

(Ebook pdf) The Many Lives of the Batman: Critical Approaches to a Superhero and his Media

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From Routledge : The Many Lives of the Batman: Critical Approaches to a Superhero and his Media before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Many Lives of the Batman: Critical Approaches to a Superhero and his Media:

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. The Many Lives of the BatmanBy Bill KtepiThe first thing that should be explained here is that this is a book of academic criticism -- not a popular history of the character, an anthology of comics, or anything of the like. That isn't a complaint: it's a notice. It happens to be a very good book of criticism, informed somewhat by the then-recent release of Tim Burton's Batman movie. Pearson and Uricchio present over a dozen essays analyzing various aspects of Batman as a character and a product, doing so without either pandering to the subject or making it too dry. No matter how high one's analysis is, after all, this remains a comic book character. Highlights include a demographic study of the patrons waiting in line to attend Tim Burton's Batman; an interview with Frank Miller (author of The Dark Knight Returns and Batman: Year One, pivotal re-definitions of the character which set the tone for over a decade); and Bill Boichel's "Batman: Commodity as Myth." Although any student of the Batman character or mythos would be well-advised to pick up a thorough history of the character (such as Les Daniels'), Pearson and Uricchio's text is an excellent addition to any library, readable either by scholars of popular culture or dedicated fans of the character (I promise you, the academic language is kept to a minimum).3 of 4

people found the following review helpful. Very intellectual
By A Customer
During my freshman year of college, my writing class required us to write a research paper, and in typical style I was disappointed because everyone in my class was writing about abortion or sports, and when I saw this book at the the University library, I got very excited because it appeared that there were actual scholars writing about Batman and it presented me the opportunity to research his history. This book, in conjunction with a few others, allowed me to prove my thesis at a well-known Big Ten university (not that it was that hard) that Batman's evolution was a direct result of society's changing political and social views

The phenomenal success of *Batman: The Movie* seemed to signal the apotheosis of the Batman in the American popular imagination. But what social conditions can account for the enduring popularity of such a dark and conflicted character? *The Many Lives of the Batman* is the first serious academic exploration of this intriguing cultural phenomenon. Marketing savvy alone did not build the Batman's extraordinary success; it traverses a variety of audiences who have embraced the hero in a collage of different media manifestations throughout his fifty year history. These overlapping lives are illuminated in this critical anthology, which analyzes the contexts of the character's production and reception across a wide spectrum of time and media forms.

From Publishers Weekly
Since his 1939 debut Batman has appeared in a stream of guises--the original Dark Knight of the '40s, the "bright, sunny fellow" of the '50s, the campy clown of the '60s and the current complex character that incorporates both "obsessed loner" and comedic traits. In this intriguing collection of essays, editors Pearson and Uricchio, who teach mass communications at Penn State University, join contributors to examine the reasons for this frequent overhaul in the nature of the Caped Crusader. They point to the comic-book industry's gradual shift from a mass to a specialized medium, along with new marketing strategies and changing cultural environments. Interviews with Batman editor Dennis O'Neil and graphic-novel author Frank Miller reveal both the creative and the business processes of comics. The authors also explore Batman's controversial relationship with Robin, and the influence of fans, so powerfully expressed by their telephone-poll decision to kill the Boy Wonder. Despite its academic style, comics fans, collectors and readers interested in pop culture will find this work stimulating and informative. Copyright 1991 Cahners Business Information, Inc.