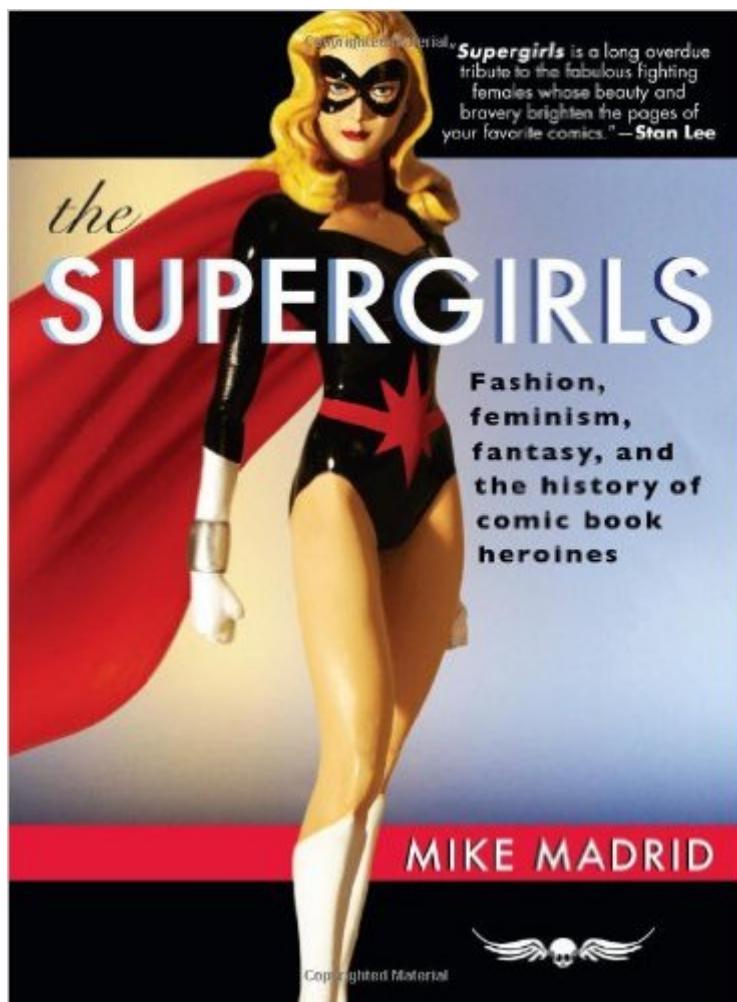


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The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy, And The History Of Comic Book Heroines



Synopsis

The Supergirls is a long overdue tribute to the fabulous fighting females whose beauty and bravery brighten the pages of your favorite comics. STAN LEE A thoughtful, comprehensive history of women in comics . . . The Supergirls gleefully celebrates the medium itself, in all its goofy, glorious excess. • NPR Best Five Books To Share With Your Friends • citation; Sharp and lively; and just obsessive enough about women who wear capes and boots to be cool but not creepy. [Madrid] clearly loves this stuff. And he's enough of a historian to be able to trace the ways in which the portrayal of sirens and supergirls has echoed society's ever-changing feelings about women and sex. • Entertainment Weekly Has Wonder Woman hit the comic book glass ceiling? Is that the one opposition that even herian strength can't defeat? Entertaining and informative, The Supergirls explores iconic superheroines and what it means for the culture when they do everything the superhero does, only in thongs and high heels. This much-needed alternative history of American comic book icons; from Wonder Woman to Supergirl and beyond; delves into where these crime-fighting females fit in popular culture and why, and what their stories say about the role of women in society from their creation to now, and into the future. Mike Madrid is the author of *Divas, Dames & Daredevils: Lost Heroines of Golden Age Comics* (forthcoming from Exterminating Angel Press in October 2013) and *The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy, and the History of Comic Book Heroines*, an NPR Best Book To Share With Your Friends • and American Library Association Amelia Bloomer Project Notable Book. Madrid, a San Francisco native and lifelong fan of comic books and popular culture, also appears in the documentary *Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines*.

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Customer Reviews

The thesis for "The Supergirls" is obvious; Mike Madrid explores the depiction of women in the superhero world, and as one might expect, he concludes that more often than not, they have been mistreated. The text is presented in a very accessible fashion that does not pre-suppose much familiarity with the characters and stories he cites throughout, though I do feel he should have done a clearer job explaining a few major industry-wide events. For the most part, the book is structured chronologically, beginning with the late 1930s/early 1940s, and concluding in the 21st Century. Wisely, though, Madrid has constructed each chapter around a theme specific to each era. This means that each chapter is, essentially, its own thesis essay within the frame of the overall book. I do wish Madrid had been more specific in naming the creators and editors of the stories he referenced. Most citations simply lay the blame for mishandled characters at the feet of their publisher, but more often than not he doesn't even identify which publisher was responsible for a character's woes. Maybe it's just a by-product of earning my degree in history, but I felt this was relevant information that the reader shouldn't have to supplement on his or her own. After all, it was individual men and women who made the choices about the content of the issues that hit the stands; Madrid suggests by omission of their names that some faceless order simply decreed how things would go. Also conspicuously absent are any insights from anyone within the industry. A spattering of quotes taken from previously published interviews appear, but it seems that either Madrid was uninterested in, or more likely unable to, interview anyone for the purpose of this book.

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