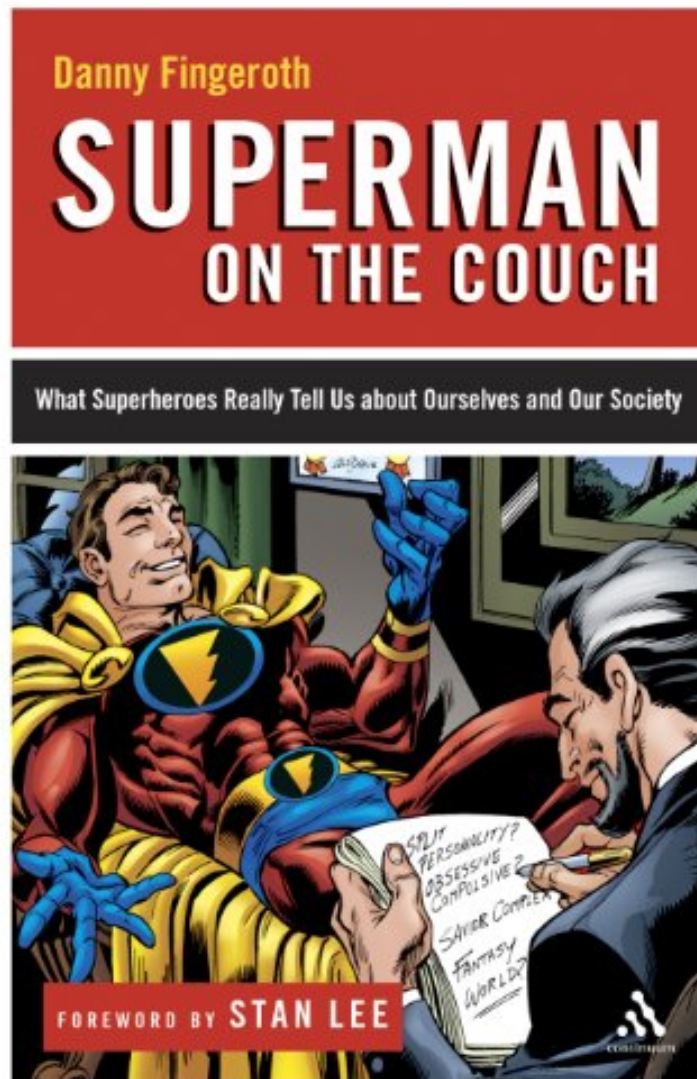


(Read free) Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society

Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society

Danny Fingeroth

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#420704 in Books Bloomsbury Academic 2004-02-27 2004-02-27Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.01 x .2 x 5.99l, .63 #File Name: 0826415407192 pages | File size: 77.Mb

Danny Fingeroth : Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Always insightfulBy Steven ZisserI've long enjoyed Danny's work, both in comics and his subsequent writings about comics. Perfect companion to "Disguised as Clark Kent"8 of 24

people found the following review helpful. lacks good, hard, concise facts
By Goggle-Eyed Slewfoot
Where are most superheroes orphaned at an early age? What is the purpose of groups of superheroes? Why does Batman have a preadolescent sidekick? Why are there also superheroines? I'm afraid I can't answer any of these questions. The author of this book discusses all of these questions, but his discussion is a little too hazy for me.
2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Superheros R Us
By Tim Lasiuta
What do superheroes mean to culture? In 'Disguised As Clark Kent', Danny Fingeroth established the basis of Superman and other heroes in Jewish and Eastern mythologies. 'Superman On the Couch' takes a step back, and discusses what superheroes tell us about ourselves and society. For instance, this tome contains fascinating discourses on The history of superheroes, dual identities, the storm of the orphan, our amazing feminine superheroes, the groups like the Justice League of America, The X Men, and Fantastic Four, anger and superheroes, changing of the guard, and villains. Now, as a 'mature' reader, I can understand how superhero mythology developed. So much for a simple comic book I guess. But, all things in balance. Comics can be comics, and enjoyment is enjoyment. As a reader, I still enjoy reading comics. So here comes Mr Fingeroth and his verbalization of arguments that have been around in academic circles for years. Did the early creators and writers of comic books know what they were doing when they produced the books of our youth? Were they that smart? Did they research their stories in advance? Are modern educated writers with college and university degrees any more thoughtful in drawing on classic influences? Whether we are more intelligent or not, we draw on our references. Shuster and Siegel drew on Zorro, Gladiator, Doc Savage, and Gladiator for Superman. Modern writers use Superman, Batman, and Spiderman as templates. We stand on what has gone on before. Superhero convention and archetypes will always be present. I guess that is the point of the book. Superheroes reflect how we see what our potential is with respect to our own limitations. Even Jesus reflected on that when he compared faith the size of a mustard seed that could move a mountain. Tell a man he cannot triumph against forces of evil, and constrain him, and he will not. Give him 'superhuman' abilities, and he will. Such are superheroes, and Mr Fingeroth presents strong arguments on the validity of superheroes for today. Are you a superhero? Read this book and find out how close you might be!
Tim Lasiuta[...]

Why are so many of the superhero myths tied up with loss, often violent, of parents or parental figures? What is the significance of the dual identity? What makes some superhuman figures "good" and others "evil"? Why are so many of the prime superheroes white and male? How has the superhero evolved over the course of the 20th and early 21st centuries? And how might the myths be changing? Why is it that the key superhero archetypes - Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Spider-Man, the X-Men - touch primal needs and experiences in everyone? Why has the superhero moved beyond the pages of comics into other media? All these topics, and more, are covered in this lively and original exploration of the reasons why the superhero - in comic books, films, and TV - is such a potent myth for our times and culture.

