

Thank You

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A Girl From The "Hood"

By Poppy Dong

This zine focus on the relationship between the developments of comic characters and their living environments.

By answering the following questions:

- **What is ghettoization?**
- **How ghettoization affects people and their social values?**
- **How the characters like Rocket, Amanda Waller, Martha Washington, Orpheus, and Luke Cage relate to it?**

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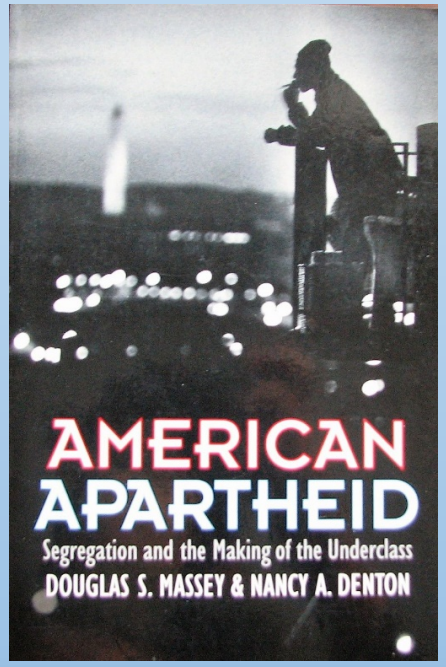
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Conclusion

Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton demonstrate in the book, *American Apartheid*, that this systematic segregation of African Americans leads inexorably to the creation of underclass communities during periods of economic downturn. Under conditions of extreme segregation, any increase in the overall rate of black poverty yields a marked increase in the geographic concentration of indigence and the deterioration of social and economic conditions in black communities.

In this zine, characters like Rocket, Amanda Waller, Martha Washington, Orpheus, and Luke Cage are different perspectives of people from the "hood." Although they had different childhood experiences, every character aims to help their community to become better and safer. It is the main reason why Raquel Ervin become Rocket, and how many comic heroes start their journey.



In the early 1940s, the United States government constructed projects to help people relocate. Although the intention was good, the projects did not thrive as everyone hoped.

Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton discussed in the book, *American Apartheid*, the relationship between ghettoization and socialization. This powerful and disturbing book links persistent poverty among blacks in the United States to the unparalleled degree of deliberate segregation they experience in American cities. This zine will explore the relationship between ghettoization and the development of comic characters such as Raquel Ervin, the Rocket, and many others.

What is ghettoization?

