

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

“Archeology is the search for fact, not truth. If it is truth you’re interested in, Dr. Tyree’s Philosophy class is right down the hall.” So states Professor Indiana “Indy” Jones to his class after returning from an adventure in which he retrieved a lost artifact. Yet the next adventure Indy goes on is not to search for artifacts, but to find his kidnapped father Dr. Henry Jones. Along the way, Indy finds more than just facts. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* uses plot, acting, and dialog to take the viewer on a wonderful adventure.

As *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* starts out, the plot seems simple enough. But as the movie progresses, the plot becomes multi-layered and more intriguing. The changing plot of good versus evil, doing what is right and fighting what is wrong, really makes this a must-see film. Indy discovers ancient artifacts and wants to place them in a museum, but the bad guys take those artifacts for profit or power. This is a simple start to the movie, but as Caryn James, a writer for the [New York Times](#) says, “This is the ultimate quest movie, each discovery leading to a new search-for father, for the Grail, for faith” (79). Throughout the movie, Dr. Henry Jones is searching for the Holy Grail. The Germans also want the Grail for its power of eternal youth. To speed up their search for the Grail, the Germans kidnap Dr. Jones. While on the quest to save his father, Indy is also captured by the Germans. As the father-son duo try to escape their captors, there is a calm quiet moment, and the discussion turns to what type of father the elder Dr. Jones had been during Indy’s younger years. Dr. Jones explains to his son that by not telling Indy to wash up, clean his room, or do his chores, Dr. Jones was a great father. This is a new discovery for Indy. Yet this should not be a shock to the viewer, for as movie critic Roger Ebert has observed, this type of occurrence at unusual times and unexpected locations is normal for the Jones’. This type of changing plot line is what makes this film so enjoyable.

With that changing plot line, the viewer sees not just great actors, but great acting. This aspect really brings *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* to life. Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones plays his role as the adventurous archeologist extremely well. While the goal may be an artifact, the plan is usually done on the fly with uncertainty; but it is always an adventure. Sean Connery portrays Dr. Henry Jones as both a challenging father to Indy, and an older, more refined archeologist who has a plan in place. These two distinguished actors play such different roles, yet one writer for [Variety](#) has observed, “The Harrison Ford-Sean Connery father-and -son team gives ‘Last Crusade’ unexpected emotional depth, reminding us that real film magic is not in special effects” (McBride). This all comes together throughout the film, but especially in a scene where the two characters are escaping from their captors and come to a cross-road. Indy wants to go right, to continue escaping, and pursuing the Holy Grail. Dr. Jones wants to go left, which would lead back to the captors who possess his diary containing the clues needed to find the Grail. So this is both a literal and figurative cross-road. During the heated exchange, Dr. Jones slaps Indy for his “blasphemy”. This not only startles Indy, it also allows him realize that his father’s decision is the right choice. More than an exchange between father and son, it is between an archeologist and his peer. Both actors play strong roles that add to the scene. A writer for [Entertainment Weekly](#), Steve Daly wrote

how this type of scene brings another dimension to each character, and this strengthens the performance. The acting is another aspect of this film that makes the viewing so much fun.

While the plot and acting are great aspects of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, the dialog really brings this great adventure home. Whether the dialog exchange is between characters, or a single line spoken alone, it all adds to the excitement and discovery within the film. Examples of this occur at the start, where young Indy is on an adventure with his Boy Scout troop. As Indy and a friend are exploring some caves and arches, the two boys come upon a group of treasure hunters. As the other scout is leaving to get help, Indy is asked what he will do. The reply of, "I'll think of something," shows how dialog helps describe the character's creativity and spontaneity. As the scene continues and Indy finds that out he is alone, the exclamation of, "Everybody is lost but me," is another illustration of Indy's character. Later in the film, a conversation between Indy and his father, Dr. Henry Jones shows again how dialog strengthens the story. Dr. Jones is being held captive by the German army. During the rescue attempt, Indy crashes through a window into the room where his father is being held. During the scene, Dr. Jones calls Indy "Junior" and Indy's reply of, "Stop calling me 'Junior'," adds depth to the scene and the story. This short dialog gives a brief peek into the type of father and son relationship between Indy and Dr. Jones. Desson Howe, a Washington Post Staff Writer has observed how this exchange shows that Sean Connery, "... is an old block of Harrison Ford's chip." A little later during the escape, the father to son line of "You left just when you were becoming interesting" is such a delight, for it illustrates the "[e]dgy father-son relationship" in this film (Canby 93). The wonderful use of dialog to support the film is another reason why *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* has become a classic adventure film, and a must-see for all adventure loving fans.

As the final scene fades out and the credits start to roll, the viewer realizes that more than just an adventure has been shared. The changing plot gives the viewer more insight into relationships and what is important. The great acting shows that each character was both a lead, and a supporting role in the story. The dialog reveals the change in both characters' perspectives. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* has given the viewer what a great adventure film should give: clues to follow in life's crusade.

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