Wonder Woman in her art.



Jen Stuller, Author

Jen Stuller is a Seattle-based writer and scholar, specializing in gender and sexuality in popular culture. Her most recent book, "Ink-Stained Amazons and Cinematic Warriors: Superwomen in Modern Mythology," is a comprehensive history, critique, and reference guide examining feminist history and potential within popular culture.



Katie Pineda, Wonder Woman Fan and 4th Grader

Katie laments that not enough people know about Wonder Woman. She's Katie's favorite superhero, "because she's strong, amazing, and she saves a lot of lives." Katie loves to shoot arrows, beat her dad at video games, write comic books, and, on occasion, dress like her favorite superhero.



Carmela Lane, Wonder Woman Fan and Mom

Carmela has used Wonder Woman as her life's inspiration and has multiple tattoos to prove it. An émigré from Brazil, she works and raises her daughter in New York and hopes that she can teach her daughter how to be a strong "Wonder Girl."



Trina Robbins, Author and Comics Historian

Trina Robbins has been writing graphic novels, comics and books for over thirty years. She is a veteran of San Francisco's underground comix movement. Her characters have ranged from Wonder Woman to the Powerpuff Girls to her own teenage heroines in the "Go Girl!" series, and from women cartoonists to women who kill.

Director's Statement



Like most women and men of my generation, I grew up with Lynda Carter's "Wonder Woman" television show. It was the late 70's, the show was already in the constant rotation of syndication, and there simply wasn't anything else out there that captured my imagination as a little girl. I had friends who were Wonder Woman for Halloween year after year because there were so few options for girls as fantasy heroes.

When I started telling people about this film, men and women had wildly different reactions. Most of the guys admitted that Wonder Woman was their first TV crush. Women reminisced about how they pretended to be her: twirling a rope to capture foes or spinning to transform themselves into superheroes.

Fast-forward some thirty years and I was reading a New York Times article that introduced Gail Simone as Wonder Woman's first female writer EVER. Here was this incredible feminist symbol who had always been stuck, like a lot of strong female characters, between being created by men and being primarily consumed by boys.

The story stayed with me, and I began looking into Wonder Woman's origins. Her creator, William Moulton Marston, was a fascinating character who set out to create an empowering role model amid a lot of super-violent male heroes. Of course, he also had some interesting ideas about what a strong female hero should look like. But his creation has endured while so many others have been forgotten.

I loved the idea of looking at something as populist as comics to reveal our cultural obsessions, and in particular, how women's roles have changed over time. The narratives of our most iconic superheroes, told and re-told over decades, boldly outline our shifting values. That's one story WONDER WOMEN! tells, but to me, it's not the most interesting one. I hope the film also conveys the unpredictable ways those icons can shape and even transform us in return. For some it's Lara Croft, for others it's Buffy the Vampire Slayer, but we all need those iconic heroes that tell us we have the power to slay our dragons and don't have to wait around to be rescued.

"Everyone needs someone to look up to, but it seems like it's mostly men people have to look up to. I mean, why not women?"

– Reel Grrls Animation Camp participant, age 9

Community Screenings, Panels, and Speaking Engagements

- Panel at Geek Girl Con, Seattle (October 2011)
- Panel to benefit Girls Empowerment Network (GENaustin), Austin, Texas (March 2012)
- Speaking engagement, Empowering Young Latinas Using Media & Technology, Austin, Texas (March 2012)
- Panel at Seattle International Film Festival with GeekGirlCon and Reel Grrls (May 2012)
- Geek Girl Con, Seattle (August 2012)
- Speaking engagement at Women in Film Dallas (October 2012)
- Speaking engagement at Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts, Lubbock, Texas (October 2012)
- Charter Oak Cultural Center, Hartford, Connecticut (October 2012)
- University of Maryland Baltimore County (October 2012)
- University of Connecticut (October 2012)
- Speaking engagement at The Loft Cinema fundraiser for Arizona List, Tucson, Arizona (October 2012)
- Bay Area Video Coalition, Producers Institute for New Media Technology, for our transmedia project, the interactive game Wonder City (October 2012)
- University of North Alabama (October 2012)
- Wonder Women Unite fundraiser, Seattle (October 2012)
- Panel at National Women's Studies Association Conference, Oakland (November 2012)
- Panel at the International Museum of Women, San Francisco (December 2012)
- University of Hartford (December 2012)
- Celebration of Craftswomen Festival, San Francisco (December 2012)
- University of Missouri Women's Center, Columbia, Missouri (January 2013)
- Women's Funding Alliance fundraiser, Seattle (January 2013)
- Speaking engagement at Executive Women in Texas Government, Dallas, Texas (January 2013)
- Chicago Filmmakers Cooperative (February 2013)
- Columbia College Chicago (February 2013)
- ITVS Community Cinema screenings, in 27 states across the United States (March 2013)
- Speaking engagement at Women's Resource Center, Durango, Colorado (March 2013)
- Women's Rights Night, Skopje, Macedonia (March 2013)
- Speaking engagement at Hawaii Women in Filmmaking (March 2013)
- Women and Film VOICES, Denver Film Society (March 2013)
- Speaking engagement at Tribeca Film Institute's Youth Screening Series (March 2013)

