

cereal:geek[®]

animation of the eighties



issue two
second quarter 2007

ISSUE TWO CREDITS

EDITOR--

JAMES EATOCK

DESIGN AND LAYOUT--

HARRIET CORNWALL

JAMES EATOCK

WRITERS--

HARRIET CORNWALL

JAMES EATOCK

TOPHER HANCE

ROD HANNAH

JON KALLIS

ROBERT LAMB

MARK LUNGO

ERIC MARSHALL

ROSS MAY

TARA O'SHEA

MARTIN SMITH

JON TALPUR

ARTISTS--

NATHAN BAERTSCH

ART BALTAZAR

BOO

CODY CONSTABLE

MARK FAIRLESS

PEDRO FIGUE

FRANCESCO!

MICAH J. GUNNELL

LEANNE HANNAH

MIKE JUNGBLUTH

TIM KELLY

JON LANDRAY

ERIC MARSHALL

AARON MASIK

RICH A. MOLINELLI

MATT MOYLAN

KEITH O'MALLEY

DANIEL MORALES OLIVERA

MAKOTO ONO

DAN SCHOENING

KEN STACY

MICHAŁ SZYKSIAN

ANDIE TONG

TORI

KEITH TUCKER

COLORISTS--

NATHAN BAERTSCH

NICOLAS CHAPUIS

ANDREW CRAMER

THOMAS GABEL

JUKKA ISSAKAINEN

EDMON O'DONOGHUE

JOSHUA RAUELLO

VAL STAPLES

ART CONTRIBUTORS--

MARK SHEARD

editorial

THANK YOU for purchasing issue two of **cereal:geek**! More importantly THANK YOU for being so incredibly patient! As you well know this issue was a tad later than planned (just check out the cover date - 'second quarter?'). But have no fear; I am slowly beginning to understand this whole magazine-publishing lark a little better. In all seriousness with every issue I really do learn how to better produce the next issue, and issue three will be with you sooner than you expect!

I have been genuinely surprised by the overwhelming positive response to the first issue of **cereal:geek**, and I thank all of those who have supported the magazine. And before you ask; Yes, I have searched for the magazine on Google! (I have to learn what is being said about the magazine, don't I?) I hope this issue and future issues live up to people's expectations...

So what exactly does issue two of **cereal:geek** have in store for you? Well, if you move your eyes across to the opposing page you will see the contents. But let's face it, no one ever really reads the contents page do they?! Actually, no one ever reads the editorial, so why am I still typing?!

Anyway, not that it was apparent in the first issue, but every issue of **cereal:geek** is written to have an underlying theme running through its main articles. Although never explicitly stated the first issue's theme discussed how **violence** was portrayed in the cartoons from the eighties, which explains why She-Ra was slightly bruised on the front cover illustration. This time I'm blatantly going to state that this issue's theme discusses **magic and science**, and how the two often-opposing forces were dealt with throughout the many cartoons of the eighties. Some shows favored the balance of magic and science, whereas other shows favored one over the other, in an attempt to distinguish good from evil. A lot of great articles and beautiful illustrations await you...

As always it's been a pleasure working with every individual on this magazine and long may this continue. Well, at least into issue three! Speaking of which as you read this issue I will already be producing the third issue of **cereal:geek**! Yes, it's a risk as this magazine is currently making no money, but my attitude is that every magazine has to start somewhere...

For regular news about **cereal:geek** visit the magazine's Blog! As issue three is now in production you will find previews of what will appear in the soon-to-be-released issue!

<http://cerealgeek.blogspot.com/>

James "Busta Toons" Eatock



The cover of **cereal:geek** issue two was illustrated by four artists; Evil-Lyn by **Emiliano Santalucia**; Optimus Prime by **Makoto Ono**; colors by **Wen-Xi Chen**, and textures by **Nathan Baerstch**.

