

Southern Enclave

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Race Relations in the SW Universe

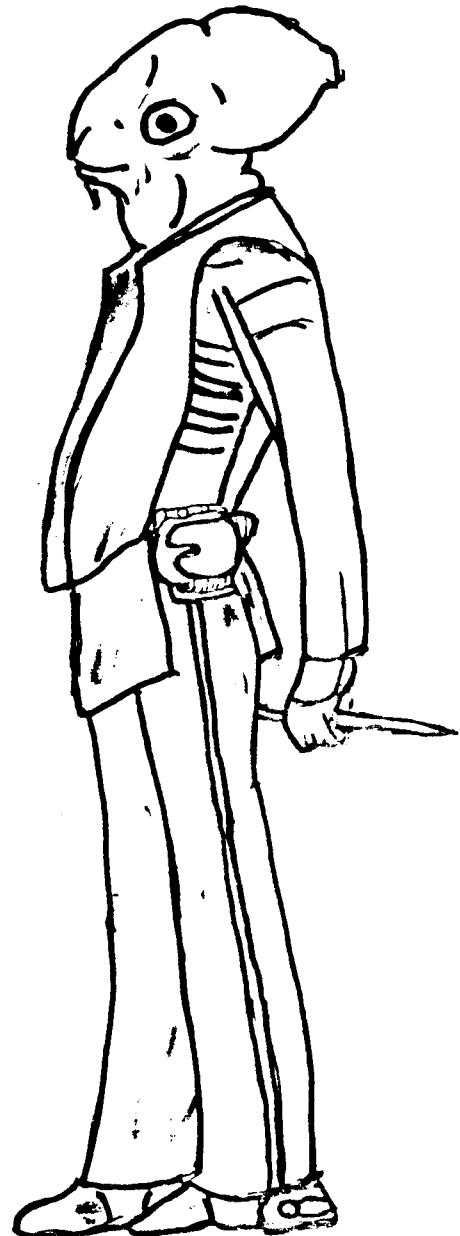
Sandra Necchi

In a galaxy so diverse as that presented in the STAR WARS Saga, racial/species conflict is impossible to keep track of. Some humans may hate all non-humans, while others may hate only certain non-humans. Then there are the complex arrangements possible between non humans. The internal bigotries of one planet may reach out into neighboring systems and mix with whatever conflicts exist there, ad infinitum. The variables inherent in such overwhelming variety can make galactic sociologists quite overworked. Then again, there is the strong possibility that because of this immense racial/species diversity, conflict may be muted and in many places non-existent. The more homogeneous a society, the less possibility for racial conflict, but in STAR WARS, homogeneity might just mean diversity, that is, the norm in everyday life.

Where this racial diversity comes together in largely egalitarian form is among the criminal spacer element, as seen in Mos Eisley. (As for Jabba, he's an equal opportunity tyrant.) Racism is largely a product of economic privilege and competition and, to a lesser extent, a particular people's own ideological assumptions about itself. In the world of the outlaw, such biases do not go away, but they are often transcended by more common links, like risk and opportunity for gain. These are more evenly distributed. This is not to say that some form of hierarchy is non-existent, for that would be impossible. There is always unequal distribution of everything wherever one goes, even in the most democratic arrangements. But there is nothing more equalizing than non-conformity, and certainly criminals are the most non-conforming of societal dissidents.

But the galaxy in SW certainly does not constitute one collective, uniform society. It is fragmented, parts of it quite mongrelized, others not. And we see many more humans than any other race. We can interpret this as cinematic necessity, or we can accept it as an accurate portrayal of the galaxy at large. If the latter, then conflict is inevitable, even endemic.

