

# American culture and heroes

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Heroes are not men with capes or super powers as they are portrayed in American culture today. Heroes are people who transform compassion (a personal virtue) into heroic action (a civic virtue). In doing so, they put their best selves forward in service to humanity. A hero is as an individual or a network of people that take action on behalf of others in need, or in defense of integrity or a moral cause. Heroes are people who transform compassion (a personal virtue) into heroic action (a civic virtue).

In doing so, they put their best selves forward in service to humanity. A hero is as an individual or a network of people that take action on behalf of others in need, or in defense of integrity or a moral cause. Mike Dilbeck, [www.raproject.org](http://www.raproject.org), Response Ability Project, 2012 The Oxford American College Dictionary, (2002), e-book Ashford University Library, says that a hero is " a person, typically a man, who is admired for courage or noble qualifications. " A firefighter, police officer and a soldier (man or woman) would fall under this description of a hero.

Arthur Ashe said it best. " True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others? at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost. " Characteristics of a hero are:

**Courage:** A hero overcomes his fears and takes a challenge head on. There is not even a twinge of fear in the heroes heart.

**Virtuosity:** The key aspect of a hero's character.

**Sacrifice:** A quality that is unique from other virtues. A hero is willing to let personal comforts become indispensable for the higher cause and welfare of others.

1. Determination: The hero is unflinching in his or her determination and believes in his ability.
2. Focus: One of the most prominent qualities of a hero. They are put on this earth for one definitive motive.
3. Compassion: The true hero is empathetic, benevolent and shows compassion and tenderness to those in need.
4. Perseverance: This is what makes the hero special. Even when faced with failure, they continue to fight till they achieve success.
5. Dedication: Heroes are selfless and whole-heartedly dedicated to the task at hand.
6. Honesty: This forms the base of all of his or her efforts. This is what earns the hero respect.
7. Loyalty: The faithfulness and commitment to their cause is way beyond others.
8. Intrepidity: They have courage that is unshaken no matter what comes into their path. They are determined to fight their challenges to the end.
9. Conviction: A set of unshakable thoughts and beliefs which will not be altered.
10. Fortitude: A habit that encounters a dangerous deed that is unaltered and adopted with passive courage.
11. Responsibility: No matter what the scenario may entail, they take it with utmost sincerity and follow it to the conclusion.
12. Wisdom: The most desired quality, which must be possessed. Wisdom is an attribute that all heroes possess, be it a soldier, firefighter, or a police officer. A hero is not born, they are self-made.

These characteristics are what set a hero apart from. [www.personalitytutor.com/qualities-of-a-hero.html](http://www.personalitytutor.com/qualities-of-a-hero.html) In our American culture the media has changed the meaning of a hero.

Reality television has become a part of our everyday lives and has changed the way in which we perceive the true hero. The media is making it seem like everyone is a hero. In reality television, such as Survivor or The Great American Race, the media has made the person that completes the challenges a "hero". They play on the thoughts of Americans who want to believe. According to the media, someone surviving on this show is touted as a hero. An example of the appeal to reality television is the perceived novelty and value on real people experience and not actors. Reality television shows that the everyday person can succeed and do not have to be famous to do it.

Reality Television is not all bad. It shows people that anyone can do anything, giving the everyday white collar person hope. But it also tempts people to try things that they should never do without proper supervision. (Jack Ass) Given the time a family is apart, due to work, school, and other outside obligations, less time watching reality television and more family time is needed. Reality television is making just anybody a hero and not the people that actually deserve to be considered a hero. The real heroes are the people who fight for our freedom and our safety.

As stated in the book Teaching and Learning in the Age of Information, Tyner, Kathleen R. , Literacy in a Digital world. Teaching and Learning in the Age of Information. 1998 Ashford University Library, how literacy in America during the new information age has changed due to computers and the <https://assignbuster.com/american-culture-and-heroes/>

usage of doing all research from the point of websites, compared to the time when you had to do research by actually going to the library and doing research for the right books and then sitting down and taking notes and writing everything down by hand.

I believe that what this means is that by having the new information age and the reality television and the media that is portraying things as they want them to appear, people are not as literate as they once were. Literacy has sustained through the development of the Information Age over the past 25 years, Rassool, Naz, Literacy for Sustainable Development in the Age of Information, 1999, Ashford University Library e-book, this is true. People just don't have to work for it like they used to.

This once again falls back to where the people that actually deserve the credit do not get it and they are just put in the pool with everyone else and whoever is lucky enough to be picked on that particular day will be the one that is commended. In conclusion the way that people perceive a hero is all in how they live their everyday lives and what they believe in. If they believe the Survivor winner, Richard Hatch, is a hero then they are the very people that have changed the way that people perceive a hero.

## References

1. Hall, Alice, Viewers' Perceptions of Reality Programs, Communication Quarterly Vol. 54, No. 2, May 2006, pp 191-211. Mike Dilbeck,
2. www. raproject. org, Response Ability Project, 2012 Rassool, Naz, Literacy for Sustainable Development in the Age of Information, 1999, Ashford University Library e-book.

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4. Tyner, Kathleen R. , Literacy in a Digital world. Teaching and Learning in the Age of Information. 1998, Ashford University Library. [www.personalitytutor.com/qualities-of-a-hero.html](http://www.personalitytutor.com/qualities-of-a-hero.html)