Printed by: **UPG**

www.upgroup.co.uk - 01344 382 111

with thanks to:

Harriet Cornwall - without whom this magazine would not exist! Although try telling that to her; I guarantee that she will always strongly deny it! :)

If you have any **comments**, or if you would like to **contribute** the next issue please send an email to:

cerealgeek@googlemail.com

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"Ghostbusting is the best film of the decade" ★★★★★ PETER VENKMAN

#1 VENKMAN



#2 MELNITZ



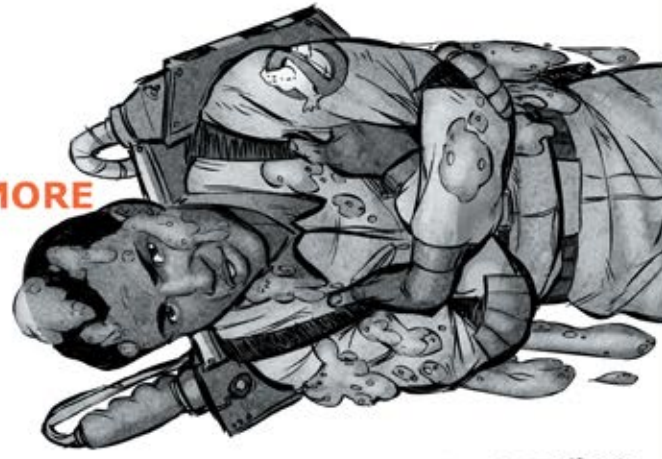
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Ghostbusting

illustration by Nathan Baertsch - colors by Joshua Ravello

TOP TEN TRANSFORMATIONS

Transformation sequences were abundant during the animated shows of the eighties. So much so that this magazine you hold in your hands was at one point was going to be called *Transformation Sequence*. Even if shows did not have a transformation sequence as such, they at least had a stock sequence, think of shows like *Bravestarr* and *M.A.S.K.* as an example. And let's face it; these moments were filled with phrases that have become a part of pop culture...

10. GHOSTBUSTERS

There were occasions when Filmation's stock system would be so incredibly repetitive that we would want to hit fast forward on our VHS players. Nowhere in Filmation history would this be more apparent than in *Ghostbusters*. The transformation of Jake Kong and Eddie Spenser into their Ghostbusting costumes would take one entire minute of airtime! Filmation often packed a lot of energy into their transformation sequences, but this was sadly not the case with *Ghostbusters*. The premise of the transformation was an interesting one, but with little to no variations over the course of sixty-five episodes this is one of the most lagging sequences of the eighties, even with its up-tempo music!

9. BANANAMAN

British cartoon *Bananaman* was never going to go down as the greatest cartoon ever made. However the transformation of Eric into Bananaman was the best piece of animation in the show. The sequence was highly creative yet surreal with Eric's clothes peeling off to reveal his Bananaman costume. Amusingly, at one point we see the huge muscular body of Bananaman still wearing Eric's shorts and shoes. In a show with a tight budget it appears that they put everything into this one memorable sequence.

8. VOLTRON

Yes, five individual piloted robots merging into one powerful robot is nothing new these days. But at the time *Voltron* was something very special indeed. One of the most pleasing things about the formation of Voltron is not only the animated background, but also the level of detail used on the robots as they form. This sequence is also remembered for the end pose struck by Voltron, making the viewer feel like they have just witnessed something uniquely special!

7. SPIDER-MAN AND HIS AMAZING FRIENDS

Bobby Drake's transformation into Iceman was one of the most visually interesting things about this series. Up until that point the comics had shown Bobby simply freezing his body to turn into Iceman. Thankfully the animators decided to try something else. In one of the most creative transformations of the eighties Bobby Drake fires ice from his hands towards his feet and slowly brings his hands over his head, turning himself into a large ice cube, until he breaks free as Iceman!

6. BIONIC SIX

Bionic Six is a series next to *ThunderCats* that had consistently impressive animation. The transformation sequence which showcased their bionic abilities was brief, but beautifully animated with the passion that TMS always demonstrated in their work. While it had elements of the *Centurions* transformation it featured some complicated character design work and highly advanced camera moves around the characters bodies. And look out for those speedlines...

5. SHE-RA, PRINCESS OF POWER

The reason that the transformation of Adora into She-Ra isn't higher in this chart is because it loses points due to its incredibly poor pacing. As the stock sequence begins Adora stands at Castle Grayskull with the magic swirling about her. The problem with this shot is that it goes on for far too long. Both Adora and the beautifully illustrated Grayskull background just sit there, static. Interestingly the original layouts for the transformation indicate that it was going to feature a lot more power, with a magical whirlwind surrounding Adora and exploding to reveal She-Ra! Of course this sequence is highly memorable because of the great Haim Saban and Shuki Levy music!