As an example, the Alliance, on the one hand, exhibits racial integration, especially in ROTJ with the Mon Calimari and Lando's co-pilot being in crucial leadership positions. The Calimari are



assigned an entire command of their own, in arguably the most important battle in the war. Yet, on the other hand, one is reminded of the army's old racist custom of separating regiments by race. Why no integration of combatants? It might simply be due to differing biological needs making it harder for species integration to occur, yet we have already seen that in ANH and ROTJ (Mos Eisley and Jabba's palace respectively) that that does not necessarily have to be a problem. There is always the possibility that the Calimari prefer to operate together among their own kind for cultural, sociological and/or psychological reasons. Beyond all this, however, is the apparent state of human-dominated leadership within the Alliance, and in most of the lower ranks as well. If the Alliance leaders are former Republicans, then perhaps this is a sign of the Old Republic's afflictions, still evident within the Alliance hierarchy. This does not necessarily mean that there are overt biases against non-humans within the Alliance leadership, but that they fail to attract the participation of many non-humans. Perhaps the Alliance simply does not appeal to the specific needs of non humans. This is quite a common phenomenon with rebellions or protest movements which profess, quite sincerely, egalitarian and humanitarian goals but wind up too homogeneous in their membership. The white middle class student movements of the 60's--though active in civil rights work in the early years--often failed to appeal to blacks, activist or not, particularly when they put civil rights on the back burner in favor of protesting the Vietnam war. Many non humans may simply view the Alliance with disinterest, even distrust, reasoning--and probably quite rightly that their main goal is simply to wrest power from the human Imperials, that their war is merely one between two different factions of the human elite. The Alliance may not have enough consciousness of the problems of non-humans to attract enough solidarity among them.

In reference to the Empire, all we see on screen are humans serving and working with it. Darth Vader might use the services of non human bounty hunters, but they do not specifically work for the Empire. In ANH, we see an Imperial officer refer to Chewie as a "thing" in a rather rude tone of voice. We do not know if this is an attitude common among the Imperials or if this individual officer is just one among the general population of the galaxy who do not like tall, furry "things".

If indeed there exists an Imperial bias, how does this translate into policy? Are there any Imperial laws based on race, like exclusivity restrictions? Is there perhaps a movement among non oxygen breathers for easier access to major Imperial centers that are human dominated? If so, did this movement exist during the time of the Republic? (Since I believe the Empire to be merely a less subtle extension of the Old Republic, I think the answer to that question is a resounding yes.)

The only time in the Saga that we see the Empire even remotely interacting with non humans collectively is in ROTJ with the Ewoks. The Empire seems to have completely overlooked the Ewoks as a threat, probably reasoning in a condescending fashion that these "primitive, ignorant savages" could hardly constitute a danger to its plans. This is obviously a racist attitude, but consider what this says about the kind of empire this is. (Anyone familiar with studies of imperial methods and mentalities, from the Babylonians to the Americans, might rummage through their old notes and compare.) For whatever

reasons, the Empire felt Endor was strategic enough to build the second Death Star in its space. Yet up until then, the Ewoks remained undisturbed, with no Imperial interference in their lives. Their traditions, their cultural integrity remains intact. Even when the Empire does appear to build the Death Star--a highly classified security risk activity--it does not round up the Ewoks and put them in detention or exploit their labor nor knowledge of Endor, nor their land and resources. Such harsh actions are commonly used by Imperial powers, particularly in times of high security risk. (Though how the Empire could use Ewok labor is anyone's guess.) And the Imperial presence is greatly limited. There is not the usual overwhelming, heavily guarded base one would expect on an Imperial possession. Again, keep in mind that the building of the Death Star with the Emperor personally overseeing final construction is hardly an ordinary affair.

The Empire becomes hostile only when the Ewoks actively side with the rebels. By doing so, they have involved themselves in the war, and are therefore (in terms of warfare) legitimate targets. Certainly the Empire attacks the Ewoks in brutal fashion, as the latter do not have equivalent technology. Perhaps from the Imperial point of view, the Ewoks' sudden hostility without any provocation deserves nothing less. Indeed, it was the Empire's policy of benign neglect that made it possible for the Ewoks to so easily guard and aid the rebels. The question arises why the Ewoks so quickly decided to join the war. The easiest answer would be that 3PO's story so convinced them, and their awe of "magic" so entranced them, that they immediately knew just who the "real" good guys were. The problem with this answer is that it legitimates the Imperial attitude of condescension towards the Ewoks. The stereotypes which we still carry of the "primitive" culture come into play here. (I am reminded of the old story taught me in grammar school of how the white man fooled the Indians by buying Manhattan for \$24, and much later I learned that the Indian concept of land made them believe that they were fooling the white man, since "buying" land was like "buying" the sky--you can't really own it. It was not theirs to sell, nor the white man's to buy.) The more just answer would be that the Ewoks, at first frightened by Luke's use of the Force, came to sense that this party of potential food was honorable beings, and that they (the Ewoks) owed the Empire nothing. (An aside: calling the Ewoks cannibals is somewhat chauvinist, since they do not eat each other, just non Ewoks. In a galaxy of so many sentient beings, eating humans does not constitute cannibalism, unless sentience alone is the deciding factor.)

