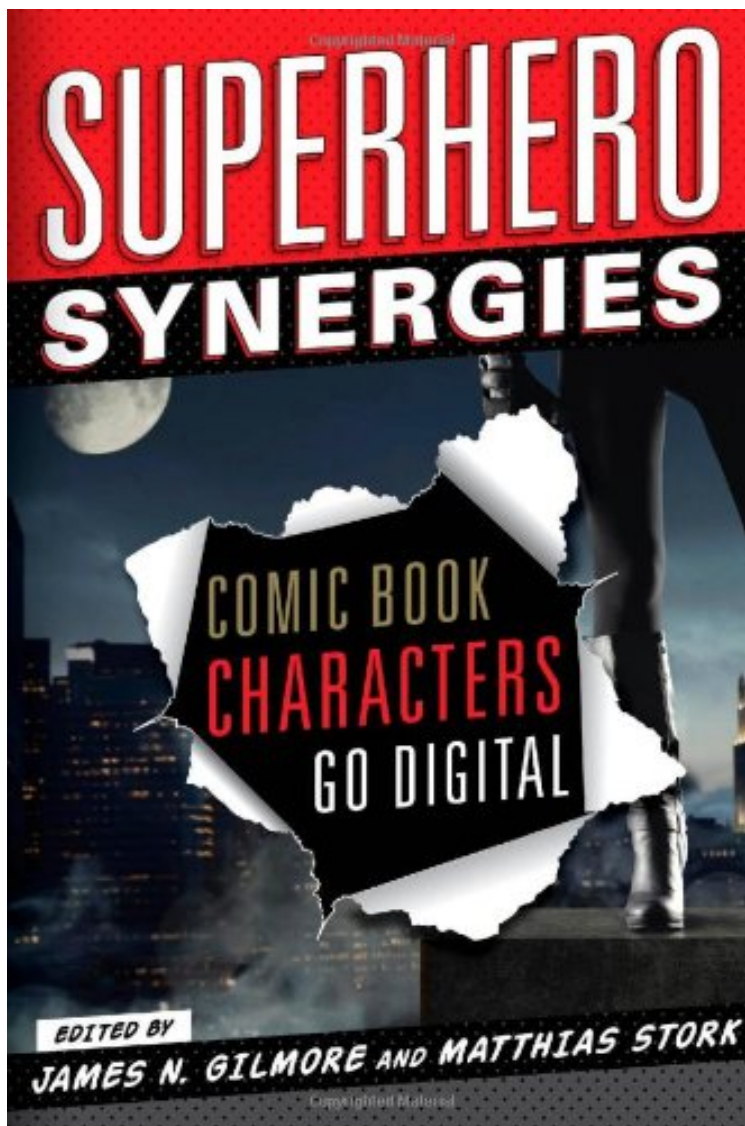


(Download ebook) Superhero Synergies: Comic Book Characters Go Digital

## Superhero Synergies: Comic Book Characters Go Digital

*From Rowman Littlefield Publishers*

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**From Rowman Littlefield Publishers : Superhero Synergies: Comic Book Characters Go Digital** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Superhero Synergies: Comic Book Characters Go Digital:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Superhero Synergies ranks as one of the best scholarly works on comic book adaptations to dateBy ClaytonA whip-smart, 13 essay collection, SUPERHERO SYNERGIES examines the emergent features of the superhero narrative in the digital age with clarity, sophistication, and wit. Essentially, the

collection of essays seeks to demonstrate how "the form of today's superhero genre relies on digital technologies," but *Superhero Synergies* is more than a rehashing of well-trodden terrain regarding indexicality or a celebration of comic-book culture. Instead, the essays form a rigorous and often provocative collective that, among many of its achievements, argues for these transmedia forms (primarily cinema) to be taken seriously as a reflective expression of contemporary discourses on reformed digital aesthetics and neoliberal politics. The collection tackles many of the biggest superhero films from the last decade-plus, including *HULK*, *THE INCREDIBLE HULK*, and *IRON MAN*, but these are not simply fanzine essays - these authors are rigorous in their treatment of films and concepts, but retain a giddy enthusiasm for the kinetic and exuberant qualities these films can offer. The crowning jewel of the entire collection, however, is Stork's own essay entitled "Assembling the Avengers: Reframing the Superhero Movie through Marvel's Cinematic Universe," which somehow condenses decades of Hollywood filmmaking strategies into an airtight case for Marvel's attempt to "reconfigure the market context in its entirety" by comprehensively reforming the notion of a franchise, culminating in the release of *THE AVENGERS*. For Stork, these developments aren't merely coincidental, but a carefully strategized business move, "imagined in a corporate-industrial dimension," that shifted emphasis away from auteurism as a component of franchise filmmaking. Thus, over the course of five preceding films, with features such as postcredits teasers, "team" rhetoric in interviews and press junkets, and an exorbitant \$525 million credit line backed by Merrill Lynch, Disney and Marvel embarked to create "almost Pavlovian-trained" audiences that sought each new film as a new addition to this emergent "cinematic universe of convergence." *SUPERHERO SYNERGIES* belongs on the shelves of fans and scholars alike. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An invaluable contribution to studies of the superhero genre. By James Fleury. *SUPERHERO SYNERGIES* is a fascinating and wide-ranging collection of essays on the superhero in the digital age. What I found particularly interesting about the book is that the essays deal with these characters in terms of their appearances in multiple media, from digital comics to CGI-infused films to video games. Because of the ubiquity of comic book characters in the current media landscape, the carefully researched and well-written essays in this book are invaluable. I recommend looking at a preview of the book's table of contents. Scholars and general readers interested in characters like Batman, the Hulk, or John Carter and issues like transmedia storytelling and movie marketing will find many insightful essays. This is certainly one of the best scholarly works on the superhero genre available.