4. THUNDERCATS

Unsurprisingly, from a show that had consistently impressive animation when Lion-O summons his fellow ThunderCats with the Sword of Omens we are treated to wonderful pieces of animation. The most exciting of these sequences would show Lion-O facing the audience swinging his sword and summoning the ThunderCats. Every part of this sequence is perfect. Worth noting is the haunting pitched tone the sword makes each time Lion-O shouts "Thunder" which brings such atmosphere to this memorable sequence.

3. CENTURIONS

One word best describes *Centurions'* various character transformations: complicated! The animators not only had to contend with three characters transforming, but also the fact that each character had an assortment of transformations. The directing on each of the transformations was superb following each piece of weaponry as it attached itself to the Centurion.

2. THE INCREDIBLE HULK

This short-lived often forgotten series featured, in my personal opinion, the best Hulk transformations ever animated for the screen! These sequences showed the agony that Bruce Banner incurred as he became the Hulk. These stunning scenes featured a mix of rotoscoped footage with quality animation! The use of colors and high contrast is beautiful at times and you get a real feel for the power that is unleashed!

1. HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

Why is the transformation of Prince Adam into He-Man the best? Because it is the epitome of a transformation and features the best elements of all the aforementioned sequences! It showcases beautiful animation and effects, attention to detail, perfect pacing, memorable music and sound, atmosphere, and most importantly power! Just look at how Castle Grayskull's contrast reacts against the lightning which is drawn into the sword. And when Adam is consumed by the power, notice that the pace of the lightning slows down, and builds until the point where it explodes revealing He-Man. Of course the highlight occurs when He-Man lowers his sword across and we see Filmation's creative use of film footage in the background. The visuals and the music effortlessly made this the best transformation sequence of the eighties, and had a generation of kids shouting "By the power of Grayskull!"



VOICE ACTOR SPOTLIGHT CAM CLARKE



Versatile is a word which is often used when it comes to describing voice actors, but when you have someone who has voiced a canine anthropomorphic take on d'Artagnan and the most powerful man in the universe, it's certainly a fitting word to use!

Almost literally born into show-business as the son of a movie actor and a variety show singer, Cam Clarke became a voice actor in the early 1980s, and soon found himself working at Intersound Incorporated, a Los Angeles studio primarily involved in the dubbing of foreign productions into other languages. There, Cam worked on three noteworthy anime series, *Around the World with Willy Fog* where he portrayed the title character's right hand cat, Rigadon, *Dogtanian and the Three Muskehounds* where he played the title character of would-be Muskehound Dogtanian, and finally on *Robotech*, where he played hot shot pilot Max Sterling in *The Macross Saga*, along with the ahead-of-his-time (for a cartoon) cross-dressing Lancer in *The New Generation*. Although the former two series were to ultimately only receive a marginal release in the U.S. market, it was undoubtedly Cam's work on *Robotech* which was heavily marketed to compete in the fast-growing world of 1980s toy-based series which brought his voice acting abilities to the widest audience.

After those initial forays into voice acting, it wasn't long before Cam's voice could be heard in other U.S. dubs of various anime series. Most noteworthy were his parts in one of Haim Saban's earliest acquisitions in the form of *Macron-1* in 1986, along with the role of Dirk Daring in *G-Force* (a second reworking of *Gatchaman/Battle of the Planets*, with Dirk being the perpetually-cool Jason/Joe G-2 character), and finally World Events Productions' *Saber Rider and the Star Sheriffs*, the latter two from 1987.

That year would also see Cam finally getting the chance to voice an original

character, freed from the constraints of the ADR voice-work used in dubbing anime productions. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* quickly became a success story of almost-unimaginable proportions, and at the forefront of the series was Cam's portrayal of the honorable and steadfast leader of the Turtles themselves, Leonardo. Not to be outdone, Cam also played the role of the usually-incompetent villainous sidekick Rocksteady. The successful combination of excellent stories, characterization and last but certainly not least, voice acting all helped to propel the series into an incredible 192-episode run that reached well into the following decade.

In addition to his long stint as the leader of the Turtles, Cam also provided voices for *Dino-Riders* in 1988 and *Captain Planet and the Planeteers* in 1990. It was around this time that Cam joined up with many of his former colleagues at Intersound and provided voice work for the Streamline Pictures dubbing company. Although only appearing in a few Streamline productions, Cam did portray one of the most important roles in one of their most important acquisitions, in the form of *Akira*. Playing Kaneda, the motorcycle gang leader whose best friend Testuro manifests telekinetic powers and decides to turn against him, Cam and Streamline brought home to foreign audiences for the first time, just how literate and adult Japanese animation could be and opened the floodgates for anime's wider acceptance in the English-speaking world.