Ghettoization

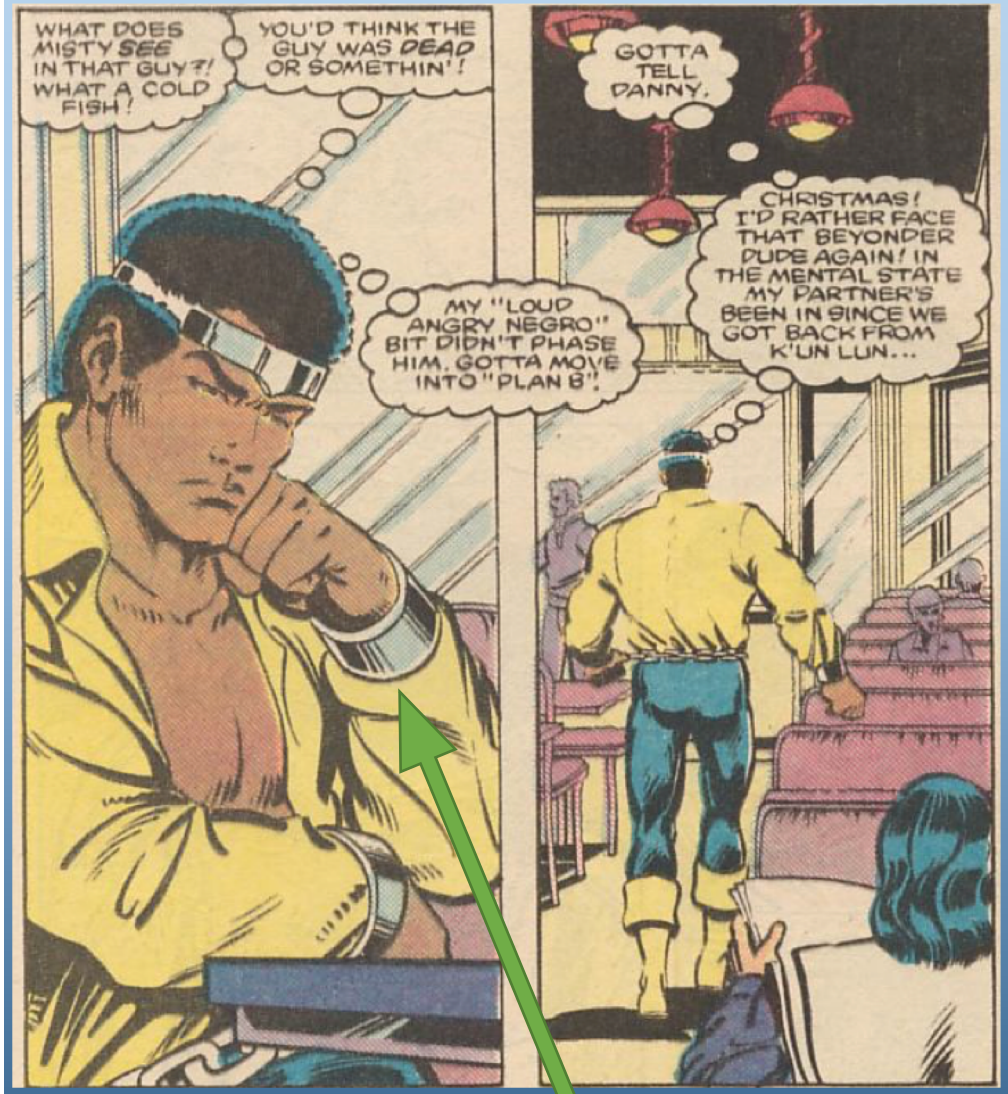
The process of becoming a ghetto, an isolated and underprivileged urban area.
The process of ghettoizing (a group): the segregation/isolation of a group and placement of that group into a figurative or literal position of little power. (Wikipedia)



Cabrini–Green Homes, a public housing project

Unlike other superheroes, Luke Cage does not have any fancy outfit while he goes out finding the bad guys. His suit represents his identity. His cloth indicates he is from a rough neighborhood. He also wears the iron cuff which looks like a handcuff which indicates violence and crime.





As ghetto residents adapt to this increasingly harsh environment under a climate of racial isolation, they evolve attitudes, behaviors, and practices that further marginalize their neighborhoods and undermine their chances of success in mainstream American society.



Douglas S. Massey, the author of *American Apartheid*

How ghettoization affects people and their social values?



Both in the comics and reality, the Cabrini–Green Homes was constructed as a public housing project in 1962.
The project was located on the North Side of Chicago. Over the years, living conditions became a problem for the residents. Crime and gang violence became a big concern in the neighborhood.

