

Call for Papers: Toxic Masculinity in the Whedonverses

Co-editors Heather M. Porter and Michael Starr invite proposals or completed essays for an edited collection of scholarly works that aims to address issues of toxic masculinity in the Whedonverses. Toxic masculinity has become an increasingly prevalent term in contemporary popular and political discourse, used to describe a range of behaviours and performances of masculinity that cause harm to society and men themselves. Manifestations of Toxic masculinity can of course be found in all facets of popular culture, and the Whedonverses—in narrative, aesthetic and industrial terms—occupy a particularly contentious space in this regard and hence are ripe for further investigation.

Proposals should demonstrate not only a clear methodology and strong thesis but also a familiarity with prior and current conversations and publications concerning the Whedonverses; but also be prepared to debate and refute prior readings. The anticipated collection seeks to showcase a range of theoretical lenses; we are hence interested in a variety of topics as well as diverse disciplinary approaches. Though not prescriptive, it may be productive to consider the following list of possible topics:

- Toxic masculinity in Whedonverse TV/films/comics etc (*Buffy TVS/Angel/Firefly/Dollhouse/The Nevers/Avengers* etc).
- Toxic masculinity in the Whedonverse and associated representational/intersectional issues. (e.g., gender/sexuality/race/disability).
- Whedon and toxicity (issues of auteurism/celebrity/cult of personality/brand).
- Toxic fandom.
- Reappraising Whedonverse characters (e.g., Xander Harris/Topher Brink/ Dr. Horrible).
- The responsibilities of academia/fandom in confronting issues of toxicity.

Queries and Submissions:

Please send queries and abstracts (350-500 words) for proposed chapter-length original work to Toxicmasculinitybook@gmail.com. Proposals should be submitted no later than **June 1, 2023**. Selected contributors will be notified by July 15, 2023. We suggest but do not require that proposals include a working bibliography. Please provide in a separate document or in the body of the email a brief author biography and selected list of prior publications/conference presentations. We are currently discussing the book proposal with a publisher who is very interested in the collection, hence are working on a production timeline which would tentatively allow for a late 2024 publication date.