[Free] Superheroes: An Analysis of Popular Culture's Modern Myths

Superheroes: An Analysis of Popular Culture's Modern Myths

David Reynolds
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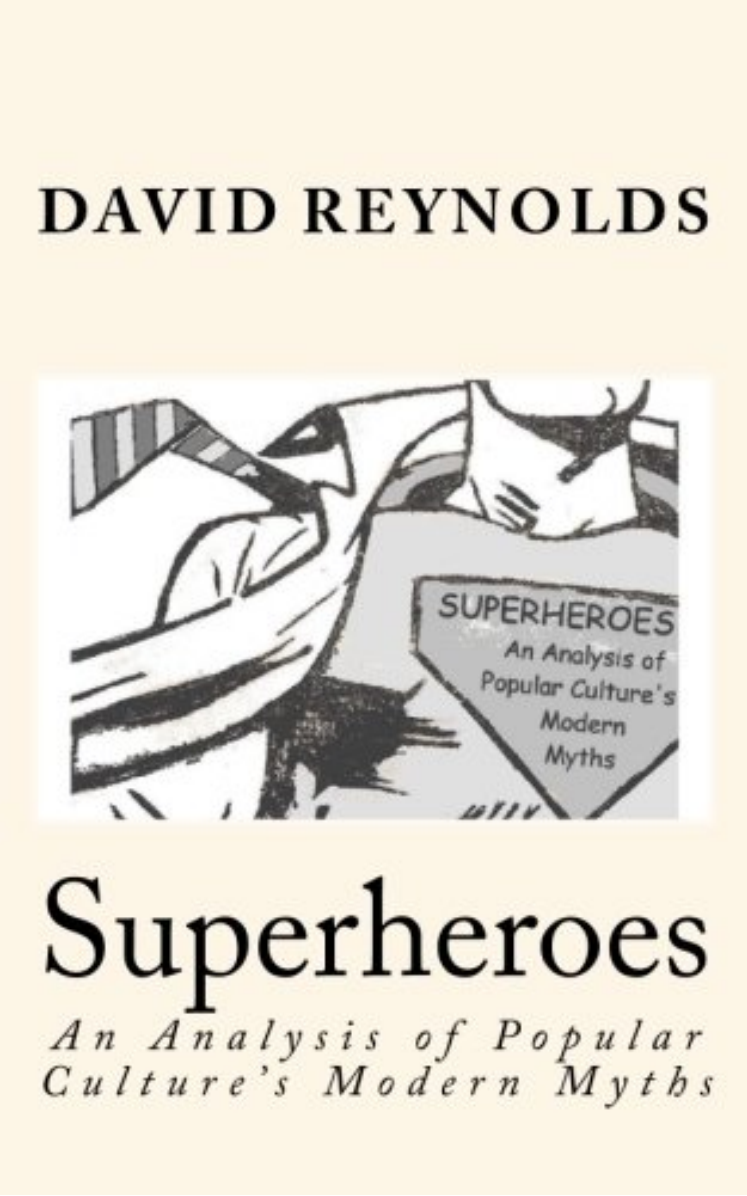

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David Reynolds : Superheroes: An Analysis of Popular Culture's Modern Myths before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Superheroes: An Analysis of Popular Culture's Modern Myths:

A semiotic and cultural anthropological interrogation of popular North American superhero narratives, such as those of Superman, Spider-Man, and Batman, provides insight into how medias messages influence the cultures ethical values. Since emerging in the late 1930s, the superhero has become a pervasive figure in North American popular culture. As an extension of ideas presented by Friedrich Nietzsche, Joseph Campbell, and Umberto Eco, this dissertation argues that superhero tales must be regarded as modern mythology. It follows that people observe and learn social norms of justice from such narratives, since these ideals are intrinsic to the tales. In investigating the superheros role as a contemporary figure of myth, this project focuses primarily on three areas: an account of the history of the superhero from 1938 to present; an examination of the cultural functions of contemporary superhero narratives; and, an interrogation of vigilantism, responsibility, and justice in these narratives and how those concerns further relate to ideologies and practices in North American culture.

About the AuthorDave Reynolds studied at Memorial University, where he completed his BA in Philosophy and English Language and Literature in 2006 in addition to completing his MPhil in Humanities in 2008. His graduate research focused on the cultural significance of superhero narratives and culminated in his dissertation Superheroes: An Analysis of Popular Cultures Modern Myths. Presently, Dave enjoys teaching English at Memorial University and plans to research how BioWares videogames (such as Mass Effect and Dragon Age) are a significant part of Canadian literature and culture. His other research interests include moral philosophy, justice, philosophy of literature, semiotics, rhetorical persuasion, and various forms of popular culture.