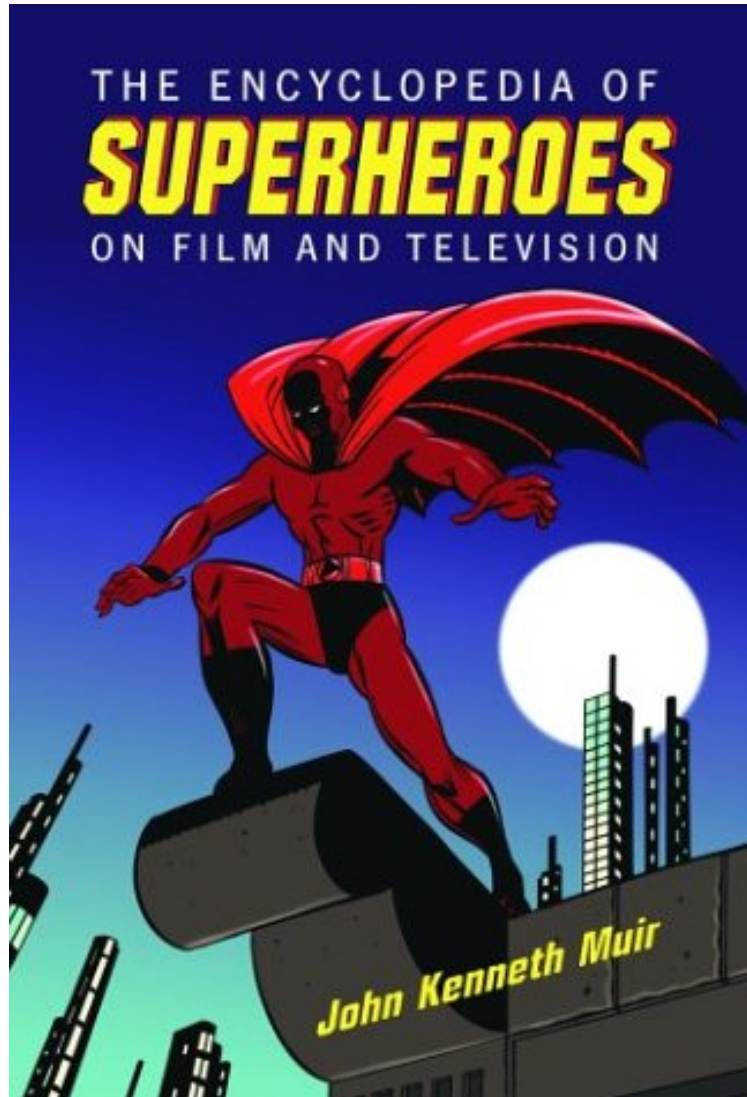


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The Encyclopedia of Superheroes on Film and Television

John Kenneth Muir

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#4037293 in Books McFarland Company 2004-04 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.52 x 7.22 x 10.201,
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John Kenneth Muir : The Encyclopedia of Superheroes on Film and Television before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Encyclopedia of Superheroes on Film and Television:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars By Mark Chocianowski Good book for knowing more about super heroes. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading for superhero fans By Michael J. Mazza "The Encyclopedia of Superheroes on Film and Television," by John Kenneth Muir, packs a wealth of information into more than 600 pages. It is illustrated with many black-and-white depictions of both animated and live-action characters. The bulk of the book is an alphabetically organized group of entries on specific superheroes. A

typical entry discusses a superhero and the various film and TV incarnations in which he/she has appeared. Muir discusses many types of superhero portrayals: animated and live-action, black-and-white and color, serious and spoof, and adult- and kid-oriented productions, even including direct-to-video features. The book is amazingly comprehensive, including both solo heroes and teams. There are the expected entries on such "big" names as The Amazing Spider-Man, Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, X-Men, etc. But Muir does not neglect the curious, cultish, or off-beat. Among the many heroes covered are the Ambiguously Gay Duo (from a series of animated shorts on "Saturday Night Live"), Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Captain Planet and the Planeteers, Darkman, ElectraWoman and DynaGirl, Isis, M.A.N.T.I.S., the Six Million Dollar Man, the Tick, and many more. I don't doubt that there are omissions or oversights (I would have liked to have seen an entry on the Bibleman character, portrayed by Willie Aames), but overall it's an impressively broad gathering of heroes. The entries feature cast and crew credits from various productions, as well as episode guides to TV series. Excerpts from critics' reviews add further to the entries. Among the fascinating topics covered along the way are the superhero underpinnings of the film "Unbreakable" and the notorious unreleased Fantastic Four film. The book includes endnotes, a bibliography, and an index, as well as a number of appendices. I found the most interesting appendix to be the one covering the clichés and conventions of superhero media: "The Dogged Reporter," "Gargoyle Pose," "Lost Powers," etc. This book is well-written and fascinating. Muir takes the genre seriously, and brings insight and intelligence to this project. He is also not afraid to be critical. In his introduction he puts superhero lore into the context of United States culture. He also discusses his rationale for excluding or including certain characters when writing the book. I consider this book an essential reference work for public and academic libraries. But its accessible writing, user-friendly organization, and treasure trove of information also make it a worthy book for any individual with an interest in interest in superheroes. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An excellent and recommended reference.

