

IDW
ISSUE
4

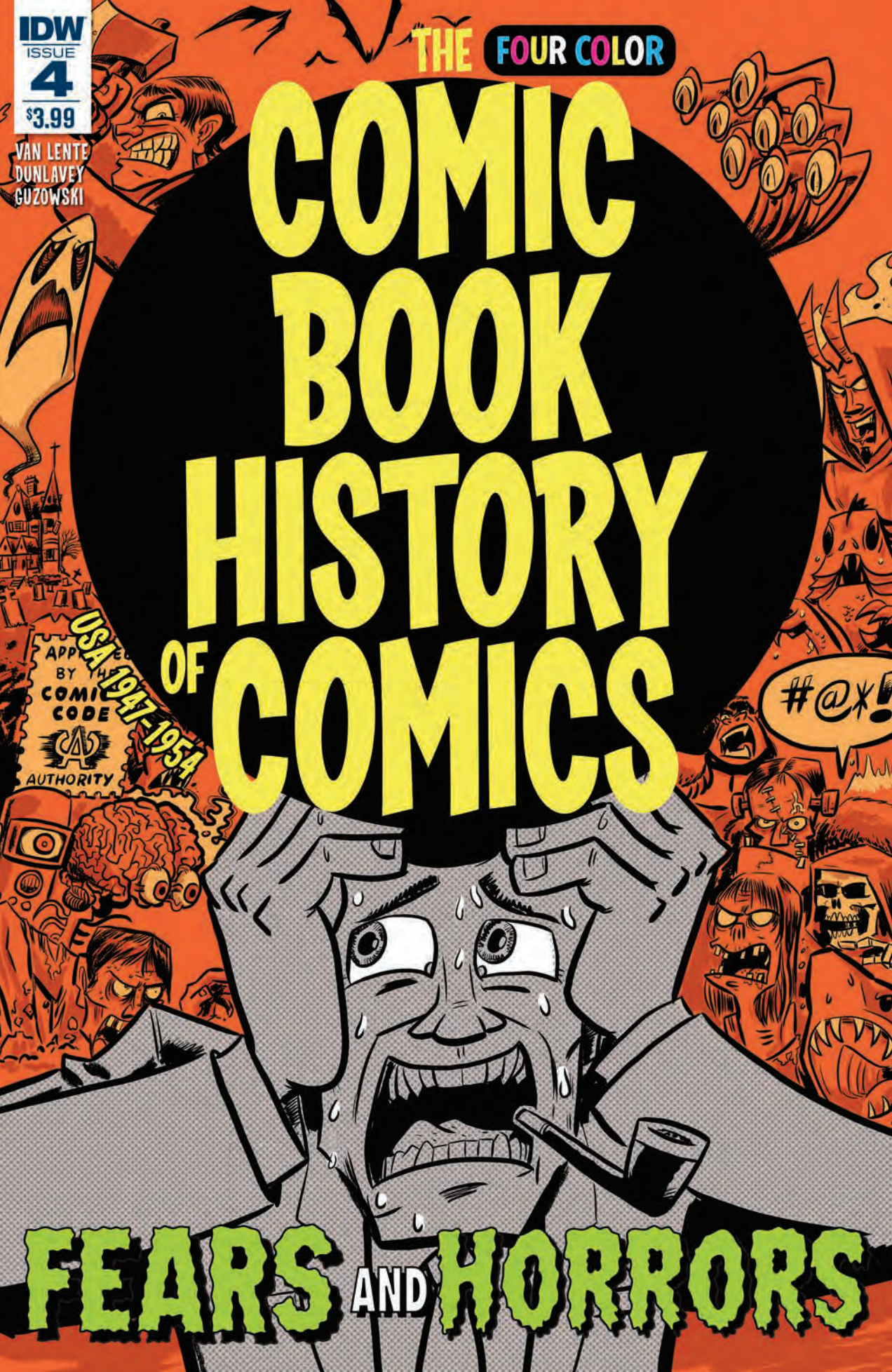
\$3.99

VAN LENTE
DUNLAVEY
GUZOWSKI

THE **FOUR COLOR**

COMIC BOOK HISTORY OF COMICS

USA 1947-1954
APP BY THE
COMI
CODE
AUTHORITY



FEARS AND HORRORS



written by
Fred Van Lente

art by
Ryan Dunlavey

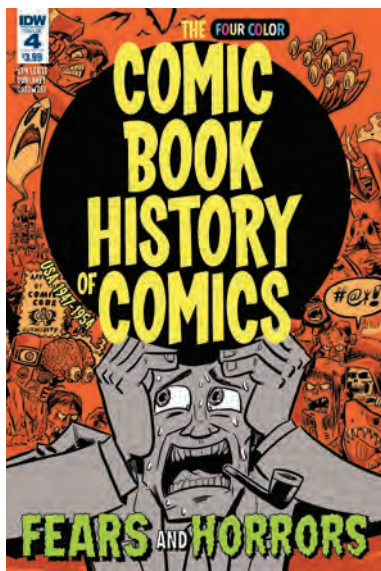
colors by
Adam Guzowski

letters by
Fred Van Lente

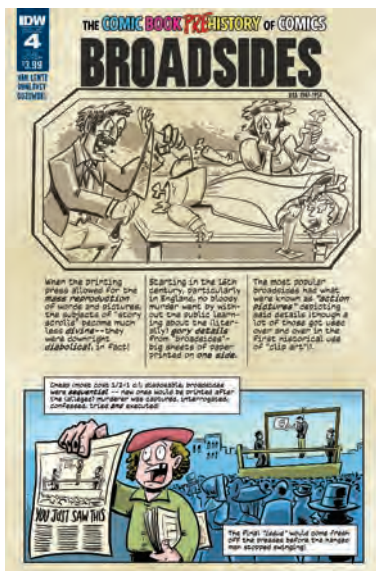
edits by
Tom Waltz

production design by
Neil Uyetake

publisher
Ted Adams



REGULAR COVER
art by Ryan Dunlavey



SUBSCRIPTION COVER
art by Ryan Dunlavey

For international rights, contact licensing@idwpublishing.com

IDW[®]
www.IDWPUBLISHING.com

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher • Greg Goldstein, President & COO • Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist • Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer • David Hedgecock, Editor-in-Chief • Laurie Windrow, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing • Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer • Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services • Jerry Bennington, VP of New Product Development

