

Reviews on Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* Graphic Novel

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

"*The Dark Knight Returns* by Frank Miller (whose Sin City stories inspired a critically acclaimed movie last spring). In this watershed work in the evolution of the comic book, Miller reimagines Batman as an embittered old man, who, coming out of retirement, finds that the society whose laws he had faithfully defended has become a fascist state, the very drawing style conveying a sense of Miller's rage."

<http://www.ncte.org/magazine/archives/122082>

The Alan Review

"Integrating Graphica into Your Curriculum: Recommended Titles for Grades 6–12"

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v37n1/pdf/gutierrez.pdf>

ImageText (Interdisciplinary Comic Studies – Department of English at the University of Florida)

"Gotham (K)Nights: Utopianism, American Mythology, and Frank Miller's Bat(-topia)"

http://www.english.ufl.edu/imagetext/archives/v4_2/murphy/

"I for Integrity: (Inter)Subjectivities and Sidekicks in Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta* and Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*"

"...in 1986 ... two other works [*Batman: TDKR* and *Watchmen*] also significantly participated in reorienting comics readership towards adults ... Neither of these works, however, entered broad public and critical consciousness with the same profound effect that [Art Spiegelman's] *Maus* did..."

http://www.english.ufl.edu/imagetext/archives/v4_3/greenblatt/

OmniNerd.com

"The underlying themes of *The Dark Knight Returns* touch upon how we deal with the world after tragedy strikes, the role of the media in our society, and the difference between Law and Justice."

http://www.omninerd.com/articles/Comic_Books_as_Literature_The_Dark_Knight_Returns

Grovel.org (Graphic Novel Reviews)

“*The Dark Knight Returns* is an awesome work, breaking the mould that stifled Batman for many years. It brought a change in the public attitude to what Batman and superheroes in general are all about. While not pandering to what the superhero crowd was perceived to want at the time, yet still containing everything a fan might desire, this book lifts the genre to a new level. If you’re interested in superheroes this book has to be on your reading list. And even if you’re not, there’s still little in the action genre that’s as good or as influential as this.”

<http://www.grovel.org.uk/batman-the-dark-knight-returns/>

Maupin House

Rationales Genre Guide for Graphic Novels

<http://maupinhouse.com/media/upload/file/Rationales%20Genre%20Guide.pdf>

Goodreads.com

“Over fifteen years after its debut, 'Batman: The Dark Knight Returns' remains an undisputed classic and one of the most influential stories ever told in the comics medium.”

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/59960.Batman>

GraphicNovelReporter.com

“*The Dark Knight Returns* is a tale of ideologies and how our perception of right and wrong, justice and retribution, and crime and punishment all ultimately decide our role in society.”

<http://graphicnovelreporter.com/content/dark-knight-returns-review>

A Place for Batman in the Classroom

“DKR could be used, or portions of it anyway, but one must take great care in choosing this title for the classroom. The language, topics, and the violence, while appropriate to the story, are very harsh.”

<http://www.graphicclassroom.org/2008/07/place-for-batman-in-classroom.html>

Comics in the Classroom with Leigh Brodsky (high school teacher in New Jersey)

“...With regards to the elective I teach I do try to balance the protagonists more. My students read *Batman Dark Knight Returns* and *Watchmen*, which are more male dominated books, but they also

read *V For Vendetta* and *Fables I*, which have some very strong female characters. Where I do notice a gender gap is in the exposure and the perception of comics. When I begin to teach a graphic novel we discuss what my students know about comics and it is usually the boys who have more of a working knowledge of American comics.”

<http://www.graphicnovelreporter.com/content/comics-classroom-leigh-brodsky-feature-stories>

“...I also like to pair Batman with excerpts from the original antihero tale of *Frankenstein* to connect the themes seen in *Dark Knight* to the literary cannon. By showing students that the characters they love and get excited about are rooted in the same themes they see in classical literature, the texts that we examine begin to carry more weight, and even conversations where students question if Batman really is a superhero even though he does not have superpowers, have a bit more meaning to them.”

<http://www.graphicnovelreporter.com/content/art-teaching-essential-list-op-ed>

Hidden Gems: Teaching Graphic Novels to Not-So-Young Adults

“Using these texts, students discovered, discussed, and wrote about what it means to be human, our curriculum’s central guiding question, just as former students had done reading traditional world literature. Fate, identity, and survival are some of the themes we explored, as well as environmental, societal, and familial influences on an individual. In addition, we examined art as a literary medium and the role of the artist in culture, religion, heroism, and the nature of good and evil. We also identified and utilized standard literary fare, such as symbolism, irony, satire, allusion, onomatopoeia, and metaphor as students applied figurative and literary language to the concepts of comics, including artistic style, closure, empathy, icons, panels, and gutters, among many others. “

<http://graphicnovelreporter.com/content/hidden-gems-teaching-graphic-novels-not-so-young-adults-op-ed>

SFSignal.com

“By showing Batman as a dark, conflicted, obsessed hero he becomes more real than he was. Batman is super-wealthy to be sure and a physical specimen – even at his advanced age – but his actions look like they could be performed by any of us. This is the ultimate genius of the work. He takes a superhero and casts him as more of an everyman that we can all relate to...

This Batman is far from perfect. He’s obsessed with fighting injustice to a fault. He refuses to be a pawn of the politicians but ultimately earns their wrath because he takes his obsession too far. For example, the Sons of Batman (a vigilante group of defeated criminals inspired by Batman to fight crime) cut off the hands of some people found gambling in the street. This association shows that Batman may have lost sight of the need to have the punishment fit the crime. There is also an annoying but somewhat truthful

psychologist who states that the supervillains exist because Batman exists. That his very existence causes the very villainy he strives to stamp out.”

http://www.sfsignal.com/archives/2008/10/review_batman_the_dark_knight_returns_by_frank_miller/

PBWorks

Literacy in the Classroom: "21st Century Style"

Book reviews for teen and young adults by teens and young adults

<http://booktalk.pbworks.com/w/page/14903950/Graphic%20Novels>

Illinois School Library Media Association

“Graphic Novels in the Classroom”

“The original graphic novels were designed for a teen and adult audience. While now more and more graphic novels are being created for younger children, the graphic novels on this website (unless otherwise noted) are specifically for secondary students. As with any material, you should review these texts to determine their suitability for your collection. You know your school best, and you know your collection development policies. Some graphic novels have language, violence, or sex that may not be appropriate for all audiences.”

<http://courseweb.lis.illinois.edu/~gray21/GraphicNovels/>