

# A Study of Possible Improvements towards the Production Management of Heroic Films

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**Abstract.** This paper mainly focuses on three basic aspects of the production of the management of heroic films which are the current occasion, specific performances, and the overall expectations. The three basic aspects follow the thread of chronological order and present the transparency in production process. A range of issues in the production of heroic films are exposed to the public by looking at the response of audiences. Increasing negative ones have been shown on social media and rating websites, indicating that potential risk for the heroic film's producers is being obstinate. The paper will demonstrate the three stages of issues throughout the process of producing heroic films with methods of literary expression, comparison, and case-study. To closely analyze different masterpieces, comparison and case-study are chosen to assist the process by examining factors that may affect the overall performances. Innovation which reflects the changeable needs of the audiences in the markets is the most effective strategy considered to be noticed. Overall, the issues are identified as hinders in the way of achieving success while they may be solved by improving no matter the quality of scripts or the publicity of the projects.

## 1 Introduction

Whether real or mythical, heroic stories are popular to enduringly certain groups of people. The ideal model of “hero” was, in the earliest stages of history, introduced in the primitive epics of Gilgamesh, the Iliad, and the Norse sagas. At all times, in different parts of the world history, stories and myths have some differences but major similarities. Psychologically, people both ancient and modern times have the same eagerness admiring, even becoming the heroes. According to this nature, it is not surprising that many producers aim at heroic films to make profitability as they find it more appealing and time-tested option for the audiences than any other genres of films. This is because of the deep-rooted desire for humankind which triggers them to purchase the tickets to heroic films almost every time as long as the films are on the screen. In addition, the heroism first appeared in Ancient Greek mythology and developed into historical figures over the centuries. It can be shown in the famous painting of Napoleon Bonaparte—Napoleon Crossing the Alps (Napoleon at the Saint-Bernard Pass) 1801, depicting his glorified image on a horse. It is reasonable for artist to adapt the mythical images into artwork but with considerable exaggeration to achieve dramatic effect. For instance, the most proper example in contemporary cinema is *Braveheart* in 1995 directed by Mel Gibson. The content of the film was based on the true story of William Wallace and amazingly polishes the story to glow [1]. Even if the initial plot was not entirely heroic, the

film itself makes the historical details more glamorous to convey heroism, which often work for audience to pay the bill from the perspective of business. Not only in Western culture the heroism proves itself as a symbol of identity but also does in eastern culture, such as *Nazha* and *Monkey King* which originate from traditional Chinese myths. Producers need a well-organized system for assisting to develop from the original concept of heroism into a completed product.

In the following passages, the system will be introduced and evaluated through case-study, comparison, and literature review. Generally, the production management of the heroic films can be improved by the quality of the scripted ideas and the publicity information that releasing out to the potential viewers. First of all, to verify the theme that is being discussed, the previous research and literature will be reviewed. This step also provides the reader with a framework for the management method of heroic films. As such, the next step takes the lead to explain the details of the method, introducing the benefits and drawbacks of the current process of film production. A multitude of reflective outcomes also being applied to the real picture of the cinema industry. After explaining the method of production, several chosen film examples will be demonstrated to closely analyse with variety of aspects including comparison of differences and similarities. Disadvantages and related problems will also be discussed due to the mentioned comparison, as well as the outcomes of the origin issue.

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## **2 Existing research & current production managements**

### **2.1 Popular culture**

Before discussing the production managements, the conceptual knowledge of popular culture matters. Almost every step for people to pay the tickets to heroic films has a relationship with the popular culture. Popular culture represents the trendy world needs that costs much time, energy, and money of individuals, incorporating with actions [2]. Accordingly, only the public aware the existence and popularity, which means the films do have some value to be measure. When comes to cinema, people tend to pay more attention to the popular films which everybody around them is talking about. The overwhelming prevalence will to some extent affect people's judgments towards a film they have never watched. The heroes in action cinema are constantly exposed between nationhood and masculinity [2]. As such, the producers of the heroic films utilize the weakness of humanity to embed more trendy and traditional identities into the management. This situation can be seen in the Avengers, a classic American heroic movie, which created a multitude of heroes on behalf of basic masculinity and nationalism. One of the most representative is Captain America who speaks for the strongest masculine and nationalism amongst all the characters in the avengers. Although he may fail to be the most popular character, the initiative spirit in him always remains the strongest and most classic in American heroic culture. People's perception of what is created and displayed through Hollywood movies is also more likely to be perceived as "American version", like the depiction of acts of heroism in American action movies [3].