Facebook: facebook.com/idwpublishing • Twitter: [@idwpublishing](https://twitter.com/idwpublishing) • YouTube: youtube.com/idwpublishing
Tumblr: tumblr.idwpublishing.com • Instagram: instagram.com/idwpublishing



THE COMIC BOOK HISTORY OF COMICS #4, FEBRUARY 2017. © 2017 FRED VAN LENTE & RYAN DUNLAVEY. All Rights Reserved. © 2017 Idea and Design Works, LLC. All Rights Reserved. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 2765 Truxtun Road, San Diego, CA 92106. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in Korea. IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.

THE HOUSE OF

COMIC BOOKS MADE IDEAL TARGETS FOR POSTWAR REACTIONARIES BECAUSE THEIR BIGGEST GROUP OF POTENTIAL DEFENDERS -- THE CONSUMERS WHO ACTUALLY BOUGHT THEM -- WERE, LARGELY, YOUNG PEOPLE DENIED ACCESS TO POLITICAL DISCOURSE.

AS PRO-LIFE AND ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS WOULD DISCOVER LATER IN THE CENTURY, NOTHING IS MORE CONDUCTIVE TO A SELF-RIGHTEOUS CRUSADE THAN VOICELESS VICTIMS WHO CAN'T PROTEST THE TACTICS OF THEIR ALLEGED "SAVIORS."



OF COURSE, COMIC BOOKS HAD BEEN MAKING PARENTS *NERVOUS* SINCE THEY FIRST APPEARED.