Following *Akira*, Cam went on to voice important characters in other series, such as *The Tick*, where he played the cowardly superhero Die Fledermaus (in his favorite role), *Gargoyles*, where he was the voice of Young Gillecomgain, and *Spider-Man*, where he was producer John Semper's personal choice to play Reed Richards, leader of the Fantastic Four. After a few more years of other voice roles it was once again time for Cam to take on an important leading role in an animated series. And so it was that in 2002, Cam alone became the only U.S. actor involved in the new *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* series from Mike Young Productions, where he expertly played the dual roles of He-Man and Prince Adam (who was clearly much younger than his 80s counterpart). Sadly the series was cancelled in 2004, but by then Cam had already established himself as a major force in providing voice-work for videogames. The most unambiguously important of his latter-day gaming roles is that of Liquid Snake in the ever-popular *Metal Gear Solid* series of games.

With his continuing presence on very popular videogames such as *Metal Gear Solid* and *Painkiller*, along with his newer voice-work on shows such as *W.I.T.C.H.* (to say nothing of his vast and still-popular back catalogue of series), Cam's voice is one that will be proving much entertainment for a very diverse audience for many years to come.



THE BOUNDARIES OF BELIEVABILITY

I will admit that it's hard to point out how a show that dealt with four guys who caught ghosts for a living could push the boundaries of believability. But I will try! In *The Real Ghostbusters* episode "Cry Uncle" Egon's critical uncle Cyrus pays him a visit, and even though the four Ghostbusters take him on a bust, he refuses to believe in the existence of the supernatural. Subsequently he whisks Egon off to the Midwest to begin scientific research in his own laboratory. Whilst the Ghostbusters entertain one final bust Cyrus remains back at the firehouse and inadvertently shuts down the Containment Unit resulting in the reappearance of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man.

The first thing I must make mention of is that the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man was not a ghost in the 1984 feature film, rather he was the form chosen by Gozer (and Ray Stantz) to bring about the end of the world, and was promptly destroyed by the film's end. So we first have to assume that somehow, at some point, the Ghostbusters have captured the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man in some form or another. If we suspend our critical disbelief we can accept that maybe an altogether different ghost assumed the form, but a lot of the dialogue throughout this scene contradicts that theory.

With the Ghostbusters fleeing for their lives in the Ecto-1 Egon frets that the Stay Puft Marshmallow

Man is too big for the Ecto Traps only for Winston (the non-scientific Ghostbuster) to formulate a plan of action. And here's where the problems really start.

The script begins to desperately search for a conclusion to this large and quite frankly overwhelming problem, and finds it when Winston reveals a plan that involves using four traps instead of one. This doesn't feel like the most creatively written episode.

Within the context of *The Real Ghostbusters* this scene fails to work because busting an entity as powerful as the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man should not be as easy as laying down four traps on the floor and tripping the giant creature to land on them! How exactly do you trip a ghost?! The Ghostbusters take twenty seconds to capture and contain him. That alone should convince anyone that this scene does not work!

The last third of this episode with the appearance of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man feels extremely rushed, but there is no doubt that it is a surprising end to the episode. I personally prefer his role in this episode than his later appearances in the series where he often fought alongside the Ghostbusters.

Hmmm, maybe those are the episodes that pushed the boundaries of believability?

by James Eatock

Melnitz, Janine

Real Name: Janine Melnitz

Nicknames: None

Other Current Aliases: None

Occupation: Receptionist

Identity: No dual identity

Legal Status: Citizen of the United States with no criminal record

Former Aliases: None

Place of Birth: Brooklyn, New York

Marital Status: Single

Known Relatives: Unidentified Father, Mother, Sister, Aunt, Nephew, Grandmother, Mother in Law and Brother In Law

Group Affiliation: Ghostbusters

Base of Operations: Ghostbusters HQ

First Appearance: *Ghostbusters* (1984)

History: Janine Melnitz was hired soon after doctors Egon Spengler, Ray Stantz and Peter Venkman started their paranormal investigation and extermination business. Janine was instantly smitten with the tall and studious Egon but he seemed oblivious to her advances. Before the Ghostbusters fought the trans-dimensional being known as Gozer Janine gave Egon her lucky 1964 World's Fair coin. When he tried to return it, foreseeing that he might not return, Janine assured him that it was okay as she had another coin in her possession.

