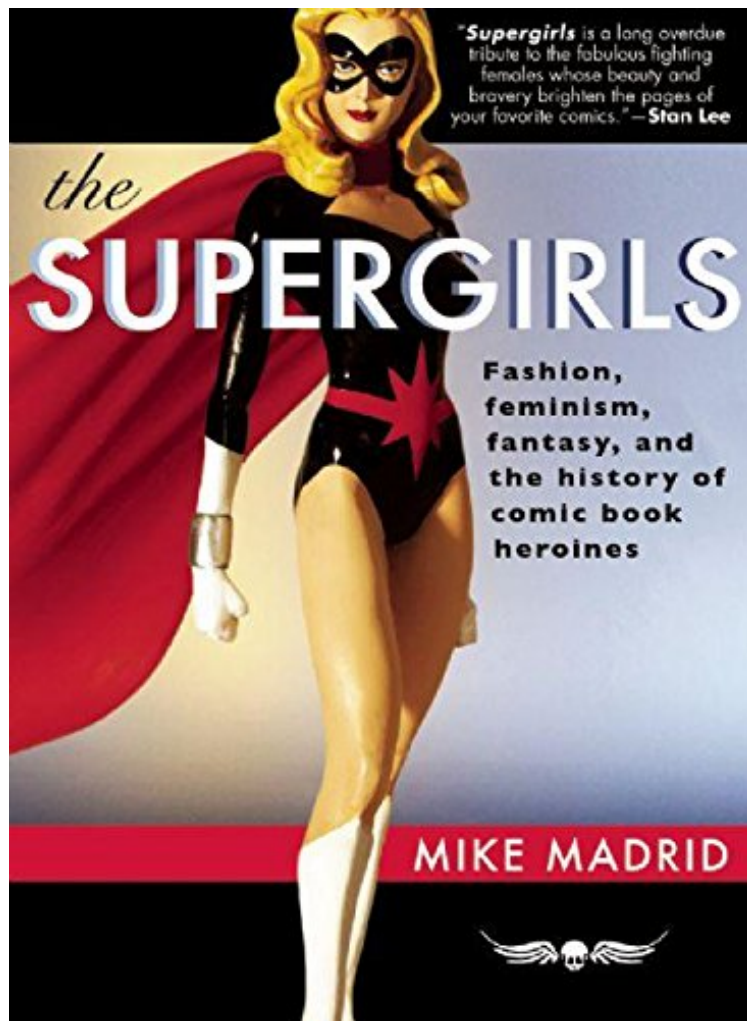


# The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy, and the History of Comic Book Heroines

Mike Madrid

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**Mike Madrid : The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy, and the History of Comic Book Heroines** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy, and the History of Comic Book Heroines:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating look at the evolution of the female superheroBy Josh WilesIt's not easy being a female in society, even in the 21st century. Men still make more money than women. Women face a daily assault over control of their own bodies. The media saturates the globe with images of scantily clad women with large breasts or women so thin you can practically see through them.For a super heroine, life is just as tough. And this book explores how super heroine's have evolved from some of the weakest super powered