Clearly, the Empire is not interested in having tight, all encompassing control over all its subjects. It is not even interested in informing all its subjects that it is in control, as the Ewoks seem to have little knowledge of the Empire. For worlds that are more closely integrated into the Imperial political/economic infrastructure--the metrocenter--the Empire probably has more overt control, although I would imagine that control manifests itself through local proxies, since that is the cheapest and easiest form of domination.

Now we come to the place with the most internal conflict that we have seen on screen--Tatooine, a planet rife with racial tension. There are three known native sentient species--humans, Jawas and the Tusken Raiders, or Sandpeople. There is obvious tension between the latter and the humans, while

there is a suggested possibility that the Tuskens might be hostile to the Jawas as well. When Ben and Luke find the results of the Imperial attack on the Jawas in ANH, Luke implies that it could not have been the Sandpeople because "they've never hit anything this big before." The implication there is that Tuskens might attack Jawas, but not if they are in large groups (which is probably a rare occurrence. Jawas appear smart enough not to travel in the desert in small numbers.)

What is the crux of the Sandpeople's hostility towards the humans? The latter have either come from off-world or from another part of Tatooine, and not very recently, but perhaps within enough generations for the Sandpeople to remember a time when there were no humans in close proximity to their territory. Is this conflict then based on competition for land and resources?

When human beings decide to settle and develop a territory, the consequences to native populations are rarely if ever considered. The colonizers invariably rationalize their actions by developing an attitude of bigotry towards those whose lands and resources they are taking. We are all familiar with them: that these people are "naturally primitive, backward and savage." Such words do not constitute objective truths, but are constructs of civilizations that view themselves as "advanced" or superior. These same arguments were used by European white settlers in places like North America and particularly Africa (where Western farming and business methods and priorities imposed that continent's eventual dependency and constant famines, where before Africans were largely self-sufficient. See *HOW EUROPE UNDERDEVELOPED AFRICA* by Walter Rodney.) The process of colonization is never understood by native peoples, who are at first more than willing to share what they have. The Sandpeople exhibit classic symptoms of a people who have realized the truth too late.

The effects upon a people's psyche, their cultural traditions and their economy, of such a gradual invasion have been studied for generations. (A living laboratory of such a process exists, for example, in Brazil's Amazon jungle.) Without getting too deeply into the academic jargon, the Tuskens are characterized by a decided inability to adapt to the presence of humans, and exhibit unbridled hostility toward them even when they are not threatened. Luke imposed no immediate threat to them in ANH. As a matter of fact, they outnumbered him. And they obviously had no love for Ben--their neighbor for at least twenty years since he felt it necessary to use fear to protect himself from them. (I do not condemn him for this. From his point of view, this is the most effective and humane way of surviving Tusken hostility.) They are apparently extremely secretive, completely uninterested in contact with the humans, or any other race. Contrast this with the Jawas, who have adapted quite well to the dominant human economy. Capturing and selling droids, they serve a useful though still marginal purpose to the human farmers in their continued exploitation of Tatooine's few resources. (I use the term "exploitation" in the neutral sense here.) And this association surely cannot endear them to the Tuskens.

The perspective of the Tatooine human settlers may go like this: "Before we came along, there was nothing of value here. We are developing the planet. The Sandpeople would never have changed anything." The Tuskens might respond with "Why should anything change? We had all we needed before the

humans came. Now they reduce our lands every day, force us into the worst areas since they take the best that the world has. Why do humans always find fault with what is?"

