

# There has been an awakening

Business



“ Comic books are for kids.

” “ You need to grow up and stop reading comics.” Believe it or not, I’ve heard both of those statements in my life. I grew up with comic books and a lot of pop culture. Marvel, DC, Star Wars, you name it. I love all of those things and then some.

I haven’t shrunk from showing it. I have cried watching the new trailer for “ Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens,” and I have-and I do not exaggerate-28 posters of various aspects of pop-culture. But as a kid, I grew up in an environment not so keen on comics and comic books. Even now, I have people who have been on my case about playing Magic or liking Star Wars. But nowadays, it’s less. In fact, more people have taken that culture in as their own.

We are in a new generation where kids are flocking out to the stores for Star Wars. Star. Wars. A saga that started in 1977 and now kids of today are hyped than ever for The Force Awakens. So what happened? First thing is the resurgence of the medium.

Comic books have been around since 18th Century Japan, and were popularized in the 1930s. However, comics didn’t explode until the likes of “ Action Comics #1” and “ Amazing Tales #1” began circulating. Then, comics just blew up since then, spawning countless story arcs and even reboots, such as DC’s New 52 and Marvel’s all-new Marvel NOW. Comics are now even bigger than ever, with TV series, video games and of course, movies. The comic book industry skyrocketed after the success of 1978’s “ Superman” and 1989’s “ Batman.

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" Here we are in 2015, with Marvel Studios dominating the game with both " Ant-Man" and box-office behemoth " Avengers: Age of Ultron" both circulating in stores. Comics are now some of the biggest things in the world. Fans flocked to the " Marvel's The Avengers," making it the first film to gross over \$200 million in its opening weekend. Never in all of human history has that opening ever been achieved. It's insane to think that comics would ever get to this point, isn't it? At one point, we saw comics as more of a kid's thing.

Another huge thing is the themes have matured over the years. Again with the comic analogy, comics at first were all about truth and justice. But now, things have changed. Characters tackle more mature subjects, while still having the same-lightheartedness that kids love. Take for instance, Captain America and Iron Man.

Two icons of Marvel Comics. They both stood for heroism and truth, always working together. Then, you have " Civil War": a story that divided the two heroes. It touches on dividing friendships and the ramifications that come from that. It's not afraid to go the extra mile and deal with very difficult topics that most other mediums wouldn't. Same thing with " Superman: Doomsday," dealing with death of the supposed immortal.

Even Pa Kent's death from heart failure is powerful. It shows that of all the things Superman could do, he can't save everyone. There are some things that even he can't save. But I know what you're thinking: what does this have to do with " Redefining a generation"? How does this relate to

awakening? And, for the longest time, I asked that too. Then, as I was planning this article, it hit me.

From Star Wars to Avengers and Superman to Guardians of the Galaxy, it's surprising how big these things have gotten. Raise your hand: who heard of the "Guardians of the Galaxy" before the movie came out? Now look at them: household names alongside the Avengers. I believe that it's because these aren't just drawings on a piece of paper. They are ideals to strive towards. They show us the best of what we can become.

Again using Superman as an example, he isn't just an overpowered sketch on paper. Superman is an all-powerful being who can move planets and do the impossible. Yes, he isn't supposed to be relatable. He is never meant to lose. His story is one of a god living among men.

It's about doing the right thing. Captain America is the same thing: a story of a man just doing what he feels is right. Numbers and figures don't matter if none of the characters are likable and have relatable motives. And that's why I say there has been an awakening. Everything that's popular isn't just aimed at one demographic; Star Wars is multi-generational now. A saga many of us were alive for (prequels do not exist.

At all). It's amazing to see this generation excited for the revival of pop-culture classic. Indeed, there has been an awakening...have you felt it?