

Real-life superheroes

Squeegeeman



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Who? A "mass do-gooder" who vows to rid New York of both crime and grime. His superhero weapon of choice? A squeegee.

Why? Claiming to have been born with "Super-squeegee abilities", Squeegeeman not only fights crime, but also goes on hospital visits, plants trees and collects money for charity. He claims that when someone walks down a clean street in New York or makes it home without getting mugged, they have him to thank, which kind of steals credit away from the city street-cleaners and the NYPD.

Movie hero equivalent: WALL•E, the only movie character to equal Squeegeeman's superhuman dedication to cleaning and tidying.

Real-life superheroes

Entomo, the Insect Man of Naples

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Who? This Italian hero claims a near-death experience connected him to "a spiritual plane of existence involving insects".

Why? Entomo lists his superpowers as sharpened senses, agility and an insect-like psychic ability he calls 'parallelogram' - apparently this helps him to establish "a specific psychological/physical profile only based on tiny, almost insignificant details". Entomo battles criminals as well as corrupt politicians, and he even has his own superhero catchphrase: "Hear my buzz, fear my bite: I inject justice". Catchy.

Movie hero equivalent: Spider-Man, who also developed creepy-crawly superpowers of agility and a special 'spidey sense'.

Real-life superheroes

Terrifica

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Who? A guardian fighting for sobriety, chastity and the way home for drunk, vulnerable females in need of protection from lusty men.

Why? Like a disapproving parent in a costume, Terrifica patrols bars and parties in New York late at night defending inebriated women from lecherous guys looking to take advantage while armed with pepper spray, a camera and Smarties (to keep her energy levels up). Curiously, she even has her own arch-nemesis, Fantastico, a 'supervillain' lothario who dresses in velvet and skulks around bars trying to pick up defenceless women.

Movie hero equivalent: Buffy the Vampire Slayer, who also rescued damsels in distress from preying monsters and predators.

Real-life superheroes

Zetaman

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Who? A self-confessed nerd who adopted a costume and name to be more like the superheroes in his favourite comics.

Why? While Zetaman tries to steer clear of actual crime-fighting ("I guess it sounds kind of less heroic, but I don't want to die"), he arms himself with a collapsible baton, a stun gun, an air horn and a mobile phone just in case. The most important items in his arsenal, however, are blankets, gloves, socks and sandwiches which he hands out to the men and women who are forced to live on the streets of his home town Portland, Oregon.

Movie hero equivalent: Superman, who shares Zetaman's humanitarian attitude and his chest-based insignia.

Real-life superheroes

Angle-Grinder Man

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Who? A costumed vigilante who fights the system by offering a free wheel-clamp removal service for frustrated motorists in the UK.

Why? Rebelling against what he considers to be oppressive measures such as congestion charges, CCTV and speed cameras, Angle-Grinder Man takes a stand against "arrogant" politicians by providing wheel-clamp aid to persecuted vehicle owners in Kent and London (at weekends). His website lists his mobile number for such emergencies, presumably because no one has access to a giant Angle-Grinder signal light to shine in the sky.

Movie hero equivalent: V from V For Vendetta, another British vigilante who fights against a corrupt government.

Picture courtesy of [Angle-Grinder Man](#)

Real-life superheroes

Master Legend

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Who? A costumed crime-fighter who claims to have psychic abilities, as well as powers bestowed to him by a voodoo queen.

Why? The daddy of superheroes, Master Legend has been thwarting criminals for over a decade and the local sheriff in his hometown of Winter Park, Florida has even confirmed that the masked hero has helped with many arrests. With his own means of transport (the Legend Cycle) and armed with his Master Blaster personal cannon (a spud gun), this old defender shows no sign of hanging up his tights any time soon.

Movie hero equivalent: Professor Charles Xavier from X-Men who also has psychic powers (minus the silver body armour).

Picture courtesy of [Master Legend](#)

Real-life superheroes

Superbarrio

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Who? A Mexican hero who takes a realistic approach to fighting crime and corruption: by organising labour rallies and filing petitions.

Why? Donning a red-and-yellow costume, complete with wrestler's mask, Superbarrio is a champion for the working class and homeless of Mexico City. His work protecting low-income neighbourhoods by leading protests and challenging court decisions has resulted in the hefty campaigner becoming a folk legend – he even had a giant-size statue erected in his honour and once met with Fidel Castro.

Movie hero equivalent: Nacho Libre, the tubby Mexican wrestler who also has a secret identity.

Picture courtesy of Bernardo Bolaños (via [Wikipedia](#))

Real-life superheroes

Dark Guardian

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Who? Criminals of New York beware! This highly-trained martial artist is "dedicated to making the world a better place".

Why? Despite going through some costume changes in the past, Dark Guardian is a committed superhero who claims to have helped the police in apprehending various drug dealers and tracking down an illegal gambling den. Unlike most of his other superhero colleagues, he does not keep his true identity secret – his real name is Chris Pollack. Dark Guardian sounds better though.

