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CONTRIBUTORS



MILES GUTTERY

Miles remembers the days when games came on floppy disks. Great big 5 1/4 inch ones. He tries to tell people down the pub, but they won't believe him.



CLAIRE LIM

Music PR by day and mega geek at all other times, Claire has a penchant for anything comic books, robots, space and superheroes.



JONATHAN CLEMENTS

Jonathan Clements' latest book is Christ's Samurai: The True Story of the Shimabara Rebellion, all about teenage sorcerers. Because... Japan.



GEMMA COX

Gemma has been editor of our sister magazine, the Japanese lifestyle and culture bible that is NEO, for the last ten years.



JOHN HOULIHAN

Writer, game designer, sci-fi, fantasy and horror lover, author of the Seraph books and ex-boss of CVG - it's His Houlihan Mr Houlihan.



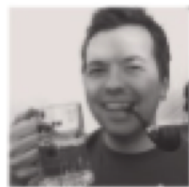
MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Film enthusiast, horror hound, beard aficionado. Comic book junkie Michael is also an experienced professional wrestling journalist.



PAUL GANNON

Paul occasionally dresses up as a Ghostbuster and parades around the house with the Hoover on his back. Keep Bustin' Paul.



ROB BURMAN

Determined to get his family to play something other than Cluedo at Christmas, Rob is on a constant hunt to discover great board games.



HUGH DAVID

With an in-depth knowledge of global genre film, television and animation, Hugh has seen more geeky films than you've had Star Wars toys.



JEM ROBERTS

Jem is an author, storyteller, comedy historian, performer and magazine man, with official books on Blackadder and Douglas Adams.



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WELCOME...

If there's something strange in your neighbourhood, it's probably the latest issue of Geeky Monkey jumping from the newsagent's shelf. With the original crew on the front cover, we've charted the Evolution of the Ghostbusters, from Dan Aykroyd's first draft of the 1984 movie, through comics, games and cartoons to this month's all-female reboot. They're not the first girls to suit-up you know, as you'll discover on page six.

A fan of Doctor Who? Of course you are. Well we have a treat for you in our exclusive interviews with the authors of the original novels and amazing artist. They discuss their favourite stories, episodes and the size of Jon Pertwee's nose starting on page 36, then show off the BBC Books reprints to Peter Capaldi himself. We were lucky enough to grab a chat with Sophie Aldred at a recent ComicCon too, find out what she had to say about her Doctor Who companion Ace and working with Sylvester McCoy on page 104.

The fact that you're reading this editorial means that we've done something right, you've bought a copy of Geeky Monkey. If you enjoy the magazine please let your geeky friends know. Everyone can save money and subscribe at geekymonkey.tv, we'll even deliver the magazine to your door. Or read us digitally through our app, just search "Geeky Monkey" on your chosen app store.

Keep the feedback coming on Twitter and Facebook, or we also accept messages through GERTY 3000. Enjoy.

NICK ROBERTS
EDITOR

GIRLS AS GHOSTBUSTERS? IT'S NOT THAT OUTRAGEOUS! AS FAR BACK AS DAN AYKORYD'S ORIGINAL SCRIPT, GHOSTBUSTERS HAS BEEN A FRANCHISE IN WAITING, AND IT'S BEEN EVOLVING EVER SINCE...

Words: PAUL GANNON

Paul Gannon is a podcaster, radio producer and Ghostbusters bore. Don't get him started...



THE EVOLUTION OF...
GHOSTBUSTERS



STERS

There is a scene, early on in Ivan Reitman's classic 1984 supernatural comedy, where Dr Peter Venkman, played by Bill Murray, declares, "The franchise rights alone will make us rich beyond our wildest dreams." It was a promise the film didn't really keep, especially in its (let's all admit this here and now) lacklustre 1989 sequel. For the last 32 years, the world of Ghostbusters has been largely tied to its four original characters, which is both a celebration of how iconic they became and also one of the major sticking points in moving the universe of Ghostbusters forward. Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, Harold Ramis and Ernie Hudson became the faces so vividly attached to Ghostbusters that, understandably, it was hard to see how anyone else could fill their jumpsuits.