Luck Cage

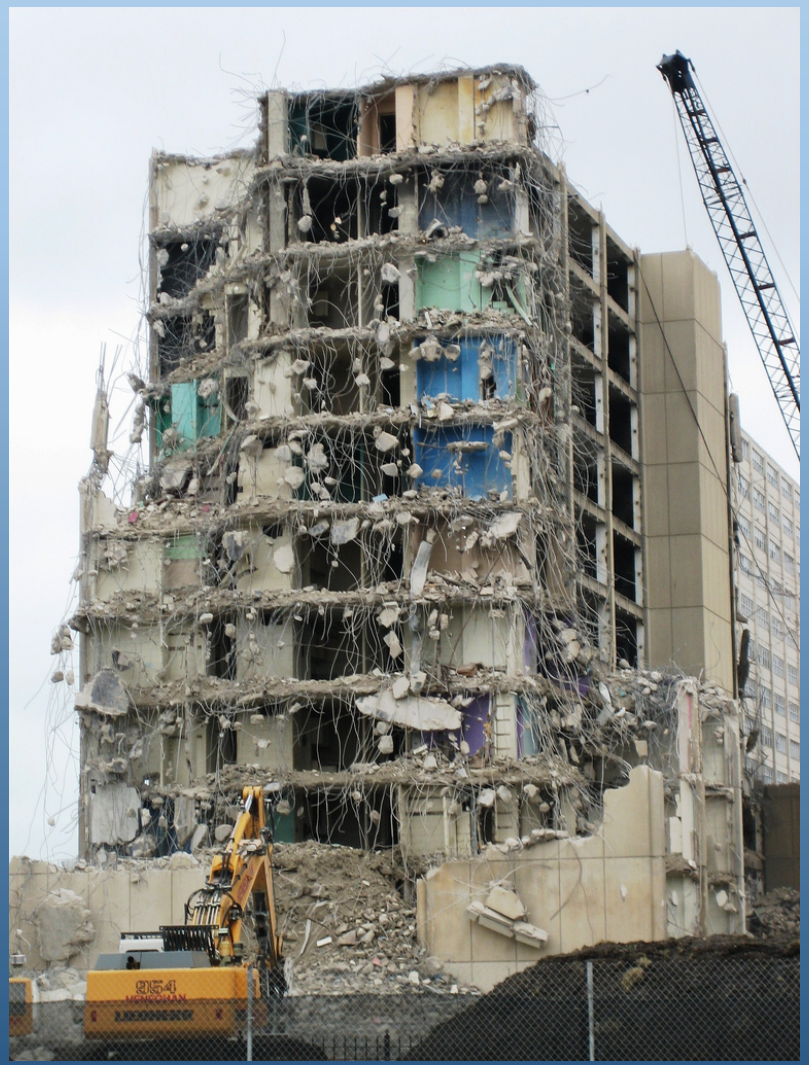


Luke Cage is an ex-convict imprisoned for a crime he did not commit, who gains the powers of superhuman strength and unbreakable skin after being subjected voluntarily to an experimental procedure.

When Orpheus graduated college, he left America to see the world in a traveling dance troupe. This exposed him to many new styles of dance and martial arts.
It also exposed him to brutality and injustice across the globe. He saw poverty and oppression, as people tore each other apart for trivial differences. During this time he also lost several friends in related tragedies. This inspired him to try and end the madness. He became a vigilante to try to keep his communities safe.



The Cabrini-green housing project was many comic character's home!



Raquel Ervin (Rocket)

The primary character was Raquel Ervin, created by Dwayne McDuffie, Denys Cowan, and Mark Bright in 1993.
She was also called Rocket in the DC Universe.
In the comic, Raquel Ervin got pregnant by her ex-boyfriend Noble. Although Noble and her family both wanted her to get an abortion, she decided to keep the child which makes her the first single teenage mother in the history of the comics.
Rocket has the ambition to improve the overall environment for her community. Therefore, in the comic, she became the sidekick for Icon. She was the catalyst in the creation of the superhero Icon.

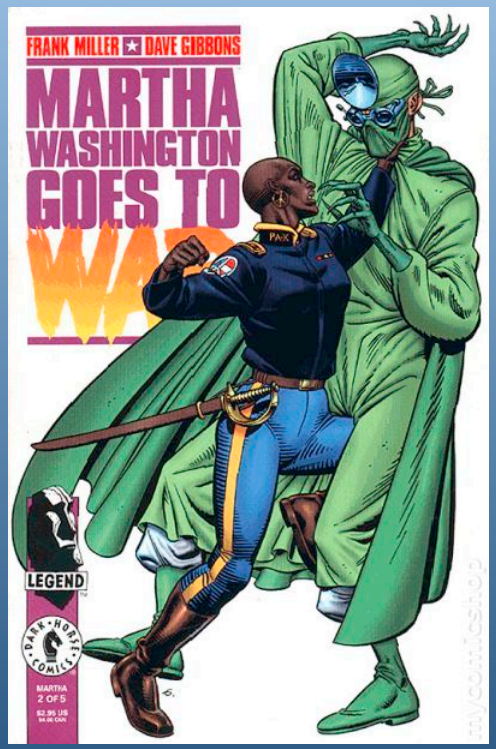
Orpheus

Gavin King grew up in Gotham dreaming of becoming a professional dancer and singer.



His ambitions made him a target for local bullies, and after one too many beatings, King began studying the martial arts, excelling at them from the start.