For several years Janine proved herself aptly in the Ghostbusters' employ. Janine always had witty slogans to tell customers over the phone, the right comebacks to Peter's jokes, and after Ray was the person most able to tolerate and interact with their resident ghost Slimer. Several times she also aided the guys when they required another Ghostbuster, and on more than one occasion even acted as their rescuer when held prisoner by supernatural forces.

Janine continued to get along well with her employers and seemed largely content with life, but secretly she was also frustrated with Egon's lack of romantic interest in her. When deceased despot Vigo the Carpathian attempted to resurrect himself Janine had a brief but torrid affair with the Ghostbusters' accountant and lawyer Louis Tully. The two continued to get along well afterwards but their fling was never mentioned by either party again.

While still carrying a torch for Egon an evil spirit called Makeoverus Lotsabucks disguised itself as a fairy godmother and granted Janine's wishes for cosmetic changes in order to get Egon to notice her. Over time she gained height, became thinner and developed a new voice. As this was a long and arduous magical process neither her work colleagues nor her friends noticed the dramatic change. When the Ghostbusters eventually noticed the changes by comparing photos of Janine over the years they saved her from altering herself irreparably, and Egon asked her out to see a science documentary.

Janine continues to work for the Ghostbusters, content with her position, and the forthcoming pay rise that Peter keeps promising.

Height: 5' 3"

Weight: 115 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Red

Unusual Features: None

Strength Level: Janine possesses the normal human strength of a woman of her age, height, and build who engages in moderate regular exercise.

Known Superhuman Powers: Self-proclaimed precognitive powers.

Abilities: Janine is a competent underpaid office worker and able to understand even the illegible of handwritings. She is also able to competently operate the ghostbusting equipment.



THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE
1980S
UNIVERSE

by Ross May - illustration by Nathan Baertsch



who ya gonna animate?

by Ross May - illustration by Dan Schoening

Director Ivan Reitman was reportedly taken aback by the overwhelming positive reaction from children to the 1984 film *Ghostbusters*. After all, the movie does feature smoking, the occasional profanity: e.g. "Let's show this prehistoric bitch how we do things downtown," pre-marital demonic sex, and let us not forget the dozens of ghosts including that scene where Sigourney Weaver's chair grows arms and gropes her. But it is obvious why kids loved the movie - it stars funny guys blasting and trapping monsters. You do not need a focus group to tell you the appeal in that.

Soon after the release and huge success of

the film, Columbia Pictures got DiC (*Inspector Gadget*, *M.A.S.K.*) working on turning it into a children's animated series. Columbia Pictures had acquired the rights to use the name "Ghostbusters" for major motion pictures, but had neglected the television rights. Thus at the very same time Filmmation was creating another Ghostbusters cartoon to cash in on the movie's popularity, but theirs was based on an unrelated live-action television show from the 70's. The solution for Columbia and DiC was to rename their series *The Real Ghostbusters*.

What seems remarkable about *The Real Ghostbusters*, or *RGB*, is how well it transitioned from the movie screen to Saturday morning cartoons. Yes, there are discrepancies, and I will get to them in a moment, but think of all the things the series got right. The four Ghostbusters and secretary Janine are all present. They are still operating out of the old firehouse. The 1959 Cadillac, Ecto-1, is still the main mode of transportation. The ghostbusting equipment, while cosmetically altered for the series, is recognizable and functions exactly the same.



Most importantly, in my opinion, is the fact that there is just about nothing in the series that contradicts the movie or its 1989 sequel. You would think that should be easy, but look at other 80's properties that crossed different mediums. The *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* cartoon was clearly different from its movies (Splinter's origin as a human vs. a rat, the mutagen coming from Dimension X vs. TGR1, etc.), not to mention its comic books being different as well. While the *Super Mario Bros.* cartoons were fairly faithful to the video games, the movie was dark and retained only some superficial similarities. Heck, even the *Muppet Movie* does not jive with the *Muppet Babies* television show. Forget violent influences from cartoon shows, it is amazing they did not give more of us mental disassociate disorders.