Festival and Theatrical Screenings

- South by Southwest Film Festival, Austin, Texas (March 2012) – **World Premiere**
- ActionFest, Asheville, North Carolina (April 2012)
- Seattle International Film Festival (May 2012) – **West Coast Premiere**
- Belfast Film Festival, Northern Ireland (June 2012) – **International Premiere**
- Mendocino Film Festival, California (June 2012)

- Philadelphia Mausoleum of Contemporary Art (June 2012)
- Revelation Perth International Film Festival, Australia (July 2012)
- Indianapolis International Film Festival (July 2012) – **Audience Award**
- Hardacre Film Festival, Tipton, Iowa (August 2012)
- Nevada City Film Festival, California (August 2012)
- Dallas VideoFest (September 2012) – **Best Documentary Award**
- DOXA Motion Picture Film Series, Vancouver, Canada (September 2012)
- New Orleans Film Festival (October 2012)
- Mill Valley Film Festival, San Rafael, California (October 2012)
- BendFilm Festival, Oregon (October 2012) – **Best Documentary** and **Best Director**
- St. John's International Women's Film Festival, Canada (October 2012)
- Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, Arkansas (October 2012)
- Kaohsiung Film Festival, Taiwan (October 2012)
- Savannah Film Festival, (October 2012)
- Citizen Jane Film Festival, Columbia, Missouri (October 2012)
- 2-in-1 International Film Festival, Moscow, Russia (October 2012)
- Guelph Festival of Moving Media, Canada (November 2012)
- American Film Festival, Poland (November 2012)
- Siren Nation Film Festival, Portland, Oregon (November 2012)
- Virginia Film Festival (November 2012)
- Montreal International Documentary Festival, Canada (November 2012)
- DOC NYC (November 2012)
- Vox Feminae Film Festival, Croatia (November 2012)
- BioDox Film Festival, Iceland (November 2012)
- Doc Lounge, Stockholm, Sweden (December 2012)
- Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne, Australia (January 2013)
- Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, Missoula, Montana (February 2013)
- Spokane International Film Festival, Washington (February 2013) – **Audience Award for Best Documentary** and **Jury Award for Most Promising Filmmaker**
- Sedona International Film Festival, Arizona (February 2013)
- University of Colorado Boulder's International Film Series (February 2013)
- San Antonio Cinefestival, Texas (February 2013)
- Glasgow Film Festival, Scotland (February 2013)
- Athena Film Festival, New York City (February 2013)
- Victoria Film Festival, Canada (February 2013)
- San Luis Obispo International Film Festival, California (March 2013)
- Portland Oregon Women's Film Festival (March 2013)
- FEMCINE Festival of Women's Cinema, Chile (March 2013)
- Florida State University's Student Life Cinema, Tallahassee, Florida (March 2013)
- Atlanta Film Festival (March 2013)
- Cleveland International Film Festival (April 2013)

