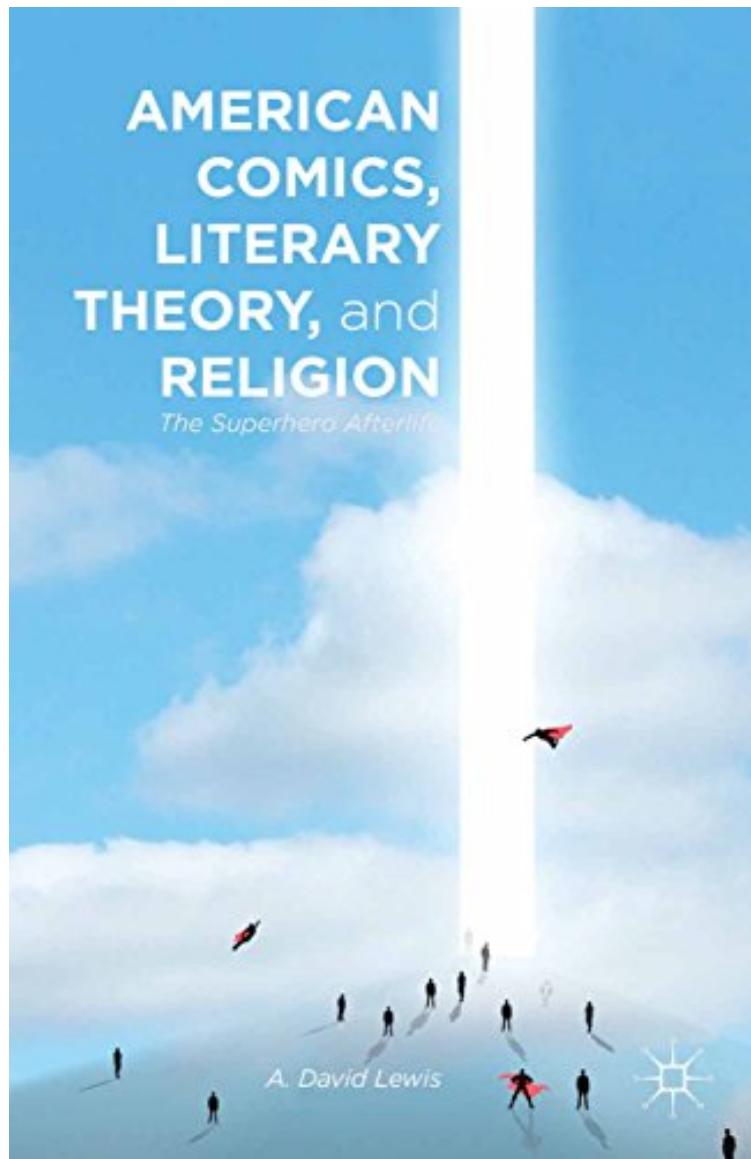


American Comics, Literary Theory, and Religion: The Superhero Afterlife

A. Lewis

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A. Lewis : American Comics, Literary Theory, and Religion: The Superhero Afterlife before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Comics, Literary Theory, and Religion: The Superhero Afterlife:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Definitely worth the read. By Scott A Gardner To echo the other reviews you'll find on this work, it is simply fantastic. As a religious academic comics are a bit outside my knowledge

base. It is only recently I became interested in the topic after picking up Chris Claremont's recent run on *Nightcrawler*. My main question dealt with Kurt Wagner's commitment to Catholicism and Marvel's portrayal of the afterlife. Though the comic run failed to meet my expectations it led me to wonder what academic work had been done in the field of Religion and Comics. After reading many pseudo-academic writings on the topic I thought the field without rigor. Then out of the blue... "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's A. David Lewis!" He was one of the first of many academic scholars I discovered who took this field seriously. *American Comics, Literary Theory and Religion* does more than just establish and systematize a new sub-genre, but adds to religious scholarship by challenging ideas of selfhood and religious engagement. What does it mean to be more than a unified self? And how does seeing ourselves in multiplicity actually lead to inter-religious dialogue. If I had anything to add or say that could have been expounded upon in this work it would have been nice to see a short discussion on Carl Jung's insights to religion, archetypes and his views of the multiplicity of selfhood. But this in no way detracts from the work Lewis has done but would only strengthen it. I highly recommend picking up this book, and I look forward to his future projects. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Two great things that go great together: Religion and pop culture collide in A. David Lewis's surprisingly accessible examination of heaven and hell, salvation and damnation in perhaps the most unexpected of superhero comics. From *Fantastic Four* to *Promethea*, Lewis traces the idea of the afterlife, our notions of selfhood, and nothing less than the meaning of life (and death) through the pages of a uniquely American genre.

Unlocking a new and overdue model for reading comic books, this unique volume explores religious interpretations of popular comic book superheroes such as the Green Lantern and the Hulk. This superhero subgenre offers a hermeneutic for those interested in integrating multiplicity into religious practices and considerations of the afterlife.

"Don't be fooled by the academic tone of the title. This book is captivating, insightful, and incredibly thought-provoking. Whether you're fairly new to the comics medium or have (like me) studied it all your life, you'll find that Lewis illuminates the subject in a light you've never before seen or considered, and it's delightfully revelatory." - Mark Waid, writer for *Fantastic Four*, *Daredevil*, *Superman: Birthright*, *Kingdom Come*, and *Thrillbent's Empire* "A unique and fascinating look into the metaphysics of the comic book world." - J.M. DeMatteis, writer of *Moonshadow* and *Brooklyn Dreams* "This is a beautiful and sophisticated analysis of the multiplex self in the mirror of the afterlives portrayed in the narratives and visual art of superhero comics. The positive message is clear. We are not who we think we are. Like the superheroes themselves, we each have a secret identity (or identities). The conscious ego or unitary self is a useful construction, but also an illusion. Lewis then goes further. He suggests that these multiplex selves imagined in fantastic fiction can help us with the real-world work of interreligious understanding and, indeed, of self-understanding. As such, these super-selves can become an important part of a new soul-making practice that will result in future selves and future stories in which to live and flourish. Our afterlives, it turns out, are not determined or decided. They are constantly being rewritten, redrawn, and seen anew. By us, as super." - Jeffrey J. Kripal, J. Newton Rayzor Professor of Religion, Rice University, USA and author of *Mutants and Mystics: Science Fiction, Superhero Comics, and the Paranormal* About the Author A. David Lewis is Adjunct Assistant Professor, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University, USA.