Written by Jeff Ignatius
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After two weekends, the only question remaining about *The Dark Knight*'s box-office prowess is whether it will become the all-time domestic champion, toppling *Titanic*. It's unlikely, but Christopher Nolan's second Batman movie is a very good bet to unseat *Star Wars* from second place, as long as we don't consider pesky factors such as inflation.

Titanic earned nearly $601 million in the U.S., while *Star Wars* has grossed $461 million. After 10 days, *The Dark Knight* stands at nearly $314 million.

That's a big gap, but if Batman follows the lead of *Iron Man*, he'll be north of $550 million - well ahead of George Lucas and within spittin' distance of James Cameron. *Iron Man* has earned roughly 44 percent of its gross since its second weekend, after which it stood at $178 million.

And if *The Dark Knight* has anywhere close to the staying power of Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet - who topped the box office for 15 consecutive weeks - *Titanic* might be sunk.

But Cameron shouldn't sweat too much - yet. *The Dark Knight* lost a greater percentage of its business in weekend two (52 percent) than *Iron Man*

at the same point in its release (48 percent).

About Box Office Power Rankings

This is the first appearance of the Box Office Power Rankings in the pages of the *Reader*, so an introduction is in order.

Box Office Power Rankings balance box office and critical reception to create a better measure of a movie's overall performance against its peers than gross receipts alone.

The weekly rankings cover the 10 top-grossing movies in the United States for the previous weekend. I assign equal weight to box office and critical opinion, with each having two components. The measures are: box-office gross, per-theatre average, Rotten Tomatoes (http://www.rottentomatoes.com) score, and Metacritic (http://www.metacritic.com) score.

Why those four? Box-office gross basically measures the number of people who saw a movie in a given weekend. Per-theatre average corrects for blockbuster-wannabes that flood the market with prints, and gives limited-release movies a fighting chance. Rotten Tomatoes measures critical opinion in a binary way. And Metacritic gives a better sense of critics' enthusiasm (or bile) for a movie.

For each of the four measures, the movies are ranked and assigned points (10 for the best performer, one for the worst). Finally, those points are added up, with a maximum score of 40 and a minimum score of four.

For more Box Office Power Rankings, visit (http://www.culturesnob.com/bopr). Culture Snob is the Web site of R
eader
Managing Editor Jeff Ignatius.

Box Office Power Rankings: July 25-27

Box Office Ranks **Critics' Ranks**

Rank	Movie	Last Week	Gross
1	***The Dark Knight***	1	10
2	***WALL•E***	2	4

3	***Mamma Mia!***	4	8
3	***Step Brothers***	-	9
5	***Journey to the Center of the Earth***	4	6
6	***Hellboy II: The Golden Army***	3	3
7	***The X-Files: I Want to Believe***	-	7
8	***Hancock***	6	5

8	***Wanted***	7	1
10	***Space Chimps***	10	2