From Publishers Weekly
The golden age of comic books may be over, but our "hope (and fear) that there may be more to this world than what we see" draws us to pop culture heroes who mesh otherworldly powers and smarts with a sense of duty and even some human frailty. This is part of a global "superhero comic consciousness" that, observes Fingeroth, transcends religious and national boundaries to infect us with do-gooder inclinations while still letting us delight in violent retribution against imagined villains. Connecting the dots from ancient warriors and biblical figures to modern-day superheroes, Fingeroth analyzes archetypes like the angry young man (Wolverine), the avenging orphan (Batman), the dual personality (Superman) and other modern derivatives like Dirty Harry and Rambo. Not surprisingly, super-heroines have struggled for decades to achieve the popularity of their male counterparts. Powerful women are threatening whether drawn or born, concludes Fingeroth, and until the 1990s advent of Buffy and Xena, Wonderwoman was a lonely lady at the top. With humor and a touch of comic book hyperbole, the author capably mines the genres cultural morphologies and the societal changes it reflects a subject largely overlooked by contemporary pop psychologists and academics. While this psychological journey through comic hero history can seem reductive at times with page-filler statements like "We achieve immortality through the superheroes," the book, like the escapist but enduring media it chronicles, proves an illuminating read. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
From School Library Journal
Adult/High School
Fingeroth offers a lucid and accessible social critique of the mainstream comics' preternatural characters as well as reasoning why and how the public welcomes such stories. Although he rightfully reaches back to earlier literary uses and developments of heroic character types, these discussions don't demand strong academic knowledge of world cultures, nor do his analyses of superhero motives require readers to be grounded in theoretical psychology. Instead, this is an engaging discussion that may turn some readers into literary sleuths and deeper thinkers, simply because the writing is so solid and the presentation so balanced. Even those who aren't fans of Spider-Man or Batman will be able to understand the relevance of considering how fiction and culture interact with one another. An excellent resource for both research and pleasure reading.
Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA
Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Fingeroth draws on his decades of working at Marvel Comics (including

work as the editorial director of the Spider-Man comics family) to write this personal, engaging, and earnest work. He addresses, among other topics, superheroes and immigration (Superman, the ultimate alien), superheroes and family relations (Fantastic Four and X-Men), and the development of the teen voice in comic books (from sidekick to Spider-Man). Fingeroth hits a number of high notes, especially in his discussion of villains as proactive characters, as opposed to the usually reactive heroes. He also considers the idea of the female superhero. Fingeroth supports his assertions with a good array of scholarly and popular sources, including work by Joseph Campbell, Gloria Steinem, and Les Daniels. The result is an easygoing exploration of superheroes' culture significance, and it will appeal to a mainstream audience. Comics legend Stan Lee provides the foreword to this slim volume. The hardcover carries a hefty price tag, so larger public libraries may wish to consider the paperback. Because of the subject matter's appeal and the accessibility of Fingeroth's writing, this title is an especially good choice for school libraries." "Library Journal" (Library Journal)"With a uniquely psychological approach, Fingeroth attempts to understand America's continuing fascination with spandex-clad crime-fighters. His conclusions are intriguing. " Washington Square News, 4/26/04 (Eric Kohn)Superman on the Couch has a number of interesting, novel things to say about the assimilation and naturalization of superhero fiction. Superman on the couch is a near-exhaustive look at the superhero phenomenon, through the eyes of a man who has spent all his working life around them. I would recommend the book to anyone with even a passing interest in comics or fiction in general. Thoroughly engrossing read. It provides even the most jaded superhero fan with a wealth of clever, novel ideas to chew over. Matthew Craig, RobotFist.com, 6/7/04Superman on the Couch is informative and well researched, examining characters from cultural, psychological and historical perspectives. Fingeroth, who ran the Spider-Man line and consulted on the 1990s Spider-Man fox cartoons, knows his subject matter. Tim Clodfelter, Winston-Salem Journal 7/4/04" Aficionados of hero comics, pulps, and detective paperbacks of the 1940s and 1950s will appreciate this book in which Fingeroth poses questions and then helps the reader answer them. Recommended." CHOICE (A Hirsch, Emeritus, Central Connecticut State University, Choice, 9/04 CHOICE)"Books about superhero comics are typically written by fans, creators, or scholars. Danny Fingeroth's work transcends the usual limitations of perspective we find in such books because his life has encompassed all three roles. This book is recommended for all collections." (The Journal of American Culture)"In Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society, Danny Fingeroth offers something unique: a work of popular comic book criticism that explores why comic book superheroes have continued to matter so much to so many of us over the past several decades, and why characters such as Batman, Spider-Man, and Superman have not only entered into popular consciousness, but, moreover, remained so firmly rooted there. All in all, Danny Fingeroth has written an important...book that serves to adequately defend superhero comics against the charges of being either simple adolescent, male power fantasies, or, for that matter, perverted escapades intended to corrupt the minds of young readers everywhere, that have been leveled against them over the years. Fingeroth recognizes, and at a number of points well demonstrates, that superhero comics are, indeed, important cultural artifacts that deserve our critical attention....this book is recommended." Image Text, Vol. 2 no. 2, Winter 2005 (Image Text Image) Subject of article "Whatever happened to the superheroes of old" includes interview with Fingeroth. -BBC News Magazine, June 2006