As for the future, the Tuskens will likely continue on the defensive, with small, disorganized incidents of violence mounting. The conflict on Tatooine seems to be in its nascent period so it is not too late to defuse greater conflict. Yet there is a point of no return. Unless the perspective of the Tuskens is seriously taken into consideration, violent clashes will mount. One day the Tuskens may decide to organize and attack moisture farms, perhaps even attempting organized assaults on Anchorhead, Mos Eisley and Tosche Station--crucial centers of human activity. The goal will be to terrorize humans into leaving, as was the goal of the North American Indian when he attacked caravans, farms and outposts. The anger of the Tuskens already seems to be great in ANH, and years in the future it may be explosive. The human settlers will already have invested much time, energy and commitment to their homes that Tusken anger will be met with human outrage. Little attempt will be made to understand the historical context of Tusken fury, and they will be dismissed as fanatics and savages, while the humans will consider themselves peaceable and innocent. I offer this dismal scenario because it has rarely (if ever) been broken in our own history. But one never knows. All depends on the vision of the human settlers--how they see their own role and purpose on Tatooine.

Finally, there are the droids.

The droids are the one link that binds all sides of the issue of race prejudice. George Lucas has said that he humanized the droids to make a point about racism, but I do not believe many people quite understand how sophisticated his point is. (Or maybe he himself does not know but I am inclined to think that on this point he does because the message is quite clear within his story.) It is necessary to understand the nature of an overtly racist society that is largely blind to its own prejudices. To an outsider looking in, this racism is apparent, it is blatant. But to someone on the inside, who has lived with it all their lives, this inherent racism is a non-issue, usually because it is bound to a political-economic system that depends on it. (Just talk to many Afrikaners.)

Among the few slaveowners in the American South (and there were only about 10% the rest of the whites were just too poor), there were undoubtedly good, kind, honorable people, loved by their families and respected by their communities. They probably treated their slaves with kindness and sensitivity. But they accepted the system as a given. Even those few who may have doubted the morality of owning slaves continued to exploit their labor, to own them as property. The classic example is Thomas Jefferson, who tried to include an anti-slavery clause in the Declaration of Independence, failed and resolved to free his slaves, but did not do so until fifty years later. An ingrained economic system whether it be slavery, serfdom or other more subtle form of labor exploitation--no matter how immoral, is difficult to live outside of. All sorts of rationalizations are invented to maintain it (it provides employment, a skill, etc.). Even those who are uncomfortable with it generally must compromise their feelings because it is a difficult, painful thing to be a dissident all the time. (A rather depressing film with Meryl Streep called *PLENTY* is currently out and deals with this issue.)

Many either escape outside or inside, within their own internal psychological refuge. The victims of such a system, in large part, will endure it for years, often centuries, before mounting a genuinely collective rebellion against it. (There are, of course, always John Browns, fugitive slaves and sometimes even settlements founded by former slaves, as in the island of Haiti.)

In the SW universe, it is accepted behavior to exploit droids, by everyone--from the kindest, most honorable being--Yoda--right down to the Saga's personification of evil--old Brain-burn. No one questions this treatment of droids. The more sensitive of owners, like Luke, may treat them as pets, but their position in society is always one of servant, to everyone. Does this indicate evil? I suppose it depends on your own view of the concept of evil. It certainly makes people ignorant of their own complicity. Or, in Luke's case (who refers to droid rights in the novelization of ANH), it makes them consciously a participant while trying to blunt the effects of such exploitation. The argument can be made that until the system does go away, better that human slaves or, in SW, droids, be owned by people like Luke who will not abuse them as Jabba does.

But the comparison with human slaves is not without cracks, for I think it is extremely difficult to ask of organic beings to view their own mechanical creations as more than servants. That is a hurdle that will take a very long time to overcome. In our own world, the rights of animals who are organic--are barely recognized. Yet another difficulty lies in the fact that not all droids are at the level of sophistication of 3PO and R2. But I do believe that the droids in SW have developed into something beyond programmed computers. They show initiative, creativity and human emotion. The explanation that some fans have offered that these are merely programmed is problematical because

programming such things as emotion into a droid seem to be very counter-productive, as is the programming of pain. In ANH, 3PO expresses disgust toward Jawas. This looks like a completely spontaneous reaction on his part. It is an individually arrived at attitude, and a highly chauvinist one at that. Why would anyone program that into a droid?

