

Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of *The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture Journal*. We are pleased to present more research that broadens our understanding of journalism's popular image beyond that of the reporter in Hollywood films (a subject that has received the brunt of scholarly attention to date).

Three of this issue's articles examine journalism's portrayal in media targeted predominantly at young people. Combining qualitative content analysis with survey research, Daxton R. Stewart's "Harry Potter and the Exploitative Jackals" studies how the negative depiction of journalists in the hugely popular *Potter* books may affect young readers' perceptions of the news media. Ashley Ragovin's "N is for News" focuses on Kermit the Frog's "News Flash" segments on television's *Sesame Street*. She demonstrates how the segments both reinforce and contradict the predominant image of journalists in popular culture.

Existing long before *Harry Potter* and *Sesame Street*, comic books offered archetypes for youngsters to admire. Paulette Kilmer's "The Shared Mission of Journalists and Comic Book Heroes" looks at three classic superheroes — Superman, the Fox, and Spider-Man — and shows how they embody journalism's noblest aspirations.

Last year, we issued a special call for manuscripts on the gay journalist in popular culture — GLBT characters have been surprisingly common in popular depictions of the media over the decades. We also have been inviting manuscripts that focus on the public relations profession and its practitioners. Carol Ames's "Queer Eye for the PR Guy in American Films 1937-2009" looks at both of those research areas. She draws upon queer

theory in examining how the portrayal of implicitly or explicitly gay PR practitioners has evolved from the era of the Hollywood Production Code to the present.

Finally, in our features section, *IJPC Journal* co-editor Joe Saltzman takes us back to the days of the ancient Greeks in “Herodotus as an Ancient Journalist.” Ancient historians have been accused of not worrying much about what was true or false, making up quotes, frequently relying on legend rather than fact, and often accepting idle rumor, malicious gossip, and hearsay as fact. That makes them sound more like tabloid journalists than historians. Saltzman reimagines Herodotus as the “father of journalism” rather than Cicero’s appellation, “the father of history,” in examining how Herodotus reported, researched, and wrote his *Histories*.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of *The IJPC Journal*, and as always, we invite your feedback and submissions.

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