This month sees the release of a new Ghostbusters movie. One that is not attached to the original 80's classic in terms of onscreen talent, but one that hopes to build a whole new world of paranormal investigation and elimination. Summer blockbusters now no longer look at popular movies as franchises. They are now 'universes'. The, perhaps too subtle, difference between a franchise and a universe seems to be that franchises are ongoing adventures with recurring characters, whereas universes are narrative sandboxes, designed to open up possibilities for introducing new characters, high profile spin-offs and headline baiting anticipation. The most obvious example would be the Marvel Universe, which continues to be massively successful and popular with audiences outside those of us who keep Forbidden Planet open on a yearly basis. As a result, every major studio wants its own universe. Disney has both Marvel and Star Wars, and Warner Bros continues to wring money out of Harry Potter whilst struggling to find the right tone for their DC properties. As for Sony Pictures... >



“GHOSTBUSTERS WAS HARDWIRED TO BE BUILT AS AN EXPANDED UNIVERSE, WITH GHOSTBUSTER GROUPS ALL OVER THE GLOBE KEEPING YOU SAFE FROM ALL MANNER OF SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES”

Sony Pictures has been struggling with finding its own IP to develop into a universe. In decades past, Sony had success in 1997 with *Men In Black*, but in many respects, ran into similar problems as *Ghostbusters*. *MIB* was a huge, almost surprise, hit for the studio, but the sequel, like *Ghostbusters II*, came five years later and didn't manage to capture that same lightning in a bottle. This led to development hell as Sony tried to piece together a third film, which they finally managed in 2012. In both cases the battle to get these films made caused the actual finished project to seem laboured and 'by the numbers'. Sony also has the *Bond* franchise, but for all intents and purposes they babysit that... So it made sense that Sony would go back to one of its biggest, most well loved properties: *Ghostbusters*.

I'VE BEEN SEQUELED

Even the most hardened of Ghostheads (the official term for *Ghostbusters* fans across the globe) has to admit *Ghostbusters II* was underwhelming. Despite the amazing chemistry between the cast members and the joy of seeing the 'boys in grey' strap on the Proton Packs again, there is a strong sense of having seen it all before. Structurally, it repeats the same beats as the first movie and does very little to add anything truly new to the *Ghostbusters* world. Considering *Ghostbusters* was ripe for franchising and expanding, the sequel does a lot of running on the spot, only adds new tech in the form of the Slime Blowers and swaps out the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man for The Statue of Liberty.

