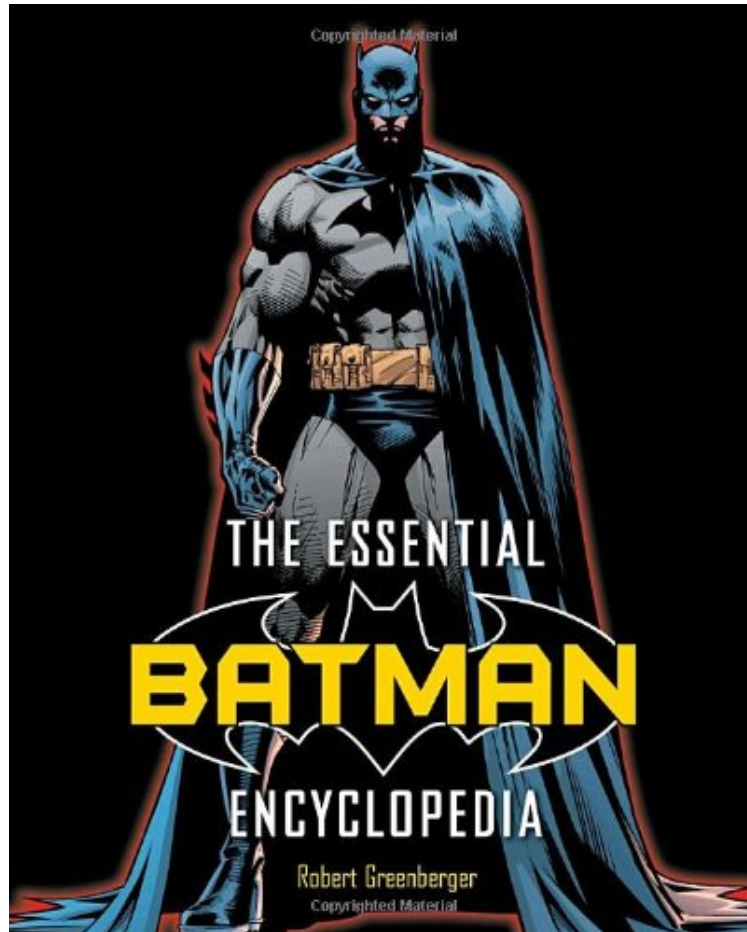


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The Essential Batman Encyclopedia

Robert Greenberger

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Robert Greenberger : The Essential Batman Encyclopedia before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Essential Batman Encyclopedia:

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The ultimate guide to the man behind the mask . . . and the mythology behind the man. Criminals are a superstitious, cowardly lot. So my disguise must be able to strike terror into their hearts. I must be a creature of the night, black, terrible. . . . I shall become a bat! So declared millionaire industrialist Bruce Wayne, orphaned as a boy by a murderous thug and driven as a man to battle the scourge of crime by becoming Batman. Batman swooped into popular culture in 1939 and for nearly seventy years has thrilled audiences in countless comics, live-action and animated television programs, and seven feature films. Prowling the darkened rooftops of Gotham City, roaring through the teeming streets in the sleek, high-powered Batmobile, and leaping into action when the iconic Bat-Signal pierces the night sky, the Caped Crusader is a larger-than-life legend. And now, for the first time in more than thirty years, everything there is to know about Batman from the beginning to the present, and from A to Z is collected in one comprehensive new sourcebook. More than 500 pages of entries and illustrations include: fascinating details and the complete background on Batman's origins; biographies of every major character in the Batman universe including his closest allies, from Robin the Boy Wonder and faithful butler Alfred Pennyworth to Commissioner Gordon; and his countless enemies, from the Joker, Penguin, Catwoman, and the Riddler to Scarecrow, Two-Face, Ras al Ghul and Poison Ivy classic black-and-white comic book artwork throughout two sixteen-page full-color artwork inserts Even an all-access pass to the Batcave couldnt rival former DC Comics editor and Batman scholar extraordinaire Robert Greenberg's exhaustive ultimate archive. The Essential Batman Encyclopedia is a must for every Batman fan's bookshelf. BATMAN, the DC Logo, and all related names, characters and elements are trademarks of DC Comics 2008. All rights reserved.

