

# \\"Truth, Justice, and the American Way\\" : A Case Study of Comic Books through the Lens of Society by Veronica Rodriguez

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## ABSTRACT

From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century classics such as Wonder Woman and Captain Marvel to today's blockbuster franchises capitalizing on big name superheroes like the Avengers or Batman, comic books, and more specifically, their superheroes have undoubtedly reflected the way American society functions at home and on the global scale. In consideration of this, it is important to determine why the scholarly field of Comic Studies and in turn comic books have long been trivialized as an inferior and often childish field and art form. This study will look at two superheroes: Superman and Captain America, to see how they have reflected American ideals and values from the 1930's to the present. This would be done through a content analysis of both superheroes, as well as, focus on coding particular themes for each comic book era that will correlate with historical instances in a particular era. The study's goal would be to connect these factors to the overall time frame of a particular era and, ultimately, prove a strong correlation between historical occurrences and how comic books were influenced by said occurrences. These results would suggest that not only are comic books a gateway to the representation of a generations desires and struggles in a constantly changing world, but are also unparalleled by any other history book. But this would also shed a light to the importance of maintaining the study of comic books and their significance as an authentic art form, as well as, demonstrate the importance of comic books, and their superheroes, in American society throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century.