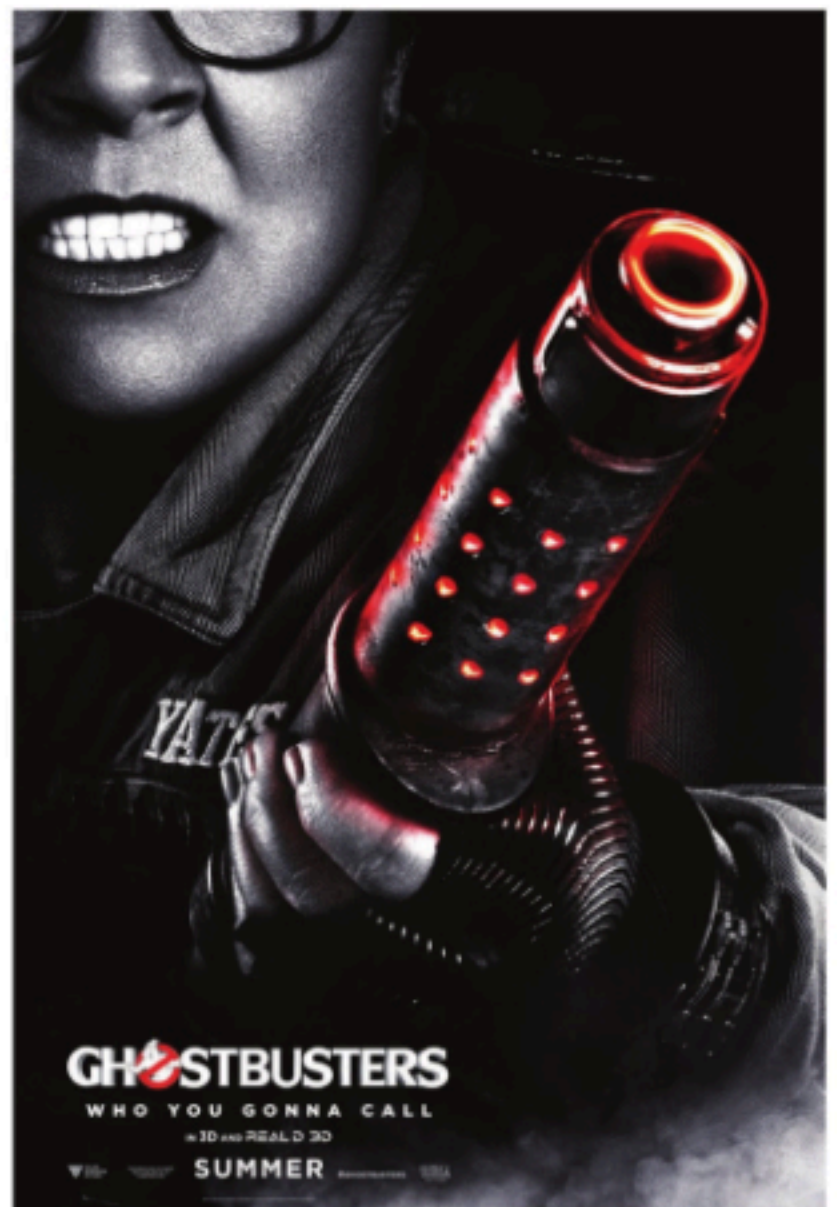
It's hardly a secret that the sequel was a tough challenge. The cast was reluctant to return, especially Bill Murray who deplores the idea of sequels, and it took a lot of convincing and bargaining to convince everyone involved that *Ghostbusters II* was worth doing. In a 1989 edition of *Starlog Magazine*, Bill Murray was quoted as saying, "It's not going to be called *Ghostbusters II*. We'll burn in hell if we call it *Ghostbusters II*. I've suggested *Last of the Ghostbusters* to make sure there won't be anything like a *Ghostbusters 3*." He practically got his wish. It was a complicated, slow process that involved not only

corralling the cast and crew, but dealing with a change of guard at Columbia Pictures. When the deal was finally arranged, it was a race to the finish line just to get the movie made. However, it was those complicated deals that secured the cast in the first place that also made the possibility of a third sequel just as hard to confirm. Now, if a *Ghostbusters 3* was to be made, Aykroyd, Ramis, Murray and Reitman had to be able to all agree to sign off on the script. If any one of them said no, it was back to square one. As you can imagine from Bill Murray's already flippant opinions on sequels, *Ghostbusters 3* went straight to development hell.

EXPANDING THE BUSINESS

Before *Ghostbusters II* was even a serious proposition, the world was already hungry for more *Ghostbusters*... and here is the thing. *Ghostbusters* was hardwired to be built as an expanded universe, with *Ghostbuster* groups all over the globe keeping you safe from all manner of supernatural entities, whether they be a focused, non-terminal repeating phantasm or Class 7 Sumerian God.