### **2.2 The main method of management**

Cultural industries play an essential character in the ideological structure by disseminating and constructing features [4]. Regarding the method of management, the business of producing matters. No matter managing the content or managing the finance, theoretically, the process provides relatively high efficiency for the final project. From three basic definitions, any management could be dynamically achieved. The level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a motivational theory, origins from the elevated stage of Needs (deprivation feelings) to stage of Wants (how people communicate their needs) to stage of Demands (when backed by buying), intuitively shows the process of changing from Deficiency Needs to Being Needs. As the pyramid demonstrated below, only the physiological needs have being met, after ascending, the highest stage (self-actualization) will be touched through a variety of ways.

Although this theory seems abstract as it originally developed from conceptual reflection, it plays an important role in understanding human motivation and various of information because they are considerably ignored amongst economic models that the incentives of human, eliminating principles of homo oeconomicus [5]. Through entertainment is one of them because a sense of connection can be given when someone is getting closer to and benefiting from it, such as watching a film. Interest toward the contents always the deep-rooted desire for people to pay attention to the films. However, the exposure rate of a film is essential at the same time. The potential audience first has to notice the existence of the film and then recognized it as a masterpiece. Accordingly, improvement through the quality of content together with the sufficient amount of publicity are the musts when managing the production of a film. Nowadays, many producers, especially those who aim to shoot heroic films, choose to use this method to expand the popularity among potential audiences.

### **2.3 The benefits and drawbacks**

Using publicity to promote the reputation of films is necessary, but mostly only in the short term. When films are released, at the post-production stage, the publicity is essential. For most publicities, they aim to generate the whole program to impart the main points and objectives of the film to audiences which lets them to scratch the surface of it. The other type, instead, present more delicate concepts and utilities for shifting the trends in the industry. This type will lead the fashion and encourage consumers to purchase their products without hesitation in the long term due to the formation of brand loyalty throughout the process. Even if this management method theoretically may bring benefits, adding reputation and value to the producing process of films, some drawbacks could still be inevitable. After using advertising and publicity, some individuals may respond negatively, claiming that the films are too commercial to appreciate. Then the films will be rated with low ranks because of the commercial appeal, leading to the reduction of potential audiences. Moreover, the reputation of directors and producers, to some extent, may be eliminated because of the overwhelming exposure before releasing.

## **3 Problem analysis**

### **3.1 The overall performance in the field**

As mentioned in the literature review, the most effective way for producers to create deep and natural connections of their audiences and their films, is to improve the contents and increase the exposure rate of the films. With the development of the production management, in the mass

cinema, heroic films have been generated into a more popular genre. To be specific, from 1977 to 1997, the average length of heroic films increased 8 minutes in total. Relating to the products linked with heroic films, the sales these days have become increasingly prevalent, especially amongst the youth [6]. Looking at a wider range, not only heroic films but also other genres, do have the ability to impart information and experience to the audiences as saying even though the film does not exactly reflect reality, it provides an occasion to introduce concepts or norms that come closer to it [7]. These heroic films present as entertaining and engaging examples for audiences, especially teenagers, because of their special characteristic which can easily affect teenagers' life style. In the following context, two specific films will be introduced and discussed focusing on each production management method. A comparison between the production management of method of heroic films and other forms will be explained.