characters to some of the strongest. Beginning with the likes of the Blonde Phantom and continuing through the likes of Storm, Psylocke, Wonder Woman, Elektra, Manhunter, Black Canary, and many more, Mike Madrid explores the evolution of the super heroine. From the stereotypes faced by female super heroes, whether it's being over-sexualized (particularly during the 90s bad girl trend) or treated as being inferior to men or pining for a man to love her to the reasons the women would become crime fighters, Madrid explores how each decade brought changes in how females were presented in comic books. From meek wallflowers to strong women who were as brave and selfless as their male counterparts. From the 40s to the present day 21st century, Madrid gives us a peek into what makes a super heroine tick. As female super heroes traveled the road to equality, they faced the same obstacles as real world women. If they felt a certain way, they were bitches. If they fought as hard as men, they were too masculine. If they got rescued by men or bowed to their will, they were weak. For a long time, being a super hero was seen as not something women should do. To the male creators that dominated the industry, having a female super hero was placing them outside of where they belonged: the home. But as kids who grew up during the women's liberation movement became the comic book creators, things changed. Women became stronger and central to the comic book universes they belonged to. Things were not perfect, but things were changing. And they continue to evolve as the years go by. While the women of the real world still face a long road to equality, super heroine's are closer than they've ever been. Wonder Woman is featured in 3 different titles on a regular basis. Marvel publishes X-Men, featuring an all female cast. A cast that has proved that they are some of the strongest super heroes on the planet. The Invisible Woman is acknowledged to be the most powerful member of the Fantastic Four, but still balances her "career" with being a wife and mother. DC and Marvel Comics feature an array of talented female creators and have pushed for titles with female headliners, such as Bat-Woman and She-Hulk. These heroine's can only inspire the Millennials to become the best they can be and not let their gender deter them from their dreams. If the comic book companies (and movie studios) fail in any way, it is that they have yet to come up with a decent movie where a female headlines. Elektra and Catwoman were notorious bombs. As was Supergirl. Wonder Woman has yet to have a movie and has struggled to find a place in the world outside a comic book. There is also a continuing trend where women are the targets of unrepentant violence, dubbed "Women in the Refrigerator Syndrome", although the characters often come out the other side stronger than ever. It is a trend that seems to be changing as more readers become vocal about the treatment of female characters. If anything that is the flaw of the book, not exploring that part of comic books. It is interesting to see how many female heroes have been killed, maimed, tortured, and raped compared to the male heroes. It would have made an interesting chapter in this book. If anything this book gives hope to the reader that as super heroine's get closer to equality, so do their real world counterparts.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A History of Women in Comics - Brilliant. By Beth Walz Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy and the History of Comic Book Heroines "I lift cars, I can lift car door handles." - Wonder Woman By Mike Madrid If you've ever pondered the history of your favorite adventure heroine you'll love this book. Well researched and entertaining to read, Supergirls, chronicles the superheroine's influential role in pop culture and her impact on society's perception of women. The book takes a historical approach to the superheroine's image and persona from the early 1900s to present day. Superheroine's have been repressed, empowered, protected and exploited over the course of time and have reflected the morals and spirit of the era. For example, in the 1940's when the world was at War the superheroine was fighting the Japanese and the Nazi's as patriotic soldiers and fighter pilots. At the war's end she retired her guns and became a more passive, yet romantic, partner for her super hero counterparts in the 1950s. When the Comic Authority Board later relaxed the rules for the depiction of women in comics she became an increasingly sexualized character. The women's movement and the sexual revolution gave the superheroine an independent yet sexually progressive viewpoint. And the 1980's reflected a hedonistic super-sexed party time. Today, the superheroine calls her own shots, addresses global problems, in addition to defeating the bad guy for world harmony. She's no longer an appendage for the super hero but a fighting force in her own right. If you ever wondered about She-Hulk, Supergirl, Batwoman, Catwoman or Wonder Woman then this is the book for you. Educational and interesting, author Mike Madrid, does an excellent job in conveying the curious relationship between women, culture and the comic superheroine.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating!!! By Red 5 This is one interesting book! It looks at comic book heroines thru the decades. Think Wonder Woman was the first superheroine to star in her own comic book? Think again! Learn which super-female was the first to have a name that did NOT contain "woman" "girl" or "lass." In addition to inf, the book tackles issues like how women are shown to be inferior to males and sexuality in comics. If the happiest times of your childhood were spent at the comic book rack at the store. This book is a must!!! The same is true if you love superheroines, true-believer!

The Supergirls is a long overdue tribute to the fabulous fighting females whose beauty and bravery brighten the pages of your favorite comics. STAN LEEA 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

WeeklyHas Wonder Woman hit the comic book glass ceiling? Is that the one opposition that even her Amazonian strength cant 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*.

National Public Radio Best Book To Share With Your Friends American Library Association Amelia Bloomer Project Notable Book *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 Book To Share With Your Friends citation From the super heroines of today to Goddesses of Tomorrow, Madrid questions the position of women in the world of superhero fantasy, showing the parallels between societys expectations and the depiction of American women in comic fiction. American Library Association Amelia Bloomer Project Notable Book 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 Weird and wonderful all the way through. Portland Mercury There comes a time in every comic book geek slash fashionistas life when she must ask herself What do costumes and couture have in common? *The Supergirls* sets out to answer that question. . . . A quick read that skims over the history of publishing powerhouses Marvel and DC, making it informative enough and providing sufficient cultural context for those who may have no prior comic book knowledge. WORN Fashion Journal (Canada) Any comics or graphic novel library needs *The Supergirls*. It provides a cultural history of comic book heroines and asks whether their fantasy world has any connection to our own, offering a fine survey of different super-women in comic history and crime fighting. Any long-time comic book reader will relish this blend of scene re-creation and social analysis. Midwest Book