In one of Dan Aykroyd's first drafts of the original movie the *Ghostbusters* are already a fully fledged spirit squad, with countless groups existing all over the world... and parallel dimensions, planets and other plains of existence. In the utterly brilliant *Making Ghostbusters* book, Ivan Reitman recalls he took one look at the first 50 pages of that script and said "...I was exhausted. By the 40th or 50th page I was counting the budget in hundreds of millions of dollars. And there really weren't many laughs." There was allegedly an ending of one script that had Winston Zeddemore stepping out of a limo and looking up a big building emblazoned with the famous 'No Ghosts' logo and a sign reading 'Ghostbusters International', suggesting that the poky little start up company had become a huge worldwide business. Regardless of the accuracy of that ending, it held a promise of a big wide world of ghostbusting, which only made the backtracking of the sequel even more frustrating. If the idea was to broaden the world beyond its four main characters, then it felt like the sequel could not fulfil that promise. ▶





“IF A GHOSTBUSTERS 3 WAS TO BE MADE, AYKROYD, RAMIS, MURRAY AND REITMAN HAD TO BE ABLE TO ALL AGREE TO SIGN OFF ON THE SCRIPT”

In September 1986 the Ghostbusters universe expanded ever so slightly. The Real Ghostbusters was a Saturday morning cartoon spin off of the hugely successful movie. Whilst it continued to focus on the characters of Ray, Egon, Peter and Winston, it also began to expand on the world around those characters, setting up new monsters to tackle, new equipment and even allowing a few of the minor characters the chance to catch a few ghosts. Notably, the team's receptionist, Janine Melnitz, managed to show her ghostbusting worth in the episodes 'Mr Sandman, Dream Me A Dream', 'Janine's Day Off', 'Janine Melnitz, Ghostbuster' and 'Jailbusters'. Can you imagine, a GIRL being a GHOSTBUSTER? Surely that would set the internet alight in this day and age? Not even Rick Moranis' character, Louis Tully, managed to become a more prominent part of the team, despite suiting up with a borrowed proton pack in Ghostbusters II.

What the cartoon show could do, that the film could not in its limited run time, was show more of the daily grind of being a paranormal exterminator. We found out more about the characters' backgrounds, what inspires them, scares them and how the city of New York treats them. Between exploring what makes these guys tick, and the supernatural world building via the often quoted Tobin's Spirit Guide, The Real Ghostbusters was the first real development of the original concept. It may have skewed to a younger audience than the movie, but it also began to invite the idea that maybe anyone could be a Ghostbuster... even you!

GETTING REAL!

After the muted success of Ghostbusters II, The Real Ghostbusters also began to run out of steam. Studio interference meant that what began as a surprisingly mature kids cartoon show soon started trying to appeal to a much younger audience. As a result the show became goofier and broader. It was even renamed 'Slimer & The Real Ghostbusters' when it transpired that the small green ghost who

became a goey pet was a hit with 'the kids'. The focus moved from weekly adventures with Egon, Ray & Co onto the wacky hi-jinks of Slimer and his attempts to escape the clutches of Professor Norman Dweeb, a mad scientist who wants to capture and experiment on Slimer for 'some reason'. Again, although it opened up the world a little more, it was, frankly, not in a very beneficial way.

The success of The Real Ghostbusters brought in a newer and younger audience at a time when you couldn't simply rewatch the movie at the touch of a button. The cartoon series kept the franchise alive throughout the mid-80s and allowed children around the world to take part in the ongoing adventures of the superstars of the supernatural. It also helped that the TV series went hand in hand with a massively successful range of toys from Kenner. While it was not uncommon in the 80s to have a range of action figures based upon a hit movie or TV show, most of them involved characters invested with special powers or skills that no child could possibly attempt to achieve in reality. When a child played with Luke Skywalker or Superman, they were characters to aspire to, but could not relate to. However, with Ghostbusters, there was a sense that these heroes were just average Joes who took it upon themselves to tackle the unknown. It demystified the fear of the bogeyman or the monster under the bed, and, more importantly, when kids played Ghostbusters in the playground, no one had to play the villain. The kids could all share the imagination of a giant monster or Stay Puft Marshmallow man and work as a team to bust it. With a small plastic toy Proton Pack on your back, you really felt as though you could be part of the Ghostbusters team, or maybe even start your own franchise.

