

Howard the Duck Vs. The Critic's Retrospective

From my time working on my paper about Howard the Duck was a wonderful learning experience from all sides. I remember applying to the class of rhetorical criticism thinking it would improve the way I can articulate my thoughts, translate, and structure them into a presentable manner. Not knowing the wild ride I would eventually get into. The chosen topic of my paper came from my love of Comic Books, specifically on the change of attitudes within the medium. Stories were in many cases light-hearted and silly, today's comic books hold no resemblance to yesterday's comic books.

A large part of my paper in its infancy was about the creator and author of Howard the Duck, Steve Gerber. He was an interesting man that had a lot to say about the publication and I went into a deep dive into the man's character. I wanted to focus more on the man and his creation, and as the paper kept going it gradually expanded in scope to more of a piece reflecting the entire history of comic books. Through my time working on the paper, I have gained a severe amount of information and an endless amount of respect for the genre. I never got bored, or tired of talking, learning, or reading about comics.

The research I conducted was largely due to my own volition, using data sites such as JSTOR. I had done research for other papers in the past, I thought I was well-equipped to complete this one. My professor did not think so as I needed to gather peer-reviewed sources, which I unfortunately was ill-equipped for. My ultimate savior was Allison Carr who had a session with the class to run down research techniques for this. I found her diagram that explained how the main topic exists in an inner shell, and the context exists in the outer shell helpful. It got me thinking differently when researching topics. Before her class session, I was afraid that since the topic of my paper is looking at juvenile and pop culture. That I would not

find anything relating to my topic, however, with a new way of researching using her diagram I was able to expand my way of thinking to explore other avenues relating to my topic. Instead of thinking about only comic books, or their companies, I looked at the surrounding period, and reviews from the time.

My argument was non-existent in the context of comic books. That of which is the century-long change of the medium. It shifted from looking at what was happening, to more of a through the ages what were comic books. The comic book genre became a variable, and the anchor to look at the past and identify the independents.

I remember at the time losing sleep how I was struggling to find peer-reviewed papers that I could use in my paper. My research was shifted due to my understanding of why scholarly articles were needed in the paper in the first place. I encountered several papers that were only focused on the diverse content of the material. Many looked at the racial, and sexual aspects of comic books. Separate from my argument I included them to get my paper merit on how hidden it is.