



AAEP and Arts Priori present the 2019 "Manuel Barkan Dissertation Award" Lecture

## Superheroes in the Classroom, Or: An Autoethnographic Account of Great Power, Responsibility, and Community in a Critical Media Pedagogy

Friday, March 29, 2019

12:30-3:30 pm

Sullivant Hall Room 141

1813 N. High Street

### Christopher Jeansonne, PhD Candidate

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**Bio:** Christopher Jeansonne is a PhD candidate in the Department of Arts Administration, Education, and Policy at The Ohio State University, specializing in film and media pedagogy. He also holds an MFA in Film from Ohio University. Chris' classroom based-media pedagogy research explores how individual, group, and cultural identities are cultivated and articulated through media. Before returning to doctoral work, Chris had worked in film and media production in New Orleans, he was the founding chair of an award-winning high school media arts program, and he had previously taught in Japan at both K-12 and university levels.

**Presentation Abstract:** Chris' dissertation is a qualitative educational action research that demonstrates how we can better engender agency in the media classroom through nuanced and transparent understandings of hierarchical relationships between students and teachers. In the university-level 'American Genres: Superheroes' class that served as a data collection site, the currently ubiquitous popular culture genre of superheroes—in which individual, interpersonal, and cultural power are an inherent narrative concern—served as a topical focus. The class incorporated student-centered critical pedagogy methods such as a negotiated syllabus in interrogating the genre, so that students became a community of 'heroes of their own learning.'

Most popular culture media pedagogy emphasizes a kind of 'critical media engagement' by giving students analytical tools through which to decode meanings and functions of texts. This study illustrates how we can balance an emphasis on hermeneutics by cultivating in students a 'reflexive media awareness' rooted in their personal and affective experience of media—this 'reflexive media awareness' leads to a mindful understanding of their 'media selves,' in dialogue with others and with the contemporary mediascape.