EXTREME TO THE MAX!

Like most trends, The Real Ghostbusters cartoon and toy line couldn't run forever, and by the start of the 90s the show had been cancelled and the toy line slowly disappeared. As the movies languished in development hell, the world of Ghostbusters became one of nostalgic ▶

Even in animated form the Ghostbusters were introducing new characters to build up the team.



THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS™

OMNIBUS



The Nintendo Wii edition of Ghostbusters allowed you to play as a man or woman. A first for the franchise.



recollection. Since a third film was not looking like an immediate possibility, Sony sought to reinvigorate the brand and wanted a new team of Ghostbusters with a hip new attitude to take over from the original characters. That show became *Extreme Ghostbusters* and was drenched in 90s buzzwords like 'edgy' or 'darker'.

Whatever its flaws were, what the show did do for the very first time in the franchise's history was to bring in a whole new cast to take the reigns and lead the Ghostbusters into the 21st century. *Extreme Ghostbusters* was nowhere near the success of the original series, but it presented a new group of flawed yet dedicated ghost hunters who were just as much a bunch of misfits as the original team. The stories also tried to tackle more mature subjects as well as deal with interpersonal interactions. Although Egon and Janine remained to ground the show with some recognisable elements (and yes, Slimer came back too), the new gang were very different from the Columbia University rejects we knew and loved.

You could argue the show was a little too eager to prove itself culturally diverse. You had Eduardo, a slacker of Latin American descent. Garrett, a sports nut who was born disabled and confined to a wheelchair. Roland was the tech guy with an African American background and finally Kylie, who was a bit Goth but an expert in the paranormal. Importantly, their backgrounds were more than just racial box ticking, with their hang ups and heritage becoming major parts of their adventures. This, in turn, opened up the storytelling possibilities enormously and gave much more depth and variety to the potentially limited remit of ghosts and ghostbusting.

Although it only ran for 40 episodes (as compared to *The Real Ghostbusters*' 140) it possibly did more to expand the franchise than anything that came before it, certainly in terms of new characters, but also in terms of technology and mythology. It also showed that the world could be expanded outside of the original line up.

GHOSTHEADS

Since 1984, the fan base had been growing. Those kids who once strapped Kenner Proton Packs to their backs had begun to craft their

own movie accurate replicas with grubby flight suits and PKE meters at the ready. In time, those fans began to find like-minded individuals in their local areas and, in turn, created their own Ghostbusters franchises. In this respect, something only hinted at in the original movie began to take form in reality. Around the world, real ghostbusting groups began forming, painting up old cars to make their own personal Ecto-1s, and instead of catching ghosts, they would represent the film at local events or comic cons, usually for a lark, but also to raise money for charity.

What these groups also managed to achieve was the ability to keep the world of Ghostbusters alive whilst the movies were out of popular culture. If it couldn't have been achieved on screen, at least Ramis and Aykroyd's dream of a Ghostbusters Universe was happening in states and cities around the world. They continued to fly the flag whilst Sony desperately struggled to get a new movie off the ground.

When one of these Ghostheads cos-played as a Ghostbuster, they didn't dress and act like Ray Stantz; they inserted themselves into that world. It strongly suggested that anyone could be a Ghostbuster and that anyone and everyone was welcome, no matter your age, race, sex or ability. It was, on reflection, an extremely novel approach to fandom. It's an inclusive and varied world out there and these franchises were proving that you didn't have to be born with super powers to live your dream.

