Super Who?

What does it mean to be a hero? Is it as simple as inspiring others, or does it delve deeper than that? Is it all about what a person has or where a person has been? Is a hero a person that is admired by a large number of other people, or does that matter? Is a person only a hero because he or she has been recognized as one, or are those who go unrecognized just as much a hero? If any given person was to be asked who his or her hero is, there are many different responses that could come up. His or her answer could be an actor, a millionaire, a tech genius, a neighbor, a parent, a community service person, or a military officer. Answers to this question range widely, but would they change if given deeper thought? If every person were to rethink his or her answer based on qualifications of a hero, their answers would change. There are several characteristics of a hero, and the movie *13 Hours* conveys those characteristics as bravery, willingness to fight, and relatability.

What is bravery? Bravery is taking a stand and fighting even though what is ahead is terrifying. There are many types of bravery. For example, a person who can look at a spider and not show fear is brave. A person who can talk or sing in front of a crowd of people is brave. Any person that can put aside his or her fear and keep going is brave. There are also those people who willingly serve their communities and their countries by literally looking danger and death in the eyes, and to say that they are brave seems like an understatement. The quote from *13 Hours* says, “I’m proud to know Americans like you” (Bay). Proud cannot come close to covering it. The
bravery of men and women in uniform is unthinkable. They could easily say no, and go about their business, but instead they choose to fight. They choose to stand up for what they believe in, and they refuse to back down. Those who do not serve will never know the emotions or the thoughts of these men and women as they are on the front lines. They will never fully understand how terrifying it must be or how much pride it fills them with to fight. The fact that they do not run but that they stand and fight is the definition of bravery.

Not only is a hero brave; a hero has the willingness to fight. Perhaps it is their willingness to fight that makes them brave. A hero does not sit back and watch as other people suffer. A hero jumps into action and is ready to put aside his or her life in order to save or better the lives of others. Being a hero “correlate[s] to a lifestyle commitment of service” (“What Makes a Hero”). Meaning that a hero never takes a day off from work; they cannot just wake up and decide not to do it anymore. Not everyone is willing to do that. In fact, most people are prone to looking the other way. It takes someone special to put others first and to willingly fight for what is right. 13 Hours gives a great example of this. When the attack on the ambassador begins, the American soldiers are ready to go in and help. They want to help and they get mad and impatient when their boss says no (Bay). Those men were willing to run into heavy battle despite what the outcomes could be for each of them. They were not concerned with their own wellbeing; instead, they were consumed with an energy to protect those around them.

A hero needs bravery and courage, but it is also important for him or her to be relatable. If they are perfect in every way, then it is hard for people to like them. It is important for people to see their flaws and that they, too, are human because “heroes provide reference points for goals, standards, and ways to behave” (Schlenker et al. 326); however, if those goals are unobtainable, then they will be looked at with hate and contempt instead of being seen as
inspirational. The men in *13 Hours* are real. They have lives at home in the states; they have families (Bay). It makes it easier for the audience to connect with them when they know and can appreciate how much is on the line for those guys and that they are not perfect, either. Think about a typical superhero, like Superman. He is not perfect. He has a fatal flaw, and that makes him more relatable. If Superman did not have any problems, he would not be as popular a Superhero as he is. Without relatability, a person cannot be a hero.

A person cannot be a hero without being brave, willing to fight, and relatable. The movie *13 Hours* presents its audience with six men that exemplify what it means to be a hero, and each of them have those three characteristics. Being a hero is more than what a person knows; it is about what that person chooses to do with that knowledge. Being a hero is more than where a person has been; it is about what that person has done. Being a hero is more than being admired; it is daring to go against the status quo and be different. There are heroes who are recognized for their work, but there are many more who go unrecognized. A hero is not just popular or famous. A hero is so much more.
Works Cited