Amanda Waller and Martha Washington are both came from the Cabrini-Green Housing project.







Rocket & Ghettoization



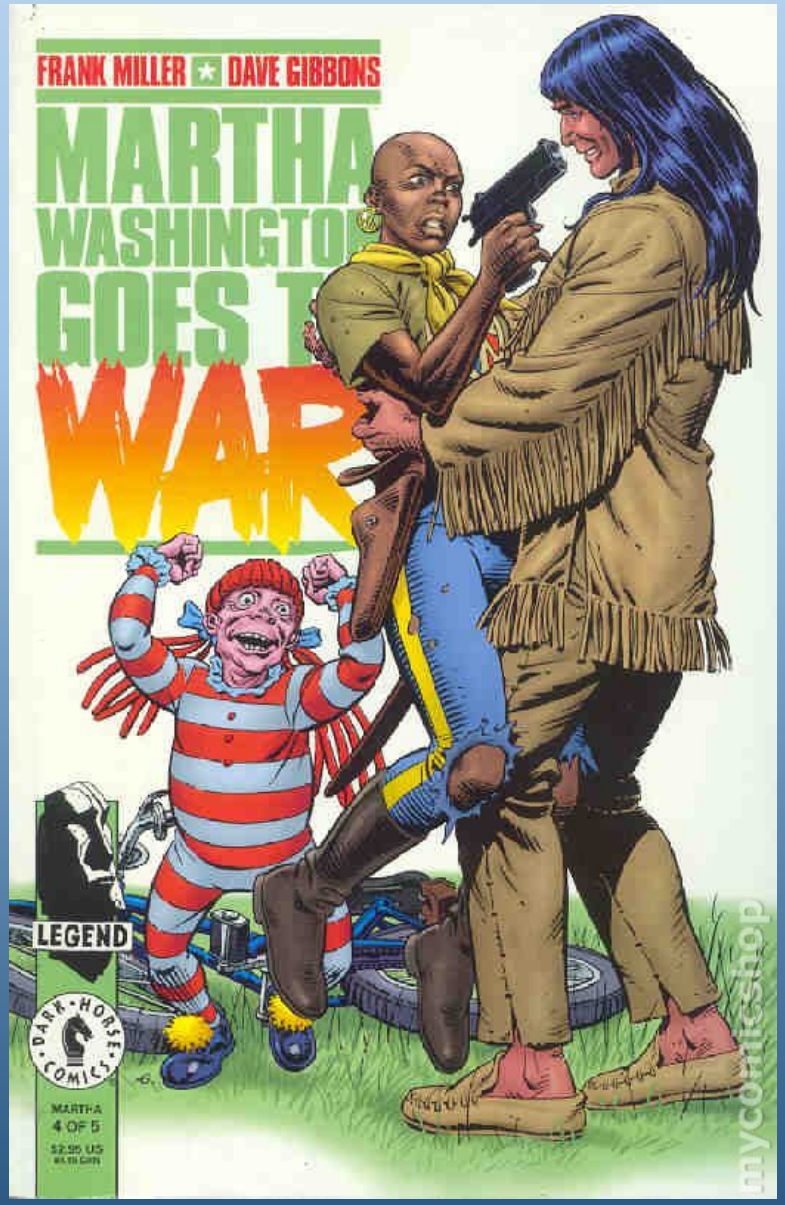
Raquel Ervin was born in the poorest neighborhood where crime is a major concern. Raquel Ervin was instigated by her ex-boyfriend to break into Augustus Freeman's house. Raquel Ervin is from a neighborhood just like Cabrini–Green Homes. By living in such conditions, Raquel Ervin was groomed to be the way she is portrayed.

Just like Amanda Waller, Martha Washington also grew up in the Cabrini–Green housing project in Chicago. She lived with her mother and two brothers. She is an average student, but one who displays a gift for computer programming and hacking.



Her teacher, Donald, encourages her to be a better student. Since he lives outside the Green, he brings her contraband items from outside.
Martha Washington later joins the PAX Peace Force, where her heroic tale begins. She fights in many battles during the second American Civil War.

