

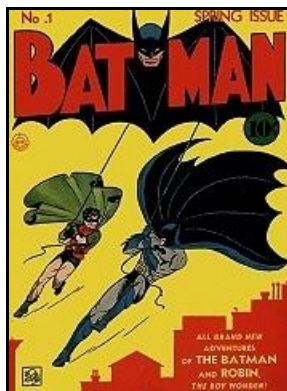
“Batman Begins: The History of The Dark Knight”

By Stanley Robinson

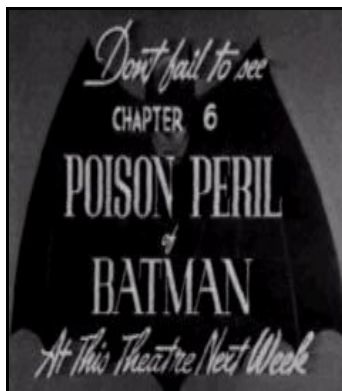


The Legend Continues! When I was growing up TV hadn't come yet. Yes, I know that sounds strange but not to me back then. There were all sorts of things to read. Books, magazines, and, comic books. My friends and I decided which comics we would buy and trade them as we finished. Of all the comics out there, two were my favorites, “Green Lantern” and “Batman”. Batman in the comics, known by the side name “The Dark Knight”, had a special edge to it. The Batman comics were on the dark side with Batman only coming out at night, bordering between crime fighting and justice to revenge and vigilantism!

Batman's history starts with Bob Kane, the creator of the comic book character in May 1939. In Kane's biography, it's said that Batman is a combination of Zorro, The Shadow, and Dracula. Kane also felt that of all of the actors who have played Batman, Val Kilmer did it best. Bob Kane also said that some of the aspects of Batman's character and appearance came not from him but from his friend and collaborator, artist Bill Finger. It was Bill's idea to take the eyes out of Batman's mask when the first sketches didn't look right, and Kane expressed deep disappointment that Bill Finger's contributions to the Batman character were hardly, if, ever acknowledged.



1st Comic Book 1939

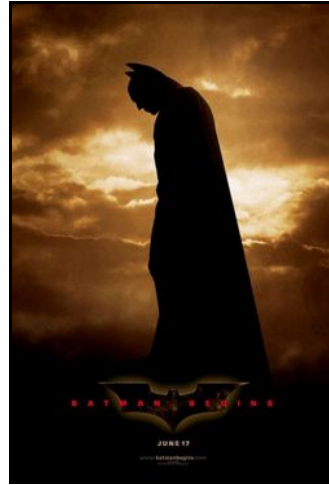


Batman Movie serial 1943



In 1943 Batman came to the movie screen in serials, simply titled “Batman” with chapter numbers. A total of 15 episodes were made (260 minutes) about 18 minutes each. The serial starred Lewis Wilson and Douglas Croft as Batman & Robin. Two sets of serials were made by Columbia Pictures, in 1943 with Wilson and Croft, and in 1949, titled “Batman and Robin”, with Robert Lowery and John Duncan as Batman & Robin! In the 1949 serial is the first time the searchlight Bat signal was ever used to call Batman for help! Some of these old serials can be found on VHS. In the TV series, 66-68, Adam West and Burt Ward were Batman & Robin.

The big screen saw a return of Batman in 89' with Michael Keaton as Batman & Jack Nicholson as the Joker, directed by Tim Burton. 92's “Batman Returns” starred Michael Keaton and Michelle Pfeiffer as Catwoman, also directed by Tim Burton. 95's “Batman Forever” hit the screen with Val Kilmer as Batman, and Joel Schumacher as director. In 97' “Batman & Robin” starred George Clooney and Chris O'Donnell, with Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl, also directed by Joel Schumacher.



"Batman Begins" 2005

2005's "Batman Begins" is more in tone with the early "Batman: Year One" style comics. Christopher Nolan, who directed the Oscar winning "Memento", starts at the beginning with the death of Bruce Wayne's millionaire parents as a boy, which led him to become obsessed with revenge. Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) disappears to the East and seeks counsel with ninja cult leader Ra's Al-Ghul (Ken Watanabe) and returns to Gotham City. Being swindled out of Wayne Industries, he finds a cave under Wayne Manor, along with a prototype-armored suit. With the help of Lucius Fox (Morgan Freeman) a friend at Wayne Industries, and trusted long time family butler Alfred Pennyworth (Michael Caine) he becomes, Batman! And, "The Legend Continues"...



Stanley Robinson, an Assistant Director in the motion picture industry, is based in Phoenix, AZ and a contributing writer to Sonik Magazine in Phoenix where an excerpt of this article appears, June 2005!