# Captain Marvel Encyclopedia Article

## Captain Marvel

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# Contents

Captain Marvel Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Captain Marvel.....3

# Captain Marvel

Captain Marvel was among the most popular comic-book superheroes of the 1940s. Created in 1940 by Bill Parker and C.C. Beck for Fawcett Publications, Captain Marvel was an ingeniously simple premise. When teenager Billy Batson speaks the magic word "Shazam," he transforms into a muscular adult superhero. Like DC Comics' Superman, Captain Marvel possessed superhuman strength, invulnerability, and the power of flight.

Captain Marvel enlisted along with most other comic-book superheroes into World War II and did his part to disseminate patriotic propaganda about the virtues of America's war effort. He was the top-selling comic-book character of the war years—even outperforming Superman for a time. By 1954, however, falling sales and a long-standing lawsuit by DC over the character's alleged similarities to Superman forced Captain Marvel into cancellation. DC later purchased the rights to the character and has published comic books featuring him since the 1970s.

## Further Reading:

Benton, Mike. *Superhero Comics of the Golden Age.* Dallas, Taylor Publishing, 1992.

O'Neil, Dennis. *Secret Origins of the Super DC Heroes.* New York, Warner, 1976.