

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

2006 MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL THREE — HONORABLE MENTION

Dear Mr. Kane,

Batman has evolved greatly since his debut in “Detective Comics,” issue #27 in 1939. Over the decades he has evolved from his original hard-nosed, stealthy, vigilante character into more of an unrealistic creature of an almost evil nature. Other authors seem to have taken the basic idea of The Batman and transformed him into something he was not: a superhero.

Like many young boys, I grew up loving superheroes. My afternoons were filled with cartoons of Superman, Spiderman, the X-Men, and of course, The Dark Knight himself. As I aged, my interests shifted; the cartoons that were once awesome pieces of action-packed entertainment seemed to be getting a little childish for my tastes. I began to read comic books and graphic novels. After reading Frank Miller’s *Batman: Year One* and *The Dark Knight Returns*, Batman soon emerged to become my distinct favorite among comic book characters. I did my fair share of research on the sixty-six year-old icon and came across *The Dark Knight Archives*, a collection of the first four issues of the Batman comic book. Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson appeared as they were originally meant to be viewed, as people fighting crime without the use of super powers.

Batman first intrigued me not because of his abilities, but his lack of abilities. He does not possess extraordinary strength, or unnaturally quick reflexes. He is simply a man that is no different from you or me. His superhero status was not given to him by a radioactive spider, he earned his status through determination and hard work. He fights crime not because he feels obligated to do so; he has a strong desire to do it. No one told him to become a superhero. He created his legacy himself.

This year, I will finish my high school career positioned midway in my small class of ninety students. I have never been the smartest or the most athletic. By most people’s standards, I am nothing more than that average. I have every bit of confidence in myself to receive a college degree and lead a relatively successful life, but what difference can I make in the world? Will my existence be remembered by anyone in the future? I realize it is not probable my name will go down in history as some famous historian or world leader. If my name will not be remembered, then perhaps my cause will. After I graduate I wish to obtain a Bachelor’s in Criminology or Criminal Justice. I plan on applying to the Massachusetts Police Academy and eventually becoming a State Police Officer. I want to fight crime and help bring peace and justice to my home, just as Bruce Wayne, Dick Grayson, and Police Commissioner Gordon did in Gotham City.

I know, it seems corny and even a bit insincere to have your inspiration in life come from a comic book character, but I know and have always known what I wanted to do with my life after high school. I want to help make the world a better place for those who occupy it after me. In a sense, I want the same thing I wanted when I was a little boy: to be a hero.

Sincerely,

Sam Mrakovich

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