



# Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero

By E. Paul Zehr

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## Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero By E. Paul Zehr

Battling bad guys. High-tech hideouts. The gratitude of the masses. Who at some point in their life hasn't dreamed of being a superhero? Impossible, right? Or is it?

Possessing no supernatural powers, Batman is the most realistic of all the superheroes. His feats are achieved through rigorous training and mental discipline, and with the aid of fantastic gadgets. Drawing on his training as a neuroscientist, kinesiologist, and martial artist, E. Paul Zehr explores the question: Could a mortal ever become Batman?

Zehr discusses the physical training necessary to maintain bad-guy-fighting readiness while relating the science underlying this process, from strength conditioning to the cognitive changes a person would endure in undertaking such a regimen. In probing what a real-life Batman could achieve, Zehr considers the level of punishment a consummately fit and trained person could handle, how hard and fast such a person could punch and kick, and the number of adversaries that individual could dispatch. He also tells us what it would be like to fight while wearing a batsuit and the amount of food we'd need to consume each day to maintain vigilance as Gotham City's guardian.

A fun foray of escapism grounded in sound science, *Becoming Batman* provides the background for attaining the realizable?though extreme?level of human performance that would allow you to be a superhero.

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

What are the odds that an ordinary billionaire like Bruce Wayne could acquire the physique and hand-to-hand fighting skills to defeat supervillains? Zehr, a Canadian neuroscientist and martial arts black belt, looks at the science of the body's capability to respond and adapt to... extremes. The author draws on Batman comics and movies to glean clues on how Wayne chiseled his body into a fighting machine. As a study of human physiology, this detailed and accessible discussion could appeal to Batman fans and those interested in intensive physical training who are prepared for serious science rather than fantasy. But Batman is only the scaffolding on which Zehr hangs his detailed look at the role of genetic makeup, diet, strength training and development of motor skills in attaining the outer limits of physical performance. Surprisingly, the discussion barely mentions the training of real-life people who need many of the same skills as Batman: special ops forces. Despite the book's strengths, readers may get the impression from the many exclamatory asides of an author still running around the house with a bedspread trailing behind him. 55 b&w illus. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

## Review

As a kid, I wanted to be Batman but always ended up more like the Joker. I only wish I could have read Dr. Zehr's fascinating book then, so that I would have known exactly what it takes to become a real superhero.

(Bradford W. Wright, author of *Comic Book Nation* [www.denofgeek.com](http://www.denofgeek.com).)

Zehr applies his specialised knowledge to quantify how an ordinary person could turn themselves into Batman.

(*Flipside*)

As a study of human physiology, this detailed and accessible discussion could appeal to Batman fans and those interested in intensive physical training who are prepared for serious science rather than fantasy. But Batman is only the scaffolding on which Zehr hangs his detailed look at the role of genetic makeup, diet, strength training and development of motor skills in attaining the 'outer limits' of physical performance.

(*Publishers Weekly*)

Zehr is a scientist, martial arts expert and comic book fan, so he's ideally qualified to write this book... *Becoming Batman* is an interesting discussion on the science of superheroes.

(Dr JV Chamary *BBC Focus Magazine*)

Charming book... There is really nothing more awesome than reading a book that cites obscure neuroscience journals in the same sentence with citations to obscure Batman comics.

(Annalee Newitz [io9.com](http://io9.com))

Zehr evaluates what it would take?physically, psychologically, and scientifically?to replicate Batman's actions and become a self-made superhero. His conclusions are sometimes surprising, and often fascinating.

(John Lewis *Baltimore Magazine*)

A wonderful book that looks at what it would really take to become Batman in today's world.

(The Surfman *thesurfman.blogspot.com*)

This is a thoughtfully imagined work that uses escapism to make solid scientific points that can benefit almost anyone. And for those who aspire to don a cape and cowl, it's essential reading.

(Richard Sherbaniuk *Edmonton Journal*)

Two black-gloved thumbs way up!