The droids in SW have not yet developed into fully individual beings. I cannot imagine the ones that we have seen in positions of leadership, for example. They still seem to need organics. But perhaps one day they will develop into much more than they already are, and when this happens, the organics around them will not realize it. Few, if any, have realized how much the droids have already gone beyond simple programming. Consciousness about them has not yet hit the mainstream of society.

This then was George Lucas' message, although I am uncertain as to the depth of his understanding of it. Society invests too much of its own self interest in myths about systems that degrade and exploit others--we all go on living our lives tolerating injustices everywhere, allowing them to happen. None of us is pure. Does that make us evil? That is up to each of you to decide. (My own feeling is that it does, but that it is part of being human; there is nothing surprising about escaping into our own personal havens to block out the horrors of the outside world.) Unfortunately, it does make us very vulnerable to shock when the victims of such systems decide to take matters into their own hands, often quite violently. It is a difficult thing to question the validity of our own particular environment. In SW, not even the droids have yet questioned their own position in society, although 3PO does show signs of a weak consciousness when he says things like "We're made to suffer. It's our lot in life."

And therein lies ground for some fanfiction...

BRENDA STARR

by Ramona Fradon and Linda Sutter



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Luke's Responsibilities

Sandi Jones

After having read so much anti-Luke material I felt compelled to take a long hard look at the issue. I came to SW fandom as a fan of both Han and Luke, but after reading so much derogatory sentiment towards Luke, I started to be more critical in my viewing of his actions. My own opinion is that much of this anti-Luke theory does not hold up under close observation. Since there are so many topics that the anti-Luke theory touches on, I have chosen to address myself to one issue in this article, Luke's responsibilities and the manner in which he handles them. I will take a point by point look at what we see on the screen, which are the facts, and then give my interpretation and explanation of what has happened from my point of view. I will also give alternate actions to each of the situations.

A NEW HOPE

1. When we first see Luke he is involved in the purchase of droids with his uncle. After being told to clean up the droids, he complains that he wants to go to Tosche Station for some power converters. He is immediately reprimanded by Owen that he has work to do. Luke is not at all happy with this situation but gives in to his responsibilities. Alternate actions: Luke could have taken the droids to the garage and left them there and gone off to Tosche Station anyway.

2. During the dinner conversation with his uncle, it is obvious that they have had previous discussions on the topic of Luke attending the Academy. Luke is once again reminded of his responsibilities as his uncle tells him that the harvest is when Luke is needed the most. It is apparent that Luke has the courage to state his desires and needs but at this point in his life he does not have the courage to see them through. Luke decides that the needs of others must come before his own needs. He has a responsibility to his uncle to stay and help, so he acquiesces and with typical youthful disappointment returns to his work. Alternate action: Luke could have walked into dinner and said, "Oh, by the way, I transferred my application to the Academy today. I leave in two weeks." When Owen told him how much he needed Luke, he could have replied, "Tough, it's my life, I'll do with it what I please!"

3. When Luke goes out after R2D2 the next morning, he leaves early so that he will have time to complete his other chores. Also, Luke knows it is his responsibility to get R2D2 back before Owen finds out about it. It was Luke's error that allowed R2D2 to escape. Alternate actions: Luke could have told Owen that it was C3PO who took the restraining bolt off R2D2. He could also have told him that the droid was stolen or that Ben Kenobi had come by and said that he would see that the droid got to Obi-Wan.

4. When Luke is reminded of C3PO by R2D2 after the sandpeople attack, he knows that it is his responsibility to help the droid. Alternate action: Luke could think just of saving his own skin and leave C3PO out there in the desert.

5. When Ben tells Luke that he must go to Alderaan with him, Luke's only thoughts are of his responsibilities to his uncle. But, he also feels an obligation to help Ben, so he offers to take him to Anchorhead. Alternate actions: Luke says to Owen, "Hey, Uncle Owen, ol' Ben says they need me on Alderaan. I'm going with him. See ya!" He even had the option of just leaving with Ben without telling anyone.