From School Library Journal Grade 6 Up Over the last 69 years, Batman has experienced countless incarnations. For years, he seemed ageless and unchanging, but recently editors and writers have found many creative ways to explore the superhero's mythos. Expanding upon Michael Fleisher's *The Encyclopedia of Comic Book Heroes: Batman* (DC Comics, 2007), this volume attempts to clarify how Batman fits into these story arcs, and to catalog nearly every villain and close ally he encountered between 1939 and September 2007. Entries are limited to characters and information within the Batman universe. This focus on characters and internal plot may be fascinating to fans, but will limit the book's usefulness as a research tool. Fewer than one-third of the entries are accompanied by black-and-white illustrations. Two sets of color plates add much to the flavor of the work, though they impart little information. Overall, the book is extremely thorough within its scope and is well researched. Dawn Rutherford, King County Library System, Bellevue, WA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Robert Greenberger is the creator of *Comics Scene*, the first national magazine covering comic books, comic strips, and animation. He has worked for DC Comics and Gist Communications, and he served as director of publishing operations for Marvel Comics. Greenberger is the author of numerous novels, including adventures set in the *Star Trek* universe, and is the news editor for the trendsetting online popular culture site *ComicMix*. He lives with his wife, Deb, in Fairfield, Connecticut. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. ABATTOIR Serial killer Arnold Etchison grew up convinced that his family members were evil. He eventually murdered them in the belief that their deaths would protect the world from further perils. Etchison also believed that he absorbed the life force from each victim after his or her death. Taking the name Abattoir, he continued his murderous spree until Batman apprehended him. Etchison was declared criminally insane and sentenced to spend the rest of his life in Gotham City's Arkham Asylum. When the international criminal Bane freed the Arkham inmates while carrying out his plan to weaken the Dark Knight, Abattoir immediately returned to tracking down and killing members of his extended family. Etchison was eventually found by Jean-Paul Valley, who at the time was substituting for Batman after the latter was crippled in a fight with Bane. Their confrontation took place at a Gotham refinery where Valley, who lacked Bruce Wayne's unwavering moral scruples, allowed Abattoir to fall to his death. However, Valley later learned that Etchison had left an innocent victim, his cousin Graham Etchison, hidden away in an undisclosed torture chamber. With Etchison dead, the victim remained undiscovered and eventually died. Some time later Etchison's spirit returned to plague Bruce Wayne, who had healed and wore Batman's cape and cowl once again. Abattoir's spirit attempted to cause his last surviving relative, an unnamed cousin, to miscarry, thereby providing him with a mortal vessel to possess in his plan to return to human form. Instead, Abattoir animated Valley's armored Batsuit and fought Batman until the Dark Knight convinced Etchison's spirit to abandon his vengeful mission and return to his proper place in the spirit realm. (Detective Comics #625, January 1991) ABBOTT, KYLE Little is known about Kyle Abbott, whose first recorded appearance saw him in the employ of eco-terrorist Ras al Ghul. He later swore his allegiance to al Ghul's former employee, Whisper aDaire, who injected him with a serum made by Ras that gave Abbott the ability to shape-shift into a werewolf and eternal life. The serum needed to be taken on a regular basis, thereby granting aDaire control over Abbott, who became her much-feared second in command. (Detective Comics #743, April 2000) Abbott was also aDaire's whipping boy, and was punished every time one of her power-grabbing schemes failed. As a result of the many beatings he received, he was left partially blinded and disfigured until aDaire used the serum to restore Abbott's health, although he remained blind in one eye. Despite his suffering, Abbott remained unswervingly loyal to his vicious master. When aDaire took over HSC International Banking, a legitimate

company fronting for the criminal group Intergang, Abbott remained by her side. Eventually regaining total sight, Abbott now able to change form from human to semi-lycan to full werewolf led a team of shape-changers against the Question and former Gotham City Police Department detective Renee Montoya, who were tracing illegal alien weaponry to Intergang. Abbott and his men engaged Intergang in a vicious fight that left all of Intergangs agents dead. Abbott later managed to track Montoya and the Question to Khandaq, framing them for the slaughter that had occurred at the Intergang HSC warehouse. (52 #1, 2006)

When he returned to Gotham, Abbott was alarmed at the fervor Bruno Mannheim, Intergangs leader, displayed for the task of destroying the city to fulfill a prophecy from the Crime Bible. As a result, he turned his back on a Daire and proved crucial in leading Montoya to the kidnapped Batwoman, about to be sacrificed by Mannheim. He was last seen accompanying Nightwing in disabling devices designed to turn the city into a charred lump of rock. (52 #48, 2007)

ABDULLAH On Earth--2, Batman and Robin, sometimes accompanied by Superman, would be hypnotized by Professor Carter Nichols and manage to pierce the time barrier. One such adventure landed the Worlds Finest team in tenth--century Baghdad. The swarthy giant Abdullah led the notorious Forty Thieves and traded a youth named Aladdin a useless oil lamp in exchange for a fortune, and then tried to frame Aladdin as a member of the thieves. The time--traveling trio not only helped the lad regain his fortune, which had been swindled from him by Abdullah, but also stopped Abdullahs planned crime wave through a Baghdad bazaar. (Worlds Finest Comics #79, November/December 1955)

