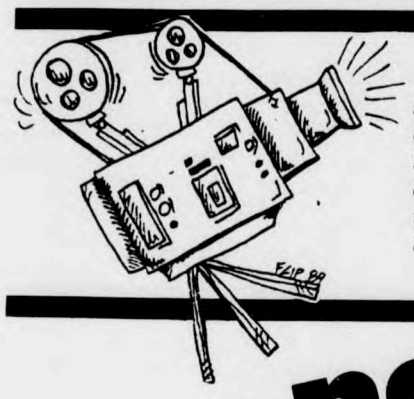


Each week one of Excalibur*'s film critics takes a look at the Reel and Screen's weekend offerings. The Reel and Screen is located in Curtis Lecture Hall L and runs on Friday and Saturday nights.*

reel and screen:

batman

by Mikel Koven

Remember way back to July? Remember what movie everyone was going to see? The movie everyone was talking about? Of course you don't.

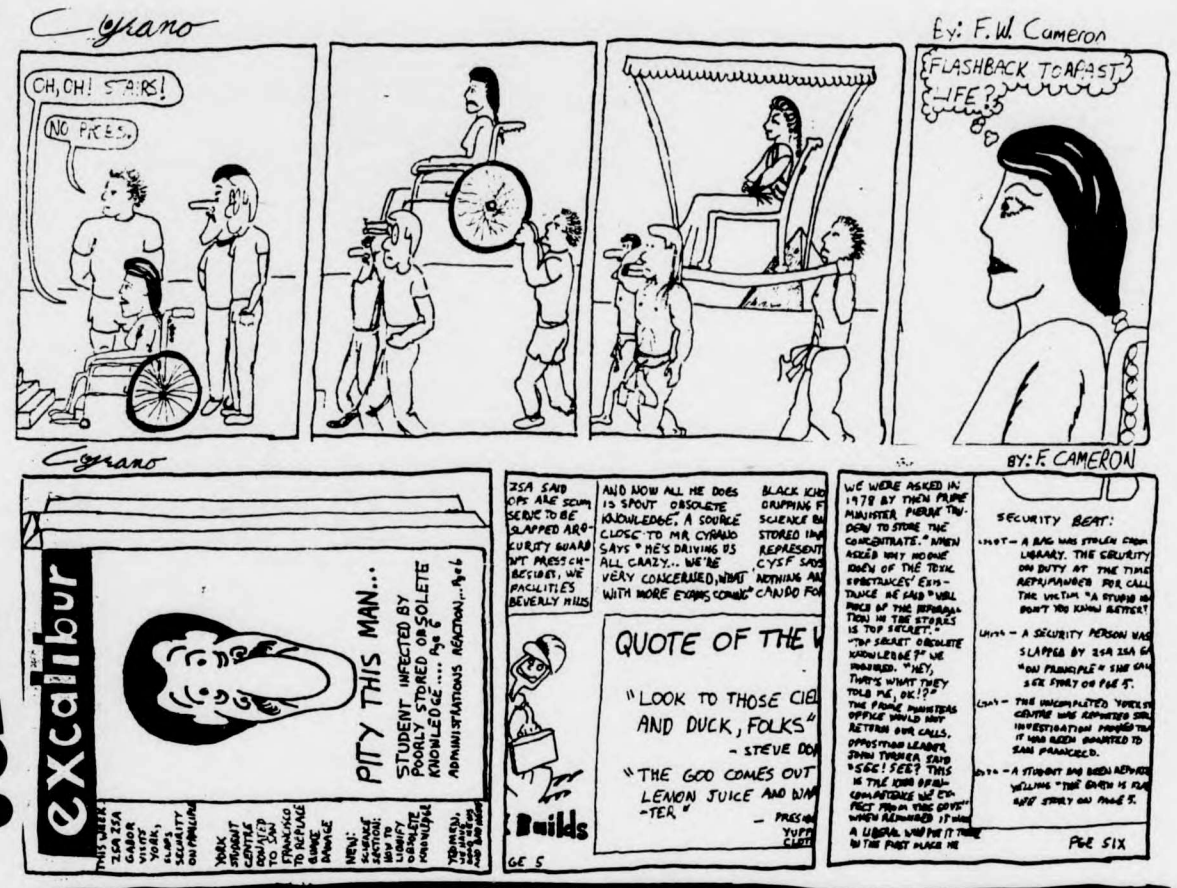
One of the few good elements about Tim Burton's much anticipated film of *Batman* was that it was forgotten quite quickly, but not before grossing millions upon millions of dollars. And now, a week before it is released on videotape, the Reel and Screen is showing . . . er . . . what was that movie called? Oh yeah, *Batman*.

Three months after the initial hullaballoo over this film, it seems appropriate to have it reduced to the mass market of videotape; appropriate because the film was intended for consumption by the mass market. *Batman* is not a movie, it is a manufactured product, a machine.

What is wrong with *Batman*? Well, it is a soulless, artificial reworking of the classic comic superhero-come-television pop celebrity. Although the acting is fine, (Jack Nicholson is wonderful), and the sets, costumes and gadgets are great, the film has nothing to support it. There is a painful absence of story, motivation, character and substance.

Some critics have argued that this makes *Batman* great. That the movie is cold and heartless, a film without soul or substance, makes it a great work of art by presupposing our responses and subverting our expectations. If wanting a story, or theme, or consciousness, is bourgeois, so be it.

Does anyone care *Batman* is being shown at York? Is there anyone who has not seen this product? I doubt it. Essays are going to be due soon. Stay at home this weekend, hit the books and try and do some work of substance. (*Batman* is at the Reel and Screen Friday and Saturday).



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