6. Luke feels responsible to rush "Home!" after he deduces that the stormtroopers killed the Jawas to find out who they had sold the droids to. Alternate action: Luke could have followed Obi-Wan's advice and not gone off to see if he could help his uncle and aunt. He could also have gone on to Mos Eisley or Anchorhead with Ben.

At this point, Luke goes through a traumatic change in his life. His world is totally turned upside down as his life on Tatooine is destroyed. He now reaches out to Ben and gives his allegiance to the Force and the Alliance. Luke makes a commitment to dedicate himself to a cause and a destiny.

7. I have long wondered at Luke's apparent lack of responsibility to his deceased aunt and uncle after their death. I used to wonder why he didn't pause to see to the disposal of their property, then it occurred to me that this would have been a foolish and irresponsible act. Surely the stormtroopers would learn of Luke's existence on the farm and return to post a guard to await Luke's return.

8. On the Death Star when Luke finds out that Leia is being held captive it is he who is responsible for initiating her rescue. He feels a responsibility to save her. Han has a sense of responsibility only to himself, which is completely in character for him at that time. Alternate actions: Luke could have remained where he was and waited to be captured or until Ben got the tractor beam deactivated.

9. When Han, Luke, Leia, and Chewie finally get to the ship in their attempt to escape, it is Luke who calls out to Ben. Luke feels a responsibility to help protect Ben, even though it means leaving himself open to attack. Luke doesn't give up until he hears Ben tell him to run. Alternate action: Luke could have just hurried onto the Falcon and left Ben to his own devices.

10. Luke, though totally inexperienced with space battles, volunteers to help the Alliance in their attack on the Death Star. Luke has a new sense of purpose in his life and a new loyalty. He has a new sense of responsibility to aid his friends

in whatever way he can. Alternate action: He could have gone with Han when given the chance. Luke could also have told the Alliance that he didn't know how to operate an x-wing and have stayed back at the rebel base. Even when he was in the battle, he had at least two instances when he could have left the battle. First, when he went through the fire storm and then when R2 was knocked out. Nothing seemed to detour Luke from completing his responsibilities.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

1. Even though Luke is supposedly the leader of the rebels (see crawl at beginning of TESB), he still takes on the responsibilities of making routine rounds. Alternate action: Luke could have just as easily assigned someone else to make that circle as he stayed in the relative warmth of the rebel base.

2. Even though Luke has just been critically injured and has to get out of his sick bed, he still leads the rebels' attack on the ATAT's. Alternate action: Luke could claim he was too ill and get off the planet with the first transport or stay back at the base to oversee the battle.

3. Once Luke has been accepted by Yoda as a student, he devotes himself to his studies and exercises with dedication and responsibility. But, as anyone who begins a new course of training, Luke has his failures and makes mistakes. It is through failures that we all learn to succeed in this world. If we all did things perfectly from the start, we would have little need of teachers or instructors. What are Luke's responsibilities as a student? He is to question when he is unsure of what he is being taught and not to blindly accept those things that he is not sure of. He is also to complete the tasks set before him. He may not have been able to levitate the x-wing out of the swamp, but he did learn a valuable lesson. He had to believe in what he was doing. Luke may have had doubts about going into the tree cave without his weapons, but he did go. I have no problem with him taking his weapons into the cave. I know of no one would want to face such an evil place unarmed. Yoda did not forbid Luke to take his weapons, he only told him he would not need them. Alternate action: Luke could have given up when Yoda did not want to teach him and have just gone back to the Alliance and forgotten his responsibility to become a fully trained Jedi.

4. When Luke sees the vision of Han and Leia in pain, his sense of responsibility and loyalty to his friends takes over. The need to help his friends is put above his own needs, even his responsibility to the galaxy is superseded by his friends' needs. This may have been a mistake on Luke's part but it is totally in his character to do this and is an essential part of his growth. Yoda does not forbid Luke to go, at this point, but merely tells Luke he must make up his own mind. He admits that Luke could save them, but like Owen had done, he lays a guilt trip on Luke so he acquiesces to Yoda's admonition and agrees to stay.