ACADEMY, THE Organized crime in Gotham City has taken many shapes over the years, but none so blatantly mirrored the efforts of law enforcement as the Academy. A secret training facility for criminals, it also doubled as the headquarters for the underworld group that most benefited from the training. Standards for admission were high, the Academy accepting only those men with an IQ higher than 135 who were physically at their peak. Upon learning of the Academys existence, Batman was determined to shut down the facility for good. The Caped Crusader disguised himself as a recruit and went through all the training courses upon acceptance. His well--developed mind and body ensured that he advanced rapidly, and eventually he became a nominee for the next leader of the organization. Batman took the leadership role and subsequently brought about the Academys downfall, with the help of the Gotham City Police Department. The Academys hoard of stolen property and its current membership roster were taken into custody, and the facility was shut down for good. (Batman #70, April/May 1952)

ACCORD The small town of Accord was said to be located two hundred or so miles north of Gotham City. Accord was founded by the great--grandfather of its local physician, Lynn Eagles, who aided the Batman during a case involving the Joker. (Legends of the Dark Knight #67, January 1995)

ACE THE BAT--HOUND When would--be counterfeiters kidnapped en-graver John Wilker, Batman and Robin launched an investigation. They saved Wilkers abandoned German shepherd, Ace, from drowning in a river, and used the dogs innate tracking abilities to help locate his master. During the search, Bruce Wayne also placed an ad for Aces master. Given the distinctive diamond--shaped mark on Aces forehead, Wayne hoped someone would recognize the dog and provide some useful information. Sure enough, one of Wilkers neighbors gave Bruce a vital clue. Wayne was also concerned that people might associate Ace and his distinctive diamond mark with Batman and his true identity; as a result, he quickly fashioned a black hood and bat--symbol collar, and Ace joined the Dynamic Duo. A criminal tracked by the cowed canine soon dubbed him Ace the Bat--Hound. Wilkers kidnappers were attempting to steal ink from the Eastern Printing--Ink Company when the crime fighters caught up to them, only to be subdued during the fight. Fashioning a crude Bat--Signal from cloth and a flashlight, Batman managed to summon Ace, who gnawed through Robins bonds, freeing the heroes and allowing them to defeat the counterfeiters. (Batman #92, June 1955)

Wilker loaned Ace to Batman for numerous cases over the next few months. When Wilker took a new job that required him to travel frequently, Wayne finally adopted the dog. By then Batman had added a receiver to Aces collar that used an ultra--high--frequency sound to summon the canine. (Batman #125, August 1959)

Ace went on frequent adventures with the Dynamic Duo, and worked alongside Batwoman as well. Bat--Mite, the magical imp from another dimension, once bequeathed Ace temporary superpowers, with disastrous results. In the reality created by the Crisis on Infinite Earths, Batman encountered the German shepherd when the dog was pet to a 130--year--old Native American shaman named Black Wolf. Batman was drawn to a bat--shaped patch on the dogs shoulder, and followed the dog. Batman was led to and rescued Black Wolf from members of his own tribe, who wanted to silence his protests at their evil plans. Batman and Black Wolf worked together to stop the tribe from committing atrocities that they felt would balance the heinous crimes committed by European settlers in 1863. After their mission, Black Wolf died and Batman brought Ace back to Gotham City. Ace aided Batman on several occasions, including tracking the monstrous and elusive Killer Croc. (Batman #462, May 1991)

Once ensconced in the Batcave, Ace was drawn to the mute hunchback Harold, who had also come to live in the cave and build tools for the Dark Knight. Harold, in return, built Ace a mechanical mouse to play with. Ace was last seen prior to events known as No Mans Land. Ace has not appeared in the reality created after the events of Infinite Crisis.

ACTUARY, THE As a way to commit crimes without interference from Batman, the Penguin once recruited an unnamed actuary. This actuary observed that the best way to commit a crime without being foiled by Batman was to do so in broad daylight. As the Penguin made his plans, he was unaware that Batman had already targeted one of his current gang members, Nico Vanetta. Batman learned from Vanetta that the Penguin intended to rob the annual Gotham Flower Show. The Dark Knight then engineered events so that the show was plunged into darkness, and the

Penguin's latest scheme was foiled. Evidence gathered at the crime scene prevented Batman from linking the near robbery to the Penguin. In his role as a casino owner, the Penguin not only had an alibi, but could explain away circumstantial evidence as well. Still, to settle the possible criminal charges, Penguin maneuvered the actuary into pleading guilty to the flower show robbery. The actuary was subsequently sentenced to Blackgate Penitentiary. (Detective Comics...