When Ghostbusters turned 25 in 2009, the fiction began to reflect the non-fiction. Sony was able to reach out to its fan base and invite them to celebrate the milestone. This inclusivity was also beginning to be reflected in the other media in which Ghostbusters was appearing. In 2009, after 20 years of uneven attempts, Activision released *Ghostbusters: The Videogame* for home consoles. It was written by and featured all the original cast in what many believe would be the closest they would ever get to a *Ghostbusters 3*. What was fascinating about the game was it gave players the first proper chance to be a part of the Ghostbusting team, as a new character called Rookie.

For the first time, gamers could project themselves in amongst the characters they adored. In an even more progressive turn of events, in the Wii version of the game you could even choose to be a female Rookie! Slowly, the possibilities were expanding. >

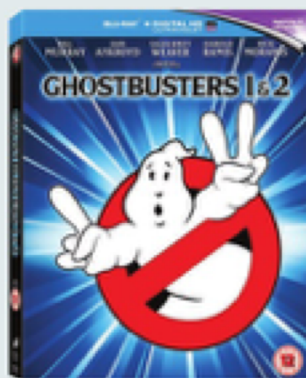
THE GHOSTBUSTERS UNIVERSE

WE'VE BEEN CROSSING THE STREAMS FOR YEARS...

“THE SUCCESS OF THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS BROUGHT IN A NEWER AND YOUNGER AUDIENCE AT A TIME WHEN YOU COULDN'T SIMPLY REWATCH THE MOVIE AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON. THE CARTOON SERIES KEPT THE FRANCHISE ALIVE THROUGHOUT THE MID 80S”

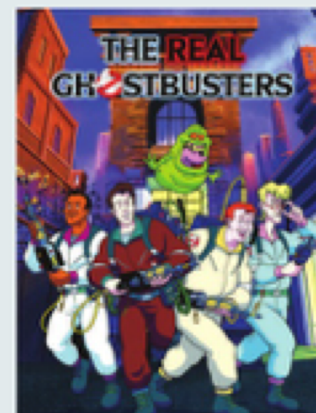


// MOVIES



The original is a classic, packed with great characters, iconic lines and eye-popping spooktacular visuals. It's a true piece of pop culture. The sequel, although saddled with fewer memorable moments and the annoying feeling you are watching more of a remake, still has plenty to recommend. The blu-rays feature an astounding amount of extra features to enjoy and even the sequel gets some long lost deleted scenes to discover, featuring a lost subplot with Rick Moranis' Louis Tully desperately trying to capture Slimer with very little success.

// CARTOON SERIES



If you grew up in the 80s you were surely aware of the super successful The Real Ghostbusters cartoon, featuring the on-going adventures of Egon, Ray, Peter and Winston. It was a surprisingly mature show considering its content and often featured frightening ghosts. Part of that came from great writing with talent such as J Michael Straczynski contributing stories. Tracking down the 90s reboot Extreme Ghostbusters is also well worth your time. It was a darker show, but warranted that tone. There were some unnerving stories and touched on troubling storylines.

// COMIC BOOKS



In the 80s, NOW in the US and Marvel in the UK began a successful run of The Real Ghostbusters comics. Both series, although published independently, began reprinting each other's stories as the run continued. They've since been released as omnibus volumes. In the mid 2000s 88mph Comics published a four part adventure titled Legion that updated the characters, had a more serious tone and placed their adventures in the present. Recently, IDW has published Ghostbusters International with new characters and multiverse adventures.

// GAMES



There have been many Ghostbusters games, not many of them were good. In the tedious 80's home computer game you waited the best part of half an hour for something to happen and when it did, it wasn't much. However, it did give us the winning title screen: "CONGLATURATION !!! YOU HAVE COMPLETED A GREAT GAME. AND PROVED THE JUSTICE OF OUR CULTURE. NOW GO AND REST OUR HEROES !" The Activision 2009 release was a delight, featuring most of the original cast, it gave you the chance to throw a proton stream around New York!

