

MEDIA RELEASE

Oakville Author Releases Book about the Impact of Pop Culture on Young Boys' Understanding of Masculinity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***The Achilles Effect* discusses pop culture messages about masculinity, their effect on boys, and the benefits of introducing more gender balance to boys' lives.**

Oakville, ON (CANADA) – February 22, 2011. Oakville writer Crystal Smith announced today the release of *The Achilles Effect: What Pop Culture is Teaching Young Boys about Masculinity*. The book is a guide for parents, caregivers, educators, and students who want to learn more about male and female stereotypes, their continued strong presence in kids' pop culture, and their effect on young boys.

The Achilles Effect outlines the gender bias that children encounter across all of pop culture: stereotypes of both sexes, male dominance, negative portrayals of fathers, breaking of the mother/son bond, and the devaluing of femininity. The book examines the gender messages in the popular culture targeted to boys, provides strategies for countering these messages, and encourages discussion of a vitally important issue that is rarely talked about—boys and their often skewed understanding of gender.

Crystal Smith is the mother of two boys, a social media and marketing writer, and the author of the [Achilles Effect blog](#), which discusses the restrictive definition of masculinity in films, movies, books, and toy marketing aimed at boys. She recently expanded the site to include a list of gender-positive books, toys, TV shows, and films for boys.

“Neither of my sons watched television before the age of three, but when they did, I found myself quite disappointed in the programs available to them,” says Smith. “I decided to look further into gender portrayals across all of children’s popular culture and to share what I learned with other parents through my blog and my book.”

An editorial review of *The Achilles Effect* noted that it is “an exceptionally well researched, organized, documented, and written piece which functions simultaneously as gender study and enlightening perspective on childrearing.” *The Achilles Effect* is available now at online booksellers, including Chapters/Indigo.

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