In the age of digital media, superheroes are no longer confined to comic books and graphic novels. Their stories are now featured in films, video games, digital comics, television programs, and more. In a single year alone, films featuring Batman, Spider-Man, and the Avengers have appeared on the big screen. Popular media no longer exists in isolation, but converges into complex multidimensional entities. As a result, traditional ideas about the relationship between varying media have come under striking revision. Although this convergence is apparent in many genres, perhaps nowhere is it more persistent, more creative, or more varied than in the superhero genre. *Superhero Synergies: Comic Book Characters Go Digital* explores this developing relationship between superheroes and various forms of media, examining how the superhero genre, which was once limited primarily to a single medium, has been developed into so many more. Essays in this volume engage with several of the most iconic heroes including Batman, Hulk, and Iron Man through a variety of academic disciplines such as industry studies, gender studies, and aesthetic analysis to develop an expansive view of the genre's potency. The contributors to this volume engage cinema, comics, video games, and even live stage shows to instill readers with new ways of looking at, thinking about, and experiencing some of contemporary media's most popular texts. This unique approach to the examination of digital media and superhero studies provides new and valuable readings of well-known texts and practices. Intended for both academics and fans of the superhero genre, this anthology introduces the innovative and growing synergy between traditional comic books and digital media.

Stork's clarity lays bare his extensive research, which digs not just into the financial logic of revised aesthetic approaches for maximal capital gains, but also film theorist Rick Altman's definition of 're-gentrification,' which finally makes clear that Marvel's strategies are not new as much as reinterpreted 'a new presentational model of crossover synergy.' Stork's work here is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand precisely how corporate control yields pop-culture product. I'll be sending his essay to my inquisitive colleague shortly along with the rest of *Superhero Synergies*. (Slant Magazine) Undisputably, *Superhero Synergies* is a strong and relevant contribution to patterns of digital media production. Offering a wide range of material and perspectives, it helps to elucidate the cultural productivity of present-day superhero(in)es, and points out blind spots of hero research through its focus on market imperatives, boundaries of the genre and affective immersion.... [T]his present volume is a viable contribution to studies of hero production and consumption, paving the way for future research into cultural practices of heroisation and the cultural processing of the heroic in the digital age. (helden. heroes. hros.) Fearlessly leapfrogging media from cinema and comics to gaming and theater, this fresh, smart collection follows the superhero's storied trajectory across formats, franchises, and fandoms, mapping our evolving entertainment universe through innovative, risk-taking scholarship. Whether or not you're into Batman or the Avengers, DC or Marvel, look no further for a shining exemplar

of the emerging field of transmedia studies. (Bob Rehak, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Film and Media Studies, Swarthmore College) Agile and witty as Spider-Man, brilliantly persuasive as Batman, these essays offer a series of new perspectives on the figure of the superhero across media platforms. The contributors are expert in both traditional scholarship and comic-book canon: Eisenstein's theory of shot-collisions meets 'Hulk smash,' and Bazin's view of the cinema screen as a 'mask' illuminates the interior of Tony Stark's helmet. This is an inspiring assembly of exciting essays. (Will Brooker, author of *Hunting the Dark Knight*) An insightful and provocative set of case studies, bound to unsettle the bad object status that film studies and critics frequently reserve for the superhero genre, even as the book challenges the techno-centric ethos of new media theory to more convincingly account for the complexities of genre and inter-media content. Together, the original essays collected here provide a useful interdisciplinary roadmap and productive critical framework that should spur other scholars to more fully engage a wider range of complexities involving gender, genre, aesthetics, identity, labor, and industrial practice that define intermedial superhero genre production and consumption today. (John T. Caldwell, Professor, Cinema and Media Studies, UCLA. Author of *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*)

**About the Author** James N. Gilmore is a graduate student in the Cinema and Media Studies program at the University of California, Los Angeles. Matthias Stork is a graduate student in the Cinema and Media Studies program at the University of California, Los Angeles. His work has appeared in *Frames Cinema Journal*, *Mediascape*, and *Media Fields Journal*, as well as several anthologies.