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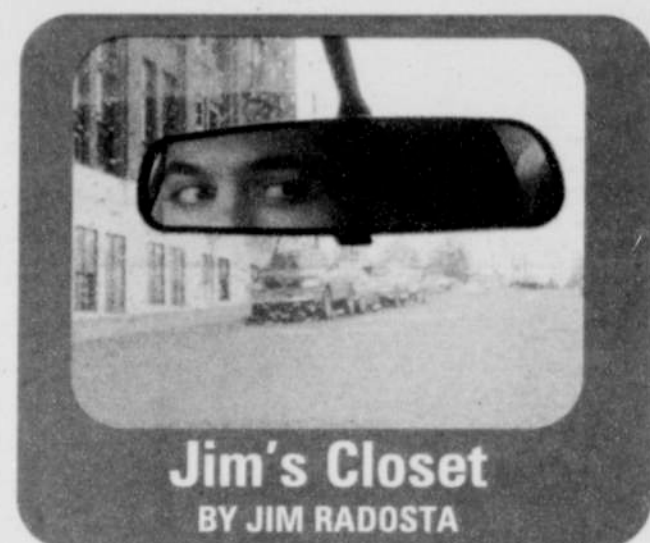
## Heroine Chic

In your satin tights, fighting for your rights

**F**orget the United Nations—what the world needs now is Wonder Woman. “Make a hawk a dove, stop a war with love, make a liar tell the truth,” goes the cheesy theme song to her live-action television series. “Stop a bullet cold, make the axis fold, change their minds and change the world.”

I’ve been fascinated by the superheroine ever since Lynda Carter exploded—quite literally—on television screens in 1975. My affinity for Wonder Woman over Superman (not to mention Ms. Pac-Man over her male counterpart) should’ve been my parents’ first clue that they were raising a queer.

So it should come as no surprise that Portland’s own Wonder Woman Day is being organized by a gay man: best-selling author, DVD producer, uniform aficionado and former Mr. Oregon State Leather Andy Mangels, a multitasking geek who curates the online Wonder Woman Museum. (He’s also the unofficial first lady of Portland; partner Don Hood steps down Oct. 20 as Rose Emperor XXXIII.) I tied him up in a magic golden lasso and made him spill the beans about this amazing Amazon.



and equality. Even as a kid, the equality of the character was really important to me, even before I knew what women’s lib was.

Additionally, you had the TV show and she could spin around and change clothes—that’s a really gay superpower. [Laughs]

As I got older and read more, I discovered that the original comics were just full of bondage! It was either Wonder Woman getting tied up or her hunky Air Force boyfriend getting tied up. Who doesn’t like hunky Air Force men?

**JR:** Are there things people might be surprised to know about Wonder Woman’s inception?

**AM:** The character was created in World War II by William Moulton Marston, a psychologist who also was one of the inventors of the lie detector. She wasn’t the first female superheroine, but she was definitely the most major one. This is pre-Rosie the Riveter. Women were only just being accepted in the military service at this point.

**JR:** Why do you think Wonder Woman has this special appeal to queers?

**AM:** I think that in modern society the appeal of Wonder Woman to gays and lesbians alike is inextricably tied to the TV series. It was five years after Stonewall; it was really the era when gays and lesbians were starting to identify with anything. She was sexy but not sexual. She was nonthreatening. She was a best friend to women and men alike. She was perfectly appealing to everyone. That was pretty revolutionary.

Beyond that, Wonder Woman is the most famous superheroine in the world. Lara Croft and Buffy Summers don’t even hold a candle to her. **10**



Lynda Carter “loves her gay and lesbian fans,” according to Wonder Woman Museum curator Andy Mangels.

**Jim Radosta:** Some folks might be surprised that a macho man like you is an expert on Wonder Woman. How did you first get into her?

**Andy Mangels:** I loved the animated adventures of *Super Friends*. There wasn’t ever any real super macho heroes until Green Arrow, so I didn’t really have a crush on superheroes—I actually identified with the ones who were kind of different than myself but who seemed heroic. I couldn’t swim, so Aquaman was somebody that I identified with.

Wonder Woman’s message was always about peace and love and understanding and compassion

Excalibur Comics hosts WONDER WOMAN DAY II from 1 to 6 p.m. Oct. 28 at

2444 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. The event will feature prizes for anyone dressed in a superhero costume; photo opportunities with a gorgeous Lynda Carter mannequin; an exhibit of rare collectibles; and a silent auction of Wonder Woman originals by more than 150 artists. In celebration of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, proceeds benefit Raphael House, Bradley-Angle House and Portland Women’s Crisis Line. For more information visit [www.wonderwomanmuseum.com](http://www.wonderwomanmuseum.com).

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