But of course there still were differences between *Ghostbusters* and its series. The main characters' appearances were changed in order to keep costs down. If this had not been done then a sizeable chunk of the production money would have gone to the movie's actors just to be able to use their likenesses. The *RGB* versions of Peter, Winston and Janine do not resemble Bill Murray, Ernie Hudson and Annie Potts very much, but then again neither are they dissimilar, enabling viewers to create vague visual connections in their minds to cross the mediums. Egon seems to be a stylized version of Harold Ramis, made skinnier to go along with his geeky status and a shock of now blond hair that defies the physics he is so fascinated with. Ray underwent the greatest metamorphosis by being put onto the short and pudgy side while Dan Aykroyd is a little over six feet tall and was not as husky at the time. On a side note, did you know that Ernie Hudson - who plays Winston in the two movies - auditioned for the same role in the series but did not get the part? Crazy.

Back to the cartoon designs, the proton packs, ghost traps, and PKE meters were also changed. In the movie the proton packs were black and had a lot of complicated looking lights and accessories to them. They looked cool, but would have been very difficult to animate. The *RGB* versions were still recognizable, plus by changing them to blue for the show kids would not be complaining when their wearable proton pack toys were not the correct color (laws prevent toy guns from being colored completely black). Another noticeable change in the equipment was the new ecto-containment unit where ghosts are stored. In the movie it appeared to be a relatively small device, but in *RGB* it was a huge machine in a basement room not previously seen.

While most of the series did a good job at remaining faithful to the movies, one episode in particular took strides to address the changes. "Citizen Ghost," aired in the first season (1986) and was written by then head writer and editor, J. Michael Straczynski. The whole episode serves basically

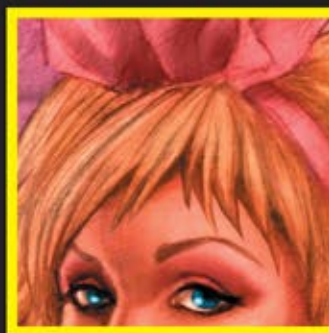
as a bridge between the movie and the series, in the process answering how Slimer the ghost came to live (or is that unlive?) at the firehouse. The Ghostbusters return home after defeating Gozer, and in an excellent display of attention to details they are actually wearing four grey uniforms rather than their new differentiating jumpsuits. As you will recall the old containment unit blew up in the first movie, and within minutes Egon states he intends to "build the next one bigger." Problems arise when the old jumpsuits are contaminated with ghostly energies, animating them as four ghostbusting doppelgangers. Slimer, who has been hanging around the firehouse, saves the Ghostbusters, cementing his bond with them and causing Peter to accept the flying pile of goo even if it means a lack of food and clean clothing for himself.

Slimer's existence on the show worked rather seamlessly, but the appearances of the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man contradicted the movie. Not only was Mr. Stay Puft roasted to oblivion in the finale, it was made fairly clear that the Marshmallow Man was a new form for Gozer. In *RGB* the sugary giant was usually shown as being friendly with the Ghostbusters, and especially with Slimer. The characters also occasionally mentioned Gozer, but never acknowledged the fact that the Marshmallow Man - according to the movie - was Gozer. In terms of plot this was the most brazen contradiction.

What was nice to see was that the filmmakers held *RGB* in some regard when they did the sequel. They could have easily ignored the cartoon's existence, but instead made little gestures to coalesce the two. Dana and Peter are not dating at the start of the film, which jives with Peter being single in the series. Originally the supped-up ectomobile was to be called Ecto-2, but was changed to Ecto-1A when it was recognized that Ecto-2 was a helicopter in the cartoon. And of course, Slimer returned for the sequel and was shown hanging around the firehouse. On the downside Janine and Louis hook up in *Ghostbusters II* when we all know Egon's her man, but I think *RGB* fans just assume she has a fetish for nerds (plus notice that when Janine zips Louis up in a jumpsuit he is wearing one of Egon's, despite Egon being the tallest member and Louis being so short... no, that's not messed up at all, Janine).

The Real Ghostbusters is one of the few 80's cartoons that you can accept as existing in the same reality as its movie counterparts. No multiverse is required. If you really want you could separate the two, as one episode suggested with its tongue-in-cheek when the guys had a movie based on them produced that turned out to be the actual film. Personally, I prefer to accept them all together. How do I rectify the Marshmallow Man problem? A wizard did it. And how seamlessly does that work, the cartoon even had wizards in it!





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£6.00 UK
C9.00 EUR
\$12.00 US
\$14.00 CAN

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