(*whatistechnoagain.wordpress.com*)

The author maintains a humorous and enjoyable tone throughout this book while providing general audiences with proven scientific methods and useful facts about the resilience and limitations of the human body.

(*Book News*)

A highly researched, very fairly reasoned and considerably factually-supported tome that not only discusses the potential for the most human of super heroes, also educates us in quite some depth about the limit of human existence and physical and mental prowess. That Dr. Zehr manages to add any style to his efforts (and let's be fair, scientists aren't known for their 'suave'), is a credit to the man and a credit to his obvious enthusiasm for his work and interests.

(Kevin Pocock *www.denofgeek.com*)

Terrifying mastery of the entire Batman mythohistoriography.

(Steven Poole *Guardian*)

*Becoming Batman* is your next step to supercool.

(Rosemary Counter *Toronto Globe and Mail*)

The author knows whereof he writes... written in an accessible and appealing manner.

(Vladimir M. Zatsiorsky *Centre Daily Times*)

Not only is it enjoyable as a popular science book for those with even the smallest Batman obsession, it could be an entertaining way to introduce human movement science to potential students.

(M. T. G. Pain *Journal of Sports Sciences*)

*Becoming Batman* takes the escapism of the Caped Crusader and puts it in real-world, grounded, scientific terms that is extremely entertaining and interesting. If you're not careful, you might learn something.

(Louis Fowler [www.bookgasm.com](http://www.bookgasm.com))

witty and informative, striking an appropriate balance between a pure scientific discourse and ample explanations to keep lesser trained readers intrigued.

([biblebodynbrains.blogspot.com](http://biblebodynbrains.blogspot.com))

If there's one thing that has influenced the new stuff, the 'Batman, Inc.' stuff, it's a book called *Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero*, which is written by E. Paul Zehr. It's a guy who is a doctor, and looking into the actual possibility of Batman and what it would take to be that person in real life: What it would do to your muscles and what it would do to your head, and how long it would take to learn the martial arts. And it's really quite fascinating, this idea of the real facts behind it.

(Grant Morrison, *Batman* writer [comicsalliance.com](http://comicsalliance.com))

When I walk, every once in a while someone notices they can't hear my footsteps. Do you know why? Dr. E. Paul Zehr knows. I'm training to become Batman. Most of the population wouldn't understand this... but beneath and entwined in the soul of many men is a hero-in-the-making. Training for that moment that will, thankfully, never come. The moment when he must be a hero. The moment he trained for. They'll never hear me coming. In this book Dr. Zehr knows exactly what our giddy souls are doing. Here he tells our secret.

(Neal Adams, *Batman* illustrator)

If you really want to become Batman, having a billion dollars in start-up funds and a subterranean lair is just the beginning. Dr. Zehr's thoroughly researched and thoughtfully imagined exploration into the real-life rigors of costumed crime-fighting shows just how DC Comics' Dark Knight?the original self-made hero?could realistically transform a mere human body into something no less than superhuman. Consider it required reading for anyone seriously contemplating donning cape and cowl.

(Scott Beatty, coauthor of *The Batman Handbook*)

#### About the Author

**E. Paul Zehr** is a professor of neuroscience and kinesiology at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, where he is also a biomedical research scholar. He holds black belts in both empty hand and armed martial arts. For more information about finding your inner superhero, visit [www.becomingbatman.com](http://www.becomingbatman.com).

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Lenore Cortez:**

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important work, like looking for your favorite book and reading a e-book. Beside you can solve your long lasting problem; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero. Try to the actual book Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero as your friend. It means that it can to become your friend when you sense alone and beside associated with course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you. The book makes you more confidence because you can know every thing by the book. So , we should make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

#### **Paula Shepard:**

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#### **Louis Chavez:**

Many people spending their time period by playing outside together with friends, fun activity along with family or just watching TV all day long. You can have new activity to spend your whole day by studying a book. Ugh, ya think reading a book can definitely hard because you have to use the book everywhere? It okay you can have the e-book, taking everywhere you want in your Touch screen phone. Like Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero which is finding the e-book version. So , why not try out this book? Let's notice.

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