But the fictional Peggy wasn’t the first. In fact, the Advertising Women of New York was founded in 1912 because women weren’t allowed into the all-male Advertising League. Its primary objectives were to educate its members in advertising and to encourage the active involvement of women in the advertising industry.

There was the legendary Jane Maas, who Advertising Age calls “the real Peggy Olsen, right out of Mad Men.” She began her career as a copywriter at Ogilvy & Mather in 1964. Eventually she became a creative director. In her book, “Mad Women: The other side of life on Madison Avenue in the ’60s and beyond,” she mentions that fans of the TV show Mad Men ask her how accurate it was: “Was there really that much sex at the office? Were there really three-martini lunches? Were women really second-class citizens?” Her answer to all three is “unequivocally, yes.”

And there was Mary Wells Lawrence, who worked for DDB before founding Wells Rich Greene and becoming the first female CEO of a company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. She’s known for her work for Alka-Seltzer. You may remember “Plop plop, fizz fizz” and “I can’t believe I ate the whole thing.” Perhaps her most iconic campaign is I ♥ NY.

Tonight we celebrate by hearing the stories of these five women. Has the ad business changed? How has it changed? And what is the future for women in advertising? And, just for tonight, let’s embrace it. We’re all proudly – MAD WOMEN.
Meet our MAD WOMEN

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