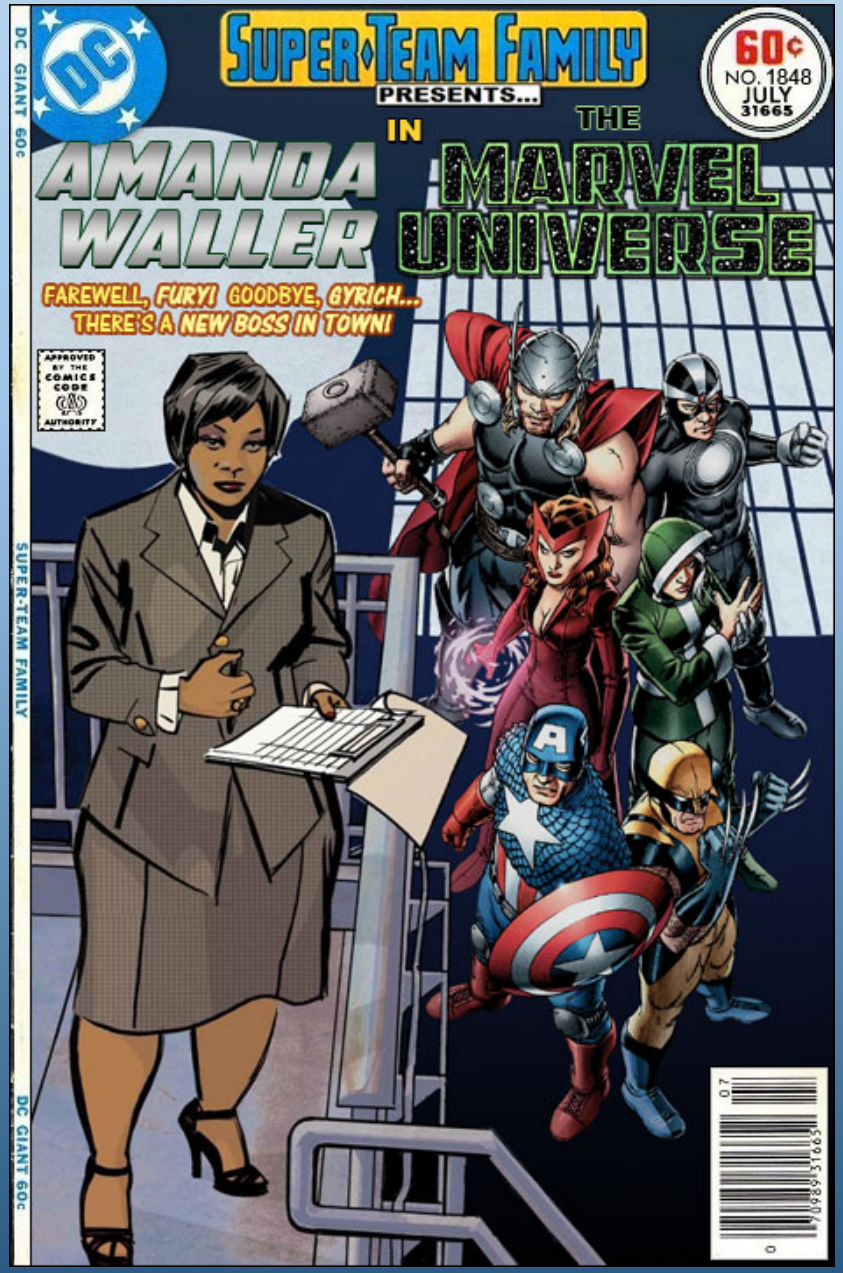
Martha Washington



Rocket is the sidekick for Icon.
She pushed Icon to become a superhero who saves the world. She wants to change the living conditions of her communities.



Amanda Waller



Amanda Waller has been established as a widow who escaped Chicago's Cabrini–Green housing projects with her surviving family after one of her sons, one of her daughters and her husband were murdered.

Amanda Waller is an ambivalent character in the DC Universe. She is the director for the deadly missions of the Suicide Squad and a specialist who oversees research into people with powers.

Although she lacks superpowers herself, the character is a ruthless, high-ranking government official who uses guile, political connections, and sheer intimidation to achieve her goals.

