

Janet Staiger

»NUKING THE FRIDGE«

Great Expectations and Affective Reception

As the acceleration of conversations between film producers and fans have increased over the past thirty years, the broad awareness of forthcoming projects has a potential downside. Will the film meet audience expectations? This problem is exacerbated when the film is a sequel, part of a carefully calculated genre franchise for which an unsatisfactory entry could harm profits beyond the most immediate box office. »Nuking the Fridge« considers US fan reception of »Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull« on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb). While many fans enjoyed the film, others were, as director George Lucas predicted, disappointed. At least amongst the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) crew, three major themes of disappointment developed. One involved Steven Spielberg's authorship. A second concerned the story structure with fans using film and literary analysis to criticize pacing, clarity, and (lack of) suspense. The third theme, for which the marketing might have prepared viewers, involved dissonances between the formula of Indiana Jones as the fans had constructed it and this sequel.



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Janet Staiger is the William P. Hobby Centennial Professor Emeritus of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin. As a theoretician and historian of film and television, she has published on the Hollywood mode of production, the economic history and dynamics of the industry and its technology, post-structural and feminist/queer approaches to authorial studies, the historical reception of cinema and television programs, and cultural issues involving gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity.

Among her publications

- »Political Emotions« (co-ed. with nn Cvetkovich and Ann Reynolds, 2010)
- »Convergence Media History« (co-ed. with Sabine Hake, 2008)
- »Media Reception Studies« (2005)
- »Authorship and Film« (co-ed. with David Gerstner, 2003)
- »Perverse Spectators: The Practices of Film Reception« (2000)
- »Blockbuster TV: Must-See Sitcoms in the Network Era« (2000)
- »Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema« (1995)
- »Interpreting Films: Studies in the Historical Reception of American Cinema« (1992)
- »The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960« (with David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, 1985)