### 3.2 Case-study

To discuss about the management, the problems can be more intuitive and simpler by taking a closer look to one to two films. For the producers, the more money and reputation can the heroic films bring to them, the better. Thus, it is not surprising that they would tend to put more efforts on publicity, such as advertising and marketing. Specifically discussing about the method, details needed to be paid attention. Accordingly, some related films will be introduced as examples to assist analyzing the production management process. Take Avengers: Infinity War and Wonder Woman 1984 as pairing examples, they are both heroic films while one originally produced by Marvel and the other produced by D.C.

When Marvel started to publicize the final film for the Avengers, they had already seen the high expectation from the fans and other potential audiences because of the positive reviews through the previous three. As such, during the production, the producers decided to design a completely different version comparing to the other three films. They declared that no one will know about the ending until they watch it, and they did. At the time, besides the delicate drama plots and the mature special effects, this action was smart enough to let the audience later on be willing to offer great response to the film, which was satisfying and the films turned out to be a culmination one. Besides, the budget also counted as a problem for the producers at that time. One of the producing partners, Kevin Feige claimed that they had cooperated delicately with screenwriters to shoot the Endgame scenes one right after another as soon as the scene is finished by screenwriters due to the savings problems.

During the production, savings (budgets) are pivotal for a film group. Without enough savings, the whole program could be a detrimental investment as almost every step needs financial assistance to move on. Additionally, the screenwriters' decisions also matter because they have to pay attention to the script, and this helps them to know the

schedule. As such, they made a decision that is smart and efficient.

When producing Wonder Woman 1984, the situation was different. Unlike Avengers, describing a multitude of heroic characters, this film only focuses on one hero who is a female, played by Gal Gadot. In this film, during World War I, the main character fought off the Greek god Ares and Imperial Germany. Unlike Avengers' team, the producers of Wonder Woman 1984 first cooperate with Smithsonian Magazine:

In early 2017, the Wonder Woman 1984 team reached out to the Smithsonian—which hosted the crews of other big-name films, like Captain America: The Winter Soldier, Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen, and the second Night at the Museum. After reviewing the script by Smithsonian, Wonder Woman 1984 got done for their detailed schedule.

Besides cooperating with magazine, this team equipped with a female filmmaker-Patty Jenkins, who has a high dignity and self-esteem. The film by the square was trying to show a heroine's story which makes a right choice of director for them because more female audiences, especially women who has feminism tendency, will be more likely to pay for it as they are willing to appreciate the cinematic language from a female director. Psychologically, this could be seen as an ambiguous encouragement and identity amongst female potential audiences.

### 3.3 Comparable to other forms

In the cinema industry, different genres of films play their unique roles in the market. Biopics, fantasy, adventure, sci-fi, and so on... can be considered as popular types these days. In order to publicize, numerous communications are necessary. Realizing that every act of communication always contains interests especially communication through mass media such as film as one of the products of pop culture, it is worth to say that every act of communication is a form of non-language 'stuff' that can be ideological, political, economic, and so forth.

For Biopics or historical films, the management method towards for the most of the time is to investigate and interview the related persons and then release the interview online to remind the potential audience information about the show. No matter to what extent this would intrigue audiences, producers will complete this step before or after putting the films on screen as it can be considered as a necessity during the production of biopics and historical films. In addition, the method of advertising used on fantasy and sci-fi films can be categorized in the same part. If the producers have the intention to publicize these films, they usually would pay some artists to design the exclusive customization for the elements in the film. For example, Harry Potter has countless peripheral products such as wizard hat, sorting hat, college badges, and flying broomsticks. As long as the film fans have seen these exclusive products, they are likely to purchase for their interests. In other words, these products somehow may be utilized as advertisements for those potential audiences to attract them to watch the films.