Movie hero equivalent: Batman, the Dark Knight, as another hero of the night fighting against injustice.

Picture courtesy of [Dark Guardian](#)

Real-life superheroes

Citizen Prime

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Who? A recently retired superhero who fought crime in \$4000 body armour and helped to found the Worldwide Heroes Organization.

Why? A financial executive by day, Citizen Prime would patrol the streets clad in a helmet, breastplate, pads and codpiece and was also particularly involved in his local community, often visiting youth centres and schools. News of his retirement was met with much mourning among the real-life superhero community, although criminals in his area presumably rejoiced.

Movie hero equivalent: Robocop, who wore similar armour and shared his attitude towards promoting good citizenship.

Picture courtesy of [Citizen Prime](#)

Real-life superheroes

Death's Head Moth

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Who? Strikes fear into criminals with sinister imagery and a scary name. Probably doesn't do many school visits.

Why? Armed with 'moth-a-rangs' (specially made metal throwing ninja stars shaped like moths) and a dark, brooding attitude, Deaths Head Moth fights crime in Norfolk, Virginia and is a well-known name in the superhero community, often teaming up with other heroes and being an active member of the Great Lakes Heroes Guild.

Movie hero equivalent: Rorschach, the cynical anti-hero in Watchmen who has an attitude as fearsome as his fighting skills.

Picture courtesy of [Death's Head Moth](#)

Real-life superheroes

Tothian

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Who? Dispensing with the costume and novelties, Tothian focuses on the most important part of being a superhero: fighting crime.

Why? Having served five years in the Marine Reserves, Tothian has the discipline, as well as the physical capabilities, to treat crime-fighting as a serious calling. Claiming that martial arts is only one aspect of the training required to be a superhero (he also lists law, criminology, forensics and first aid, among others), this patrolling defender uses his special expertise to prevent crime and ensure the safety of the residents in his hometown, New Jersey.

Movie hero equivalent: Steven Seagal in every one of his movies. He has the combat skills and mental attitude to take criminals down.

Picture courtesy of [Tothian](#)

Real-life superheroes

Captain Prospect

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Who? Founder of the Capital City Super Squad, a team of superheroes who help to protect and serve Washington DC.

Why? Along with his superhero colleagues Nice Ninja, Spark, Siren, Justice, DC Guardian and The Puzzler, Captain Prospect helps the people of Washington DC by undertaking safety patrols, contributing to community events and organising fundraisers, as well as feeding the homeless. This patriotic do-gooder even chose the colours and design of his costume to reflect the DC flag.

Movie hero equivalent: Captain America, the leader of The Avengers, who will be starring in his own movie due out in 2011.

Picture courtesy of SuperSquad.org

Real-life superheroes

Mr Xtreme

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Who? Part of the Xtreme Justice League, a team of costumed superheroes who tackle violent crime on the streets of San Diego.

Why? Using a camouflage mask with bug-shaped mesh eye-holes to keep his identity secret, Mr Xtreme patrols the streets late at night armed with a stun-gun, pepper spray and handcuffs in order to apprehend criminals as well as promote a positive message to youngsters and raise public awareness about local crime. By day, however, Mr Xtreme is merely a mild-mannered security guard. Presumably, he takes the mask off then.

Movie hero equivalent: David Dunn (Bruce Willis) from *Unbreakable*, a security guard who discovers he has superhero-like abilities.

Real-life superheroes

Shadow Hare

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Who? A caped crusader who fights crime on the streets of Cincinnati with the ominous symbol of a demonic rabbit on his chest.

Why? Declaring to "see the shadows of shadows", this costumed hero claims to have stopped "many evil doers, such as drug dealers, muggers, rapists and crazy hobos with pipes". Despite being a trained martial artist who carries mace, a taser and handcuffs, Shadow Hare actually dislocated his shoulder while assisting a woman who was being robbed, just to prove that you shouldn't be trying this at home. Luckily he can speed away on his Segway scooter if the fight gets too much for him.

Movie hero equivalent: Frank, the demonic rabbit from Donnie Darko who also liked to stick to the shadows.

Picture courtesy of MomAndSon (via [Flickr](#))

Real-life superheroes Superhero movie...

Polarman

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Who? Hardly a crime-fighter, this local hero helps his community by shovelling snow off the steps for day-care centres and the elderly.

Why? Hailing from Nunavut, a particularly icy region of North Canada, Polarman is the friendly neighbourhood superhero who, as well as clearing snow for those in need, helps to keep playgrounds in order for the local kids and deters vandals. He is said to model himself on a man in Inuit legend who provided food and clothing to the poor while riding a polar bear.

Movie hero equivalent: Iceman, the sub-zero superhero from the X-Men who doesn't, unfortunately, ride on a polar bear.

Picture courtesy of 'FrozenGrapes' (via [Flickr](#))