

## Box Office Power Rankings: "The Dark Knight" in Perspective

Written by Jeff Ignatius

Wednesday, 13 August 2008 02:24

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Because nobody has pushed *The Dark Knight* off its perch (either in the weekly box-office-receipts charts or in the [Power Rankings](#)

[Box Office](#)

) ... .

When Batman (\$445 million through August 11) knocks *Star Wars* (\$461 million) off as the second-highest-grossing movie in [domestic-box-office history](#)

— which should happen this weekend — please keep the accomplishment in perspective.

Adjusted for [ticket-price inflation](#) , *The Dark Knight* at that point will still need nearly \$130 million in additional gross before it even cracks the *top 20*

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. And it will need roughly \$800 million more to catch *Star Wars* in inflation-adjusted revenues (\$1.26 billion).

But let's keep *that* in perspective. *The Dark Knight* exists in a culture with frenzied competition for your attention and leisure dollars. When *Star Wars* opened, the moving-picture options available in my house were limited to three networks and the three other movies playing at our local cinema. S

So while I don't think it's fair to say with a straight face that *The Dark Knight* will have beaten *Star Wars* at the box office after this weekend, it's just as unfair to say it's almost a billion dollars short of *Gone with the Wind* (\$1.43 billion in inflation-adjusted receipts). The truth lies somewhere in between.

### About Box Office Power Rankings

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. We assign equal weight to box office and critical opinion, with each having two components. The measures are: box-office gross, per-theater average, [Rotten Tomatoes](#) score, and [Metacritic](#) score.

Why those four? Box-office gross basically measures the number of people who saw a movie in a given weekend. Per-theater 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.

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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 *Reader* Managing Editor Jeff Ignatius.

## Box Office Power Rankings: August 8-10

<b>Box Office Ranks</b>	<b>Critics' Ranks</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Movie</b>	<b>Last Week</b>	<b>Gross</b>	<b>Per T</b>

### [Rotten Tomatoes](#)

### [Metacritic](#)

<b>1</b>	<b><i>The Dark Knight</i></b>	<b>10 (\$26.1M)</b>	<b>9 (\$6.5K)</b>	<b>9 (94)</b>	<b>9 (82)</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Pineapple Express</i></b>		<b>-</b>		<b>9 (\$23.2M)</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b><i>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2</i></b>				<b>7 (\$10.7M)</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b><i>WALL•E</i></b>		<b>5</b>		<b>2 (\$3.1M)</b>	

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5	<i>Step Brothers</i>	2	6 (\$9.1M)
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5	<i>Journey to the Center of the Earth 2</i>		4 (\$4.9M)
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5	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>	2	5 (\$8.2M)
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8	<i>The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor</i>		8 (\$16.5M)
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9	<i>Hancock</i>	8	3 (\$3.3M)
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10	<i>Swing Vote</i>	7	1 (\$3.1M)
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