

# After Wonder Woman: Why Storm Won't Be the Next Superhero Film

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By Onicia D. L. Muller

Gal Gadot's incarnation of *Wonder Woman* is resonating with superhero fans and feminists. The fantasy/science fiction film directed by Patty Jenkins grossed over \$129 million ([IMBD](#)) and earned Lynda Carter's stamp of approval. I chatted with fableist and superhero fan, Candice Lola to discuss black female superhero characters in movies and television.

## What was your first impression of the *Wonder Woman* movie?

I felt empowered watching *Wonder Woman*. The action shots were thrilling. These women weren't pretty fighting. It looked like *300*! The men were present, but the story wasn't super dependent on them. I'm glad love didn't hinder Diana; she was dedicated to her mission the entire time.

## Do you think the film received fair press and reviews?

I saw a tweet a few days after *Wonder Woman* premiered that read, "No wonder white men are so obscenely confident all the time. I saw one woman hero movie and I'm ready to fight a thousand dudes barehanded!" Though this tweet means to be entertaining, it makes an extremely important point; representation means empowerment. When I went to see the movie I found myself clenching my fists during all of the awesome fighting scenes, cheering for her journey and imagining that I was in her shoes. And even though I have seen other superhero women portrayed on-screen, the *Wonder Woman* movie felt like it was written for women to connect with, and not just as a character to support her male co-star.

## Is this your first *Wonder Woman* film/show/comic?

I am no stranger to the *Wonder Woman* franchise. I was aware of her show when I was younger. I watched her in several Justice League cartoons and read about her in comic books. While I loved her story, I enjoyed it more as an observer than a participant; that is to say that I didn't personally identify with Wonder Woman. At that age, I didn't understand how she had anything to do with me. Portrayals of Storm though, however flat and sparse, often inspired round kicks and flying jumps off of the couch in my childhood living room. I could see myself in Storm. I WAS Storm.

**[Gina Prince-Bythewood will be the first woman of color to direct a superhero film](#) Some think Storm should be the next superhero to have a film. Thoughts?**

What's complicated about Storm getting a film is that 20th Century Fox owns the *X-Men* film rights. The general fan consensus is that Fox consistently makes bad *X-Men* films. I would not want Fox to touch [the Storm film]. That's kind of a general attitude that Marvel needs to get the film rights back. That's why Marvel has been developing the antihero angle on Netflix. They no longer own the rights to many of their major characters.

I can't tell if there's not enough fan base for Storm or if we're being ignored, but she's consistently underdeveloped and miswritten – at least in almost any moving depiction of her that I've ever seen.

In the meantime, I could see more of Misty Knight in *Luke Cage*. In the comic book, she loses her arm, gets a bionic one, and then becomes a badass female anti-hero. If I had to pick, I'd choose her or Shuri – the female Black Panther – to have the next female superhero movie.

### **Do you think the love for Storm is strictly related to gender and race?**

My dad was into comic books — especially Superman and the Hulk. I felt attached to Batman, but then Storm came along, and I was like “oh my god, a black girl!” I'm not sure if I was fully aware of race – I was just a kid. Seeing her was the first time I felt like I could be a superhero.

In the movies and cartoons Storm is depicted as very goodly and doesn't use her powers very well. But in the comic book, she's a lot more powerful. I don't know if it's intentional, but there's never been care to develop her really. Unlike Wolverine, you have to get Wolverine right if you're going to sell any *X-Men* movies.

### **What are you looking for in a comic series?**

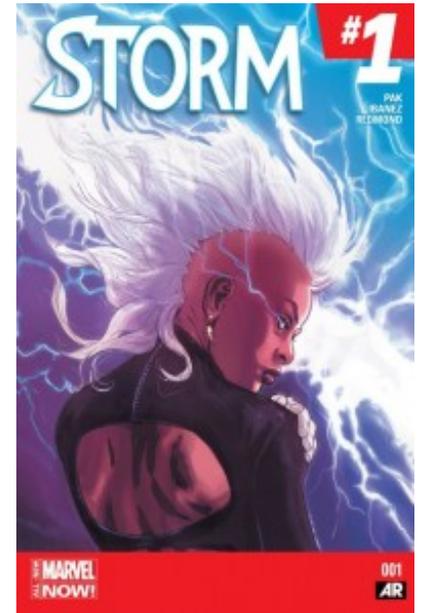
I should have examples of well-written, thoughtful portrayals of black woman who kick ass but are human enough for anyone, any human, to see themselves in. I want to see black female superheroes that are written for women to connect to, and not just as a character to support her white co-star.

Thanks to the recent rise of intersectional feminism I find myself more connected to most female portrayals even if they are non-black. No longer being left out of the conversation has made me feel overall more connected to strong women, no matter where I see them. And while for me this is overwhelmingly positive, it's only half of what should be happening. Just as I am able to connect with heroines that look like you, there should be more heroines that look like me that you can connect with. I should have examples of well-written, thoughtful portrayals of black woman who kick ass but are human enough for anyone, any human, to see themselves in. I want to see black female superheroes that are written for women to connect to, and not just as a character to support her white co-star.

### **In Caribbean and African culture there are many powerful female characters. Do you think studios should look beyond Marvel and DC to create a character representative of the modern black woman?**

Probably. When Beyoncé came out with *Lemonade*, I started researching Orisha which is a spirit in the Yoruba religion. I felt like Storm is closely related to Oya because she controls the wind and the weather. Because of this similarity between the two, I felt connected to my ancestry.

***Lemonade* and #BlackGirlMagic promoted black women power and godhood. If you were**



## designing a superhero for future black women, what would she be like?

In the fables, my characters are finding strength as they stumble through tribulation. What's great about *Lemonade* is that it gave black woman permission to celebrate. If I were creating a superhero, her body would be fit but a little bit soft – not muscular. She would have natural hair and speak with authority and grace. I would like her to be good at hand-to-hand combat and be a very powerful telepath like Professor X. Most importantly, she'd fit into Marvel's universe because her story would be about more than her powers. It would be about her human experience.

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Who do you think the next female superhero film should be about?

**Candice Lola** is a fableist and black girl nerd. She created **Drunk Science** the web series with fellow girl nerd **Rebecca Berger**.

[Storm Superhero Movies Wonder Woman X-Men](#)