COMIC STRIPS COULD BE ENTHUSIASTICALLY *ACCEPTED* BY ADULT SOCIETY BECAUSE THEY WERE UNEQUIVOCALLY *CONTEXTUALIZED* WITHIN THE *ADULT* SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

REACHING FOR "THE FUNNIES" REMINDED CHILDREN OF THEIR LIVES TO *COME* AND GAVE ADULTS A DAILY DOSE OF *NOSTALGIA* FOR THEIR YOUTHFUL PAST.

ONCE LIBERATED FROM THE *NEWSPAPER*, HOWEVER, COMICS ALLOWED CHILDREN TO ESCAPE ANY *TRACE* OF ADULT SUPERVISION INTO A PRIVATE SPHERE OF FANTASY CREATED SOLELY FOR *THEM*.

AS EARLY AS 1942 THE-SKY-IS-FALLING ARTICLES LIKE *ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW'S* "THE *PLAGUE* OF THE COMICS" BECAME COMMON IN EDUCATORS' JOURNALS.

BY 1948, BOTH THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION WERE CALLING FOR LEGISLATION TO *REGULATE* THE COMICS INDUSTRY.



ONE OF COMICS' EARLIEST CRITICS WAS THE CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGIST FOR FAMILY CIRCLE MAGAZINE, WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON, WORLD-RENOWNED INVENTOR OF THE LIE DETECTOR.

"IT SEEMED TO ME, FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANGLE... COMICS' WORST OFFENSE WAS THEIR BLOOD-CURDLING MASCULINITY.

"A MALE HERO, AT BEST, LACKS THE QUALITIES OF MATERNAL LOVE AND TENDERNES WHICH ARE AS ESSENTIAL TO THE CHILD AS THE BREATH OF LIFE."



MARSTON'S CRITICISMS CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF ONE MAXWELL C. GAINES.

REMEMBER HIM? HE PIONEERED DIRECT RETAIL OF FAMOUS FUNNIES AND GOT SUPERMAN PUBLISHED.

HE HAD FORMED A SISTER COMPANY WITH NATIONAL, "ALL-AMERICAN COMICS," THAT DEVELOPED POPULAR DC HEROES LIKE FLASH AND GREEN LANTERN.



ALL-AMERICAN EDITOR SHELDON MAYER REPORTS THAT "GAINES WAS CYNICAL ENOUGH, AND WISE ENOUGH, TO SUSPECT THAT THIS KIND OF ARTICLE WOULD CEASE IF WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON WAS CONTACTED AND PERSUADED TO WRITE FOR COMICS."

DO YOU THINK I'M A TOTAL WEIRDO?

YOUR? -PSHAW!- OF COURSE NOT!



GAINES, AT THE TIME, PROBABLY HAD NO IDEA WHO HE WAS GETTING INTO BED WITH ... METAPHORICALLY SPEAKING. MARSTON LIVED IN A MENAGE A TROIS WITH HIS WIFE ELIZABETH AND HIS LOVER, JOURNALIST OLIVE BYRNE.

HE HAD MET OLIVE WHEN SHE WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT, AND THEY WERE BOTH (COUGH) "STUDYING" A SORORITY HAZING RITUAL CALLED A "BABY PARTY," IN WHICH PLEDGES DRESSED LIKE INFANTS, THEN WERE TIED UP AND PADDLED.

"WHEN WOMEN RULE, THERE WON'T BE ANY MORE (WAR) BECAUSE THE GIRLS WON'T WANT TO WASTE TIME KILLING MEN!"

"THEY'D RATHER HAVE THEM ALIVE; IT'S MORE FUN FROM A FEMININE POINT OF VIEW!"



(MAYER ALSO REPORTS THAT MARSTON LOVED TO HOOK UP NEW ACQUAINTANCES TO HIS LIE DETECTOR FOR FUN.)



"TELL ME ANYBODY'S PREFERENCE IN STORY STRIPS, AND I'LL TELL YOU HIS SUBCONSCIOUS DESIRES!"