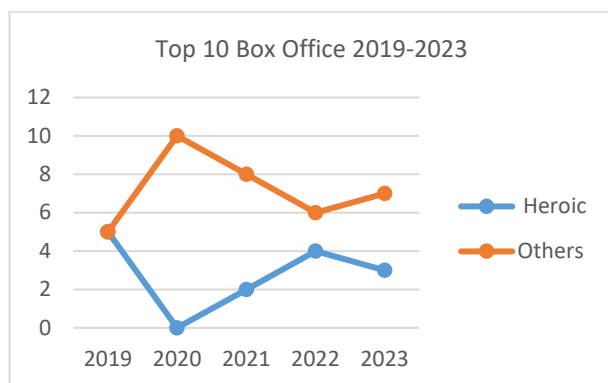
Unlike biopics and historical, adventure and heroic films, generally speaking, do not have the certain characteristics to

interview as the characters are mostly fictional. However, similarly to fantasy and sci-fi films, adventure and heroic opportunities to explore more advertising on exclusive platforms and characters. For instance, the team can separate a part of the budget to ask bloggers to share and repost information about their films on social media, which may efficiently spread messages and gain more attention. Furthermore, using prestigious directors and famous actors, to a large degree, may have positive effects on attracting audiences in the short term. Christopher Nolan's Batman films could be reckoned as a typical example. This film, which played by Christian Bale is portrayed differently significantly than the 1966 television series character directed by Adam West due to the further law challenging possibility Nolan's version had demonstrated. According to Batman's unique story and his special characteristics, along with the shooting style of Nolan, this version is praised for depicting a Byronic hero.

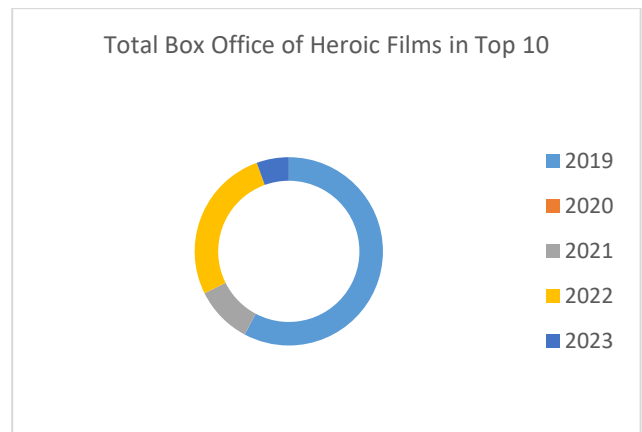
### 3.4 Disadvantages and problems

Having said that, the production management on heroic films is based on the publicities and advertisements on social media by spreading various of related information. Although this seems effectively bring the films into wider range of social impacts and along with earning multitude of viewers, the side effects of this method are somehow more of an inevitable problem. After being exposed too much around people's daily lives, the influence will probably be the opposite. Passengers would start to get annoyed by the advertised posters and even the film serial fans may begin to question the quality of it. Meanwhile, the image of the film producers would become less interesting and attractive when people mention it later on. Another problem would be the lack of interaction with the potential audiences. Even if some action such as creating a topic section for the films through social media, the interaction is not as adequate as the publicity which had been done. This will cause isolation between the heroic films and audiences, besides, the experience feeling after leaving the cinema will depreciate.

### 3.5 Current occasion



**Fig. 1.** Top 10 Box Office 2019-2023 (Picture credit: Original)



**Fig. 2.** Total Box Office of Heroic Films in Top 10 (Picture credit: Original)

Considering the current trend of heroic films, box office always the best choice for analyzing the popularity. As Figure 1 and Figure 2 shows, the best performance of heroic films appeared in 2019 and after that, the number of heroic films appearing in top 10 plummeted in 2020 when the Covid-19 came around. Similarly, the total box office of heroic films in top 10 peaked in 2019 then dramatically dropped to zero in 2020. There were fluctuations during the period of 2021-2023 but the number never increased back to 2019's. It can be seen that heroic films have fallen out of the fashions over years but still share a place in the industry with medium influence.

