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X-Men: the adventures of South African Fanboys and other tales of textual poaching

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore schoolboy fandom and identity politics in relation to the animated television text, the ‘X-Men’ which aired in the early post-apartheid years. The ‘X-men’ texts dealt with the oppression of and struggle by ‘mutants’ for their rights. Following the writings of De Certeau, Fiske, Jenkins and others about textual poaching and audience rewritings of texts, the research (through the use of focus groups and interviews) seeks to establish how primarily schoolboy audiences in Johannesburg in the mid- to late 1990s understood societal ills through the text, and constructed “imagined communities” through their rewritings of the text.