CROSSING THE STREAMS

It wasn't just in gaming that Ghostbusters was becoming more inclusive. It wasn't even that unique. Even in 1989, West End Games had created a role playing game called Ghostbusters International that tasked you with setting up your own franchise and, in typical Dungeons & Dragons fashion, let you 'role play' your own personalised ghost hunting adventures. But it was IDW Comics in 2009 that really began to run with the idea of developing the universe further. In volume six of its ongoing run of Ghostbusters comics, the original crew briefly vanished and were replaced by the 'New Ghostbusters' with Janine and Kylie heading up the group of new recruits. In February 2016, the next logical step in this evolution was introduced in the form of Ghostbusters: International where, finally, the franchise became a global venture. The comic series is proving to be a very popular and welcome addition.

Which brings us to Paul Feig's 2016 reboot. Sony Pictures had set up Ghost Corps, a branch of Sony created to deal with expanding Ghostbusters across all media, not just film. The convoluted history of developing Ghostbusters 3 eventually led to a decision which fractured the fan base. Rather than continue on from Ghostbusters II, it was decided to reboot everything from scratch leaving Reitman, Aykroyd and Ramis (before his untimely death) as guardians of the property creatively. There would now be new blood in charge, a writer-director with a strong history of successful comedy films and TV shows, featuring a cast of experienced comedy talent. It just so happened that the talent was a cast of women. This fact alone made the apparently already disagreeable idea of a reboot all the more unpalatable to 'fans' who pushed the argument from the tired complaints of reboot fatigue into something akin to the grotesque 'GamerGate' debate.

WE'RE READY TO BELIEVE YOU

The online arguments have been extremely unpleasant, with a vocal number of self righteous fans deeming the new film, sight unseen, as a personal affront to their childhoods and geekdom in general. It's impossible to judge any film until we've seen it, but the bottom line is that despite the sad fact we will never see the original team in action one last time, there is nothing about the reboot that warrants the absolutely

sickening bouts of racist and sexist vitriol that supposed fans are offering up on social media. In fact, that attitude completely goes against the inclusive nature the fandom has been so proud to boast over the past three decades.

Feig and his team have been subject to all manner of hateful, snarky comments, and for what? So we can see a much older cast we are connected to go through the motions one more time? Anyone who saw the latest Die Hard or Indiana Jones films can attest that, sadly, you can never go home. That feeling we got from the magic of that first viewing of Ghostbusters will never be recaptured, no matter how many sequels we demand, hell, Ghostbusters II proved that back in 1989.

In a cynical age of movie universes and countless Marvel/Star Wars/DC blockbusters, it makes sense that other studios would be searching their back catalogue of IPs for their own universe to build. Ghostbusters is as good as any, but for it to truly expand, it needs to move on past its origins, no matter how emotionally tied to them we are. The separation of what's possible within a franchise and what hardcore fans want to keep 'pure' is largely a moot point.

Since 1984 we have seen many variations on Ghostbusters. We have seen new team members, female Ghostbusters, new technology and an expanding mythology as well as the fans themselves creating their own personal take on what it means to be a Ghostbuster. You could argue that all the reboot is doing is finally delivering on that promise to see a wider spectrum of characters and adventures. It's reductive to restrict a franchise if there is so much potential there, and the last 30-odd years of Ghostbusters has shown that there is ample room for growth and discovery. It must simply expand or die, and sadly many 'fans' would rather see it die than allow a new generation of audiences to discover and explore the worlds and characters that existed before for themselves.

Maybe Ghostbusters will always be a victim of its success. What made the movie such a hit was also what made the sequel so creatively stagnant. It took the work of new voices and other creative talent to develop the franchise into a cartoon series, a number of videogames and comic books. It only makes sense to grow the universe further, to let other people play in that paranormal sandbox and see what they can create. Ultimately, if the new film is a hit and inspires a whole new generation of Ghostheads, isn't that exactly what Peter Venkman wanted, way back in 1984? **GM**