## 4 Overall suggestions and expectations

### 4.1 What for media to do next

For the mass media, rearranging the structure of the industry should be the priority, which the box office had shown the trend of increasing other genres of films to the top. Media generally includes television, radio, books, magazines, and the internet. In each small section of media, the main supervisors should be relatively genuine when reporting information to the potential receivers. Even if there are always latent rules within the industry which sometimes considered to be shortcuts, remaining right-minded and rational may be the fastest way to accomplish tasks. Once most people in the industry eager for success through shortcuts, arguments and divisions occur. This will only reduce the efficiency and innovation, especially in media companies. Since heroic films now have to share top box office with other forms of films, media should pay more attention to heroic films with high quality to ensure that this field not to be overly decadent. Accordingly, elements in the industry will be increasingly diverse, which is beneficial in the long run because it may develop comprehensively—having considered that, contributors in the mass media should put efforts into building a

comprehensive industry including high-quality heroic films and balance the proportion of each genre in the market.

#### 4.2 What for enterprises to do next

Generally, managements towards films arise mechanisms with bureaucratic characteristic, encouraging authors to determine fashionable genres. It presents theoretical views that enjoying prevalence engagements in order to use a conventional medium [8]. Thus, enterprises need to be aware of the political party who is taking control the examiner of content, preventing the banning of sensitive information in films. For enterprises who want to make more successful films, they have to have enough good scripts in heroic films to support the base of the initial and identify the trends through social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Before making the films, enterprises should first discover the trends amongst their potential audiences on social media, which can be identified as a type of risk management. Having the information about trendy topics, then producers are far more likely to select the proper content from millions of possible scripts to shoot films. Furthermore, enterprises should also humanize the films by collaborating and innovating with other forms of entertainment. For instance, the images of superheroes can be painted on Starbucks' bottles to sell. Thus, the impression that left for audiences will surge to a certain level then formed a strong loyalty among those film fans and meanwhile develop the coffee drinkers into the potential audience for the film, which is better both sides of one's bread. That is to say, during the post-production and after releasing the films, enough publicity and latent advertising is required for guaranteeing the exposure. Generally, all the enterprises have to do is to maintain the trendy information, search high quality contents and knot their films with other entertainment to keep enough exposure.

#### 4.3 The overview for individuals

For individuals, they should be aware of the potential risks of being overwhelmed with exclusive products after or before watching the films. The behaviors of consumers can be changeable due to factors such as technology, fashion, lifestyle and the overall trends [9]. Most exclusive products do not provide adequate values which are overrated, the only reason of their existence is to draw individuals' attention to become the potential customers. Moreover, if individuals as film fans, they can create connection with their loved characters. Following film production companies and actors on social media, providing feedback, and offering constructive criticism online. These are effective ways that individuals should do to help their appreciated heroic films grow. Once the producers or actors have received, the next

volume of films have the opportunity to be produced on higher levels. In addition, individuals can also rate films on social media such as Rotten Tomatoes. Rating websites can be considered as a self-monitoring scale. This was utilized to quantitative analysis the range of influence towards individuals in certain groups [10]. Therefore, it can be concluded that the individuals should act in the same direction to improve the heroic film production better by offering suggestions and meanwhile avoiding over-consuming the exclusive products.

### 5 Conclusion

For literary expression, the work emphasized the previous research which had been conducted in this field, to determine the subsequent direction will be discussed. To closely analyse different masterpieces, comparison and case-study are chosen to assist the process by examining various factors that may affect the overall performances. Regarding the matching solutions will be the improvements made in the process. Overall, the issues are identified as hinders in the way of achieving success while they may be solved by improving no matter the quality of scripts or the publicity of the projects. Furthermore, some personal overall suggestions and expectations through the production method are given by different groups including individuals to end the work. However, the general responses from the audiences towards the performances of the films cannot be guaranteed due to a range of external factors that are not in control. In conclusion, the issues are identified as hinders in the way of achieving success while they may be solved by improving no matter the quality of scripts or the publicity of the projects. To conclude, the release of heroic films can be well organized by certain management methods during the post-production. Using publicity to expose the films could be considered as an effective managing strategy while it needs to be assisted by a form of interaction with audiences. For now, after the pandemic, due to some uncontrollable factors, the current focus in the industry no longer be heroic films but they still necessarily own value to be improved. Therefore, individuals, film companies and media itself should pay a part of attention to heroic films, contributing in their ways to raise heroic films' popularity to a valid level.

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