

# Batman (1989)



1

- Batman on screen
- Early incarnations
  - Batman (serial) in 1943 [2:05:35-]
    - Batman/Bruce Wayne played by Lewis Wilson
  - Batman and Robin (serial film) in 1949 [6:00-]
    - Batman/Bruce Wayne played by Robert Lowery



2

## *Batman* show from 1960s

- Ran for 3 seasons, 120 episodes, 1966-68
- Adam West & Burt Ward
- campy, aimed largely at teen audience
  - Introduced generation to the Joker, the Penguin, the Riddler, Catwoman, etc.
- heavily influenced by pop art
- Pop artists sought to depict everyday life using:
  - Brand name commercials
  - Fast-food items
  - celebrities



3



Richard Hamilton  
*Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So  
 Different, So Appealing?* (1956)

4



Roy Lichtenstein  
*Drowning Girl* (1963)

5



Andy Warhol  
*Gold Marilyn Monroe* (1962)

6

- Legacy of Batman show from 1960s
  - linked Batman (& superheroes in general) to camp and silliness
  - low culture
  - read Wright, p. 225
  - introduced synergy with merchandise



7

## *Batman* (1989)

- Directed by Tim Burton
- Starring Michael Keaton, Jack Nicholson, Kim Basinger
- made \$400 million worldwide
- at the time: 5<sup>th</sup> highest grossing movie of all time
- basic plot?



8

1. Why do you think this version of the cinematic Batman was so popular with audiences in 1989? What argument does Tom Breihan make about Batman's appeal in this era?
2. Both *Batman* (1989) and *Superman* (1978) were produced by the same people and company. In what ways was Batman '89 a continuity of the comic book ethos of Superman '78? In what ways was it a radical departure?
3. Given what you read in the Medhurst reading, what would you say that the Batman archetype depends to some degree of 'camp' no matter how he is portrayed? Or is 'camp' just one way of portraying the Batman character?

9

- Other Issues
- mirrored protagonists
  - Burton: *"the whole film and mythology of the character is a complete duel of the freaks. It's a fight between two disturbed people"*
- Portrayal of cops?
- What kind of aesthetic?
  - *When* is set in?
  - 1930s fashions, Art Deco
  - costumes? faces?
  - gothic?
  - violence?
  - camp?
- special effects?



10