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Title: Hypermasculinity and the hero in comic book fiction: This Is It

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Abstract: This thesis examines occurrences of hypermasculinity in examples from the genre of comic book fiction, utilizing textual evidence to suggest the current collection has re-iterated the more negative hypermasculine components of their source material: comic books. In doing so, the thesis compares the present novels with the creative element of the PhD submission – This Is It – a novel which serves as a critique of the prevalence of hypermasculinity in heroic figures within comic book fiction. By analyzing the sociological reasons behind hypermasculinity, and its subsequent effects, this thesis aims to make apparent the danger inherent with the continued association of hypermasculinity and hero figures in a new medium such as comic book fiction. It will also argue that the development of such a form divergent from comic books allows scope for a deconstruction of the hypermasculine comic book hero.

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Hero-worship and aspirational hypermasculine role models abound in geek-friendly popular culture. We will examine the construction of the figures of male heroism that dominate modern media tagged as geek-oriented, with particular attention to science fiction. Participants completed a measure of hypermasculinity and anger was assessed before and after viewing the erotic video. A laboratory paradigm was then used to measure physical aggression toward a gay or heterosexual man. This chapter examines the discourse of heroes in Meiji Japan through its principal forms of representation, namely, history and fiction. In many cultures, the ideology of "masculine hegemony" finds cultural expression in the figure of the hero, whose exemplary masculinity compels imitation. Comic book stories are no longer the exclusive domain of geek subcultures. Part of that success lies in the appeal of an old-fashioned tale of good versus evil. The scenes of conflict and destruction in these films are viscerally exciting and certainly get the adrenaline pumping. What exactly is so appealing about this particularly aggressive form of hypermasculinity that it's become a worldwide movie obsession? Back before The Avengers were household names, superheroes were the domain of geekdom, and particularly "geek guys" who, to some degree, felt personally ostracised and disillusioned by the ideals of stereotypical tough-guy manhood in mainstream culture. portrayed in comics is right, and everyone, including the artists and creators of the lore, are problematic shitlords. But it has to be hypermasculinity, two men beating the shit out of each other just for manliness's sake. Right? Yes, I understand comics are not real, but to create engaging stories, in fiction be it in books or comics or games or plays or what have you, the characters can not be Mary Sues, they can't be perfect at everything the first time and instantly work well with others. And that's why the Avengers butt heads, because they are all deeply flawed. If you would like to see superheros with no personal flaws and no conflict, I have no idea where you would look for one, as badly written comics and heroes are not popular, and thus don't last in print. Perhaps you could create one?