By Midwest Book Review

Superheroes have been a staple of American popular culture beginning with the advent of dime novels and pulp magazines. From the introduction of Superman and Batman during the grim years of the Great Depression, to today's multiplying legions of super heroes and heroines, this action/adventure fantasy genre continues to be wildly popular and with the advent of CGI special effects for television and movies, shows no signs of wearing out its welcome with the American public. Now John Kenneth Muir (the author of twenty-two reference books covering science fiction and horror on film and television) presents a newly updated and significantly expanded second edition of "The Encyclopedia Of Superheroes On Film And Television" that begins with an overview survey of the history of super heroes in film and television, then proceeds with an alphabetical encyclopedic series of 'filmographies' ranging from The Amazing Spider-Man to Zoom: The Academy for Superheroes. "The Encyclopedia Of Superheroes On Film And Television" is then enhanced with a two-page Conclusion by Muir, appendices on Conventions and Cliches; Incarnations; Memorable Ad-Lines; and The Best, Worst and Most Influential. This is followed by Notes, Bibliography, and an Index. "The Encyclopedia Of Superheroes On Film And Television" is a work of impressive dimensions and enthusiastically recommended for personal, community, and academic library reference collections.

A complete guide to 50 years of superheroes on screen. Each entry includes cast and credits, a format guide, individual episode descriptions, cross references, critical commentaries, as well as notations about arch-villains, gadgets, powers, and headquarters.

From School Library Journal
Grade 8 Up
In this arbitrary but riveting survey, Muir sandwiches entries on 71 superheroic individuals or teams from the past 50-plus years of broadcast media between a pithy historical overview and back matter that includes a compendium of plot clichés and several "Best/Worst" lists. Each main entry opens with a briskly opinionated introduction, then goes on to extensive cast lists, (usually) comments from other critics, and, for nearly all, plot summaries for every episode, released or not. Though the bibliography is barely adequate and the black-and-white publicity stills are disappointingly sparse, the sheer quantity of information, much of it difficult or impossible to find elsewhere, more than compensates for the book's limitations. Where else are readers going to find such depth of detail, not only on such major figures as Superman or Buffy the Vampire Slayer, but the likes of Captain Nice, Isis, and Saturday Night Live's Ambiguously Gay Duo? That being said, Muir has left major gaps in his discourse: he discounts the influence of The Matrix, slights most children's cartoons, gives women their due but has little to say about race or ethnicity in superherodom, and, perhaps in service to his argument that modern superheroes are a distinctively American phenomenon, passes over Hercules and Xena, heroes derived from folklore or invented in other countries, and anime characters. Still, this is a browser's delight, and a long-overdue update for Jeff Rovin's Encyclopedia of Superheroes (Facts On File, 1985; o.p.); but to keep their pop-culture resources balanced, libraries will also need at least one comprehensive movie guide, and such resources as Jonathan Clements and Helen McCarthy's The Anime Encyclopedia (Stone Bridge, 2001).
John Peters, New York Public Library
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From Booklist
This updated edition chronicles superheroes in film and on TV. Changes from the first edition include completion of shows like Angel and Mutant X and the addition of new films and shows like Hellboy and Heroes. A superhero is defined as a

character of extraordinary capabilities or powers who has a propensity to fight evil in all its forms, whether criminal, terrorist or demonic. Although coverage is extensive for the superheroes who are included from well-known characters like Batman or Wonder Woman to the lesser-known, like Aquaman, inclusion criteria seem uneven. Buffy the Vampire Slayer is here, but the Highlander is not. Extraterrestrial world-saver Superman is in, but extraterrestrial world-saver Dr. Who is out. Entries start with description and background of the hero. Live-action films are presented with reviewer comments and cast and crew. TV series also present reviewer comments and a description of the series. Episode guides include title, writer and director credits, and air dates as well as episode descriptions and guest casts. The audience for this work is TV, film, and comics fans. Annotations are readable, even humorous. A good addition to the pop-culture collection. --Jack O'Gorman "Riveting." --School Library Journal "Valuable...useful...recommended." --Choice "Coverage is extensive...a good addition to the pop-culture collection." --Booklist