In this book, heroism experts George R. Goethals and Scott T. Allison explore how the romantic conception of heroes is constructed, both in real life and in our heads.

Here is an excerpt from the Introductory chapter:

“We adopt an approach that we call the romance of heroes. Merriam-Webster defines romance as an emotional attraction, or special quality or feeling that comes from a person, place, or thing. The verb form of romance is to exaggerate or invent detail. This book explores these processes as they operate in our human perception of heroism. We assume that people are motivated to actively construct reality from incomplete information. There is a long history of theory and research in social perception and social cognition to support this idea.”

“We also assume, based on our own research, that people are motivated to have heroes (Allison & Goethals, 2011). Our contention in this book is that our love of heroes is so strong that we could call it a romantic longing. Merriam-Webster reminds us that this longing is a strong emotional attraction that may cause mental exaggeration or invention. Our desire and drive to designate people as heroes may be subject to distortion and to motivated perception under conditions of uncertainty. We’ll also explore how this tendency to exaggerate or invent in response to strong motives can contribute to our construction of villains as well as heroes.”

Looking at the dichotomy of heroism and villainy, the authors offer insights into Donald Trump’s ascension to the US presidency, particularly detailing the correspondence between the needs of the US public and the promises the former reality TV star made in reply.

Goethals and Allison also consider how three highly charismatic men dramatically and fundamentally changed American society in the mid-20th century — Martin Luther King, Jr., Elvis Presley, and Muhammad Ali, called here The Three Kings.

This exciting and innovative book explores how charisma and human needs create romantic images of individuals as heroes and villains. For researchers and students of psychology and leadership, this is a fundamental text on the creation of both genuine heroes and false idols.

This book is now available for purchase at Amazon.com.
The human journey is brimming with opportunities for growth and development. This volume, crafted superbly by a talented group of young student-scholars at the University of Richmond, explores the myriad ways that human beings have evolved to become extraordinary heroes.

There are two types of heroic transformation. The first type refers to the process by which people undergo the significant change and growth necessary to become heroes. This transformation is a personal metamorphosis that often results from setback, transgression, and suffering.

The second type of heroic transformation refers to the hero’s ability to transform society. Once personally transformed, the hero is in a position to make her mark on society. “Transformed people transform people,” as Richard Rohr has said.

Most hero journeys feature both of these types of transformations. The heroes profiled in this book who have undergone heroic transformations include Audrey Hepburn, Susan B. Anthony, Thurgood Marshall, Muhammad Ali, Eleanor Roosevelt, Daenerys Targaryen, Dexter Morgan, Frodo Baggins, Bruce Wayne, and many more.

This book is now available at Amazon.com.

“YOU’LL BE TRANSFORMED AFTER ABSORBING HOW THESE HEROES TRANSFORMED HUMANITY.” – Professor Robert A. Giacalone, John Carroll University

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Heroic Transformation: How Heroes Change Themselves and The World

Edited by Scott T. Allison

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The Metamorphosis of the Hero: What it is, How it Happens, Why it’s Important

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Chapter 31. The List That Saved a Thousand Lives: Oskar Schindler’s Heroic Transformation During World War II

Allyson S. Maner
This book explores the heroes and villains of an entire generation of Americans — the Millennial generation, defined as people born between 1982 and 2000.

Authored by Millennial students at the University of Richmond, *Heroes and Villains of the Millennial Generation* is based on a survey of 215 Millennials across the United States who were asked to list their heroes, and their villains.

To our surprise, a large number of people were listed as both heroes and villains.

These complex individuals are the focus of this book. They are: Kanye West, Kim Kardashian, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, parents, teachers, Edward Snowden, Batman, Mother Teresa, Severus Snape, and Mark Zuckerberg.

The questions that interested us were:

- In what ways are these individuals heroes?
- In what ways are they also villains?
- Why did these individuals appear on lists of heroes and also on lists of villains?
- What psychological processes are involved in perceptions of good and evil?

*Heroes and Villains of the Millennial Generation* provides an analysis of Millennials' views of heroism and villainy, drawing from current research on heroism science. The book is now on sale at Amazon.

“A compelling analysis of the heroic values of an entire generation.”
— Professor Robert A. Giacalone, Ray Smiley Chair in Business Ethics and Director of the Ginn Institute for Social Responsibility at John Carroll University.

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Heroic Humility: What the Science of Humility Can Say to People Raised on Self-Focus

March 29, 2018

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To become truly great, one has to stand with people, not above them.
—Charles de Montesquieu

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
—Philippians 2:3–4

In this age of selfies and corporate scandals, the need for humility is pressing. This book entitled HEROIC HUMILITY offers a synthesis of research and theory on humility and heroism. It articulates a vision of heroic humility — humility of such great depth that it inspires others.

Humility has three parts: an honest self-appraisal (including an attitude that one is teachable), modest self-presentation, and an orientation to build others up and not put them down. Moreover, humility can be learned. People who embody heroic humility not only rise to moments of great humility, but practice it and emerge from frequent tests of their humility throughout life.

Thus, this book likens the formation of a humble character to a hero’s journey, with a “call,” a journey through challenges and temptations, a descent into one or more abysses, and a redemption.

With an impressive array of examples—such as Mother Teresa, Malala Yousafzai, and Abraham Lincoln — the book illustrates that no two heroes’ journeys are identical. Readers are challenged to embark on their own journey of heroic humility in their work, service, and personal lives.

Heroic Humility is authored by Everett L. Worthington, Jr., and Scott T. Allison. It will be published by the American Psychological Association, and is now available for purchase.
The focus of this new book is on how power, principles, and processes influence the way that sexuality exerts an influence on leadership and followership.

This book asks two questions: Why do unarguably intelligent and successful leaders put themselves into situations in which their sexuality will lead to their downfall?

And why are we, as members of the constituency, continually surprised by these revelations? Shouldn’t we expect it by now?

Although the question of why rich and powerful men (we are not being sexist here; it is more often men than women) risk their careers by engaging in illicit sexual activity is an interesting one, we suggest that the connection between leadership and sexuality is much more important, complex, and broad than the phenomenon of a sex scandal.

Sexual leadership can be viewed as operating at both macro- and micro-levels. Issues related to sexual leadership come into play when a nation decides in favor or against an abstinence-only policy with regard to sexual education, the Supreme Court rules in favor of gay marriage, or a husband and wife decide whether to try a new sexual position.

Sexual leadership also comes into play in grey and black markets. What leadership dynamics are involved in recruiting, motivating, and managing women who work as strippers, or as prostitutes? The purpose of this edited volume is to explore the largely ignored relationship between sexuality and leadership.

*Leadership and Sexuality* is published by Elgar and is now available for purchase.

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Scott T. Allison and Olivia Efthimiou

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Offering a holistic take on an emerging field, this edited volume examines how heroism manifests, is appropriated, and is constructed in a broad range of settings and from a variety of disciplines and perspectives.

Highlighting some of the most pressing issues in today’s world—including genocide, unethical business practices, bystanderism, whistleblowing, and the global refugee crisis this book applies a critical psychological perspective in synthesizing the social construction of heroism and wellbeing.

The lead editor, Olivia Efthimiou, is a rising star in the field of heroism science. Also editing this volume are Scott T. Allison and Zeno Franco.

This book is now available for purchase on Amazon.

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Scott T. Allison, Zeno E. Franco

Definition, Synthesis and Applications: Propositions for Future Research in the Study and Practice of Heroic Wellbeing
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