

Abstract

THESIS: Why the world needs Superheros: Using the Superhero Genre in Historical and Humanitarian Studies

STUDENT: Jacob Barajas

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Throughout the vast world of the education system, one area that has continued to be left out of the educational discipline is the popular culture phenomes of the times. While novels, such as *The Great Gatsby* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, have impacted the literature and historical studies of the past new material is being produced, at a rate that leads to a continuous evolution, putting new outlooks on our issues on display. This study aims to present contextual reason and facts at the potential to use Comic Books, as well as the films they have inspired, in our everyday classroom studies. Specifically, through the stories of *Captain America* and *The X-Men*, we can create visual perspectives to the injustices of the world, without having to spoil young minds with strong graphic imagery.

Through the methods of researching History and studying Comic Book storytelling, as well as those behind the pages, we are able to present parallels between the literature and the world they were written in. While there will be no direct study with an in-class discussion, contextualization will present the defense for the reasoning behind the importance of the Comic Book stories being held to just as high a regard as the classic literature that has been used for nearly over a century. This argument is to be presented given in a classroom setting, presenting our real world past first and then presenting the comic book narratives with heighten context and understanding.

In Conclusion, our research presents stories of racial divide and war propaganda through both fictional stories based historical figures, as well as how comics impacted the call for war time efforts in the 1940s. This is only tapping the surface of potential for the use of comic book literature in the historical educational setting, as further research will continue to grow as new stories continue to unfold in our modern world that will push the narrative of our comic book heroes.