"THESE... HIGHLY IMAGINATIVE PICTURE STORIES SATISFY ORDINARY DAILY LIFE THWARTS AND DENIES."

"SUPERMAN AND THE ARMY OF MALE COMICS CHARACTERS WHO RESEMBLE HIM SATISFY THE SIMPLE DESIRE TO BE STRONGER AND MORE POWERFUL THAN ANYBODY ELSE."



BUT I SHALL ATTEMPT THE PROCESS IN REVERSE!

I WILL CREATE "PSYCHOLOGICAL PROPAGANDA FOR THE NEW TYPE OF WOMAN..."

"...WHO SHOULD, I BELIEVE, RULE THE WORLD! THERE ISN'T LOVE ENOUGH IN THE MALE ORGANISM TO RUN THIS PLANET PEACEFULLY!"



TAPPING INTO HIS LIFELONG INTEREST IN GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHOLOGY, MARSTON INVENTED A PRINCESS OF THE ALL-FEMALE WARRIOR AMAZONS WHO WIELDED A TRUTH-COMPELLING MAGIC LASSO.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, "SUPREMA, THE WONDER WOMAN," AS MARSTON CALLED THE FIRST FEMALE SUPER HERO, WAS FULLY INTENDED FOR A MALE AUDIENCE.

"GIVE (MEN) AN ALLURING WOMAN STRONGER THAN THEMSELVES TO SUBMIT TO, AND THEY'LL BE PROUD TO BECOME HER WILLING SLAVES!"

WONDER WOMAN (SHELDON MAYER GOT MARSTON TO DROP THE "SUPREMA"), WRITTEN BY MARSTON (UNDER THE PSEUDONYM "CHARLES MOLLTON"), DRAWN BY VETERAN ILLUSTRATOR HARRY PETER, FIRST APPEARED IN THE JANUARY 1942 ISSUE OF ALL STAR COMICS, AND WAS AN INSTANT SUCCESS.

AS MARSTON PREDICTED, DC SURVEYS SHOWED HER READERSHIP WAS 90% MALE! (GIRLS ACTUALLY PREFERRED TO READ SUPERMAN.)

SUPREMA

The Wonder Woman



THOUGH, FOR A PROTO-FEMINIST, MARSTON SURE LIKED TO HAVE HIS HEROINE GET TIED UP. A LOT. IN CHAINS, ROPE, FETTERS, HANDCUFFS... WHATEVER WAS HANDY.

ONE POSTHUMOUSLY PUBLISHED WW STORY (MARSTON DIED OF CANCER IN 1947) CONTAINED NO LESS THAN SEVENTY-FIVE PANELS OF BONDAGE!



ADMITS MAYER, "I SUSPECT IT PROBABLY **SOLD MORE** COMIC BOOKS THAN I **REALIZED**, BUT EVERY TIME I CAME ACROSS ONE OF THOSE TRICKS, I WOULD TRY TO **CLEAN IT UP.**"

LIM... MAYBE THE VILLAINS COULD TRY TO, I DON'T KNOW... **SHOOT WONDER WOMAN INSTEAD?**

FOR ONCE?

-PSHAW!- "WOMEN ENJOY SUBMISSION!"



POOR **SHELDON**. NOT ONLY DID HE HAVE TO PUT UP WITH WONDER WOMAN'S LOOPY CREATOR, BUT ALSO GAINES' GOOFBALL SON, **BILL**, WHO GOFERED AROUND HIS DAD'S OFFICES DURING SUMMERS AND SCHOOL VACATIONS.

"CALLING ALL CARS! CALLING ALL CARS!"

BILL! SIT DOWN!



ONCE, MAYER WAS STARTLED BY A **STRANGE SHAPE** POPPING UP AT THE EDGE OF HIS DRAWING BOARD!



HE ACTED **INSTINCTUALLY!**

WHACK!!



MAYER REPORTS HE HAD NEVER SEEN SO MUCH **BLOOD** IN HIS LIFE!