Select Press

- Huffington Post, February 2, 2012: "Fictional and Real Life Women Kick Butt in the Film 'Wonder Women!'"
- CNN.com, February 24, 2012: "'Wonder Women!' Puts Superheroines in the Spotlight"
- Wired.com, March 10, 2012: "Wonder Women! Searches for Pop Culture's Heroines"
- Austin American-Statesman, March 11 2012: "Documentary Traces Roles of Superheroines"
- Indiewire, March 12, 2012: "Interview with the Director Kristy Guevera-Flanagan and Producer Kelcey Edwards"
- Huffington Post, March 13, 2012: "SXSW 2012: 'Wonder Women!' Pushes Hollywood to Bring Wonder Woman to the Big Screen"
- Center for Social Media, March 15, 2012: "SXSW 2012: Art as Process"
- Austin Chronicle, March 16, 2012: "SXSW Film Daily Reviews and Interviews"
- MTV Act, March 23, 2012: "Wonder Woman Comic Inspires Super Heroines of Today: Gaga, Demi + More"
- Film Threat, March 31, 2012: "Wonder Women!"
- Wired.com, April 2, 2012: "Geek Gal Fangasm: Wonder Woman's Untold Story"
- NBC Latino, May 24, 2012: "Filmmaker Shows How 'Wonder Women' Inspired a Generation"
- The Stranger, May 28, 2012: "Review: Wonder Women!"
- San Francisco Magazine, October 4, 2012: "Best 5 Documentaries at Mill Valley Film Festival"
- SF Gate, October 10, 2012: "Wonder Woman Remade from Woman's View"
- PsychologyToday.com, January 4, 2013: "Holy Wonder Woman!"
- El Pais, March 8, 2013: "Hollywood, ¿por qué rechazas a Wonder Woman?"
- New Hampshire Public Radio, March 12, 2013: "Wonder Women"
- Wired.com, March 20, 2013: "Wonder Women to Air on PBS's Independent Lens"
- LosAngelesTimes.com, March 27, 2013: "Wonder Woman: Time for the Amazon Warrior to Get Her Own Movie?"
- More Magazine, April 2013: "The Birth of a Superheroine"
- EntertainmentWeekly.com, April 6, 2013: "Wonder Woman's Invisible Jet Still off Hollywood's Radar"
- EntertainmentWeekley.com, April 9, 2013: "Wonder Woman: 10 Super Sexist Moments From Her Vintage Comics"
- KALW Radio, San Francisco, April 11, 2013: "Film Explores the Untold Story of America's Heroines"
- Los Angeles Times, April 11, 2013: "TV Picks"
- MTV Geek News, April 12, 2013: "Interview: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan On Her Documentary"
- The Daily Beast, April 13, 2013: "We Want Wonder Woman!"
- Denver Post, April 14, 2013: "Wonder Woman: Warrior Princess, Feminist Icon, Now Documentary Subject"
- USAToday.com, April 15, 2013: "On TV Tonight"
- CBS News, April 15, 2013: "The Evolution of Wonder Woman"
- New York Daily News, April 15, 2013: "Wonder Women"
- NPR.org, April 15, 2013: "Supheroines, Fighters, and Why Isn't There a Wonder Woman Movie?"
- The Week, April 19, 2013: "The Week's Guide to What's Worth Watching"

Cast & Credits

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan	director
Kelcey Edwards	producer
Erin Prather Stafford	executive producer
Melanie Levy, Carla Gutierrez	editors
Gabriel Miller	director of photography
Sylvia Roberts	animator
Jimmy LaValle	composer
PJ Raval	additional director of photography
Corey Ohama	additional editor

And featuring: Ruby Blondell, Lynda Carter, Sara Crosby, Jane Espenson, Danny Fingeroth, Katy Gilpatrick, Jehmu Greene, Jack Halberstam, Kathleen Hanna, LS. Kim, Shelby Knox, Carmela Lane, Mike Madrid, Andy Mangels, Kathleen Noble, Katie Pineda, Trina Robbins, Gail Simone, Gloria Steinem, Jennifer K. Stuller, Yvonne Tasker, Lindsay Wagner, and Maile Martinez & Reel Grrls, Seattle

Funding and Support

Aepoch Fund
Cal Humanities
Chicken and Egg Pictures
The City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program
Puffin Foundation
Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program
And over \$35,000 through Kickstarter from 700-plus individual fans!
Please visit our website for a complete list: WonderWomenDoc.com

WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES

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For more information:

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