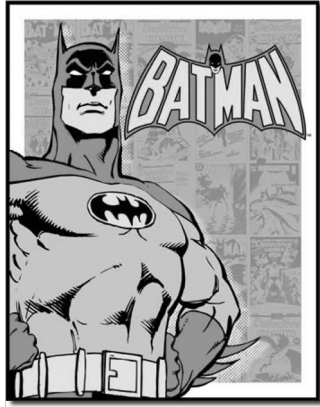


# Batman



1

- Batman appeared in *Detective Comics* # 27 (1939)

- published by National Periodicals
- creators Bob Kane / Bill Finger
  - inspired by:
    - the Shadow
    - Doc Savage – adventurer, polymath
    - the Mask of Zorro



Vigilante crime fighter



millionaire playboy



First to wear skin-tight suit

2

- Batman's features
- like Superman
  - wore costume
  - fought crime
  - had secret identity
    - billionaire playboy Bruce Wayne
  - emerged from family trauma
- but unlike Superman
  - had no super powers
  - often worked outside of the law – vigilante
  - *"If you can't beat them 'inside' the law, you must beat them 'outside' it ... and that's where I come in!"* (Batman # 43, September 1940)

3



4

- Early Batman issues

- Wright, *Comic Book Nation*, p. 17
- unusual style
- appeal to a kind of cinematic sensibility
  - *film noir*
- introduced panoply of characters that straddled between comedy and absurdity
  - Robin
    - what was the rationale?
  - The Joker – deranged homicidal maniac
  - The Riddler
  - Cat Woman
  - The Penguin
  - Two-Face

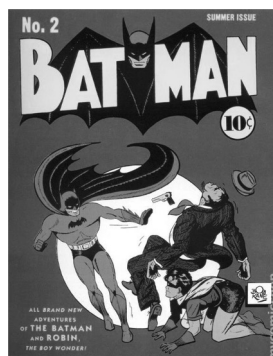
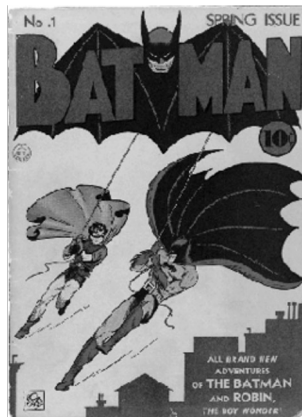


*Batman # 1 (April 1940)*



*Batman # 251 (September 1973)*

5



6



7

## Enter Bill Finger....

- contested creation!
  - Bill Finger (1914-1974)
  - Bob Kane (1915-1998)
  - both second-generation Jewish immigrants
- *Batman & Bill* (2007) documentary
  - About Marc Tyler Nobleman's search to find creator of Batman



8

1. Who do *you* think was the creator of Batman? Explain your answer.
2. Why do you think issues of authorship in the comic book industry were not of paramount importance in the 1930s and 1940s? Why did they become important later?
3. How would you summarize Bob Kane's role in the history of Batman? How does the Kevin Smith episode illuminate (or not) this question?