Later, Luke is unable to live with his decision to stay and decides he must go to his friends' aid. At this point, Yoda tells Luke he "...must not go." Luke's sense of responsibility to his friends is made quite evident when Ben says, "It is your abilities the Emperor wants, that is why your friends are made to suffer." To this Luke replies, "That is why I must go." Luke realizes in his anguished thoughts that even though Yoda thinks it is acceptable for Luke to allow Leia and Han to suffer and

sacrifice their lives for him, Luke cannot allow them to do it. It was not Han and Leia's choice to suffer for Luke, but he does have the choice to go after them. His mentors respect his decision, though they don't necessarily agree with him, and send him off with words of hope if not quite encouragement.

I am always struck by the thought of a quote from "Hamlet" when I see this scene, which is "To thine own self be true and it must follow as the night the day, Thou canst then be false to no man."

Alternate actions: Luke could have chosen to stay on Dagobah and continue to train with Yoda. But what would the consequences have been? Han may have had to stay in the carbonite longer than he did. Leia and Chewie would have been taken by Vader and probably subjected to further torture to bring Luke to them.

5. The rescue of Han was uppermost in Luke's mind at the end of TESB. He knew it was because of him that Han was in carbonite and that Leia was miserable and upset over Han's imprisonment. Luke chose to stay with Leia and wait to hear from Lando and Chewie about Han's location. Alternate actions: Luke could have gone back to Dagobah to Yoda to finish his studies, leaving Leia without both of her dearest friends and delaying Han's rescue. Also, could Luke totally dedicate his mind, heart and soul to his lessons while Han's fate was still in doubt? I think not.

RETURN OF THE JEDI

1. Luke's responsibility to Han is shown in the multi-layered plan that he had to save Han. It was a true showing of his newly developed skills. The conversation between Luke and Leia must have been very interesting as they devised the rescue plan. Alternate actions: Luke could have sent the rebels after Han. When Leia and Lando didn't return with Han, Luke could have said, "Forget it, I'm not going to try it if they can't do it." He could also have made Han wait until he had returned to Dagobah to complete his training. It is apparent that during this time, before the rescue, Luke did not sit around and twiddle his thumbs. He had a responsibility to continue his training and who knows what wonders he discovered at Obi Wan's home on Tatooine.

2. As soon as Luke's responsibility to Han is fulfilled, he takes off to keep his promise to Yoda. It is a responsible man who makes a promise and then fulfills it. Alternate actions: Having just pulled off a great rescue, Luke could have decided he didn't need anymore training and just gone back to the Alliance.

3. After Yoda dies, Luke goes through a period of doubt as he expresses to R2D2 that he doesn't know if he can go on by himself. Anyone would be overpowered by the thought of having the fate of the galaxy resting on one's shoulders. Luke realizes his responsibility and, though the thought of having to kill his own father is overpowering, he finds strength in Obi-Wan's words to continue. He knows that he can and must face what lies ahead of him. Alternate actions: Luke could have told Ben that he had had enough and that Leia could do the rest.

4. Upon returning to the Alliance, Luke immediately joins with his friends in their planned mission to Endor. He has hardly had time to be briefed on all the details of the mission but his sense of responsibility to the Alliance and his friends spurs him to volunteer. Alternate actions:

Luke could have stayed in the back of the briefing room and waited until someone else volunteered for the fourth place in the command team.

5. Luke clearly shows his sense of responsibility and brotherly protection for Leia when he takes off after her when she goes off on the speeder. Alternate actions: Luke could have said, "Blast that headstrong broad; let her go off and be a hero. I'll let Han take care of this."

6. Luke was the one responsible for the group's surrender to the Ewoks, but he is also the one who was responsible for getting them out of the situation without anyone being harmed, except perhaps the circuits of one very nervous golden droid. Alternate actions: Luke could have come up swinging with his lightsaber and gotten rid of the Ewoks very easily, but just think of the consequences of that action. Who would have helped defeat the Imperials in the Battle of Endor?

7. Luke is dealing with a great many responsibilities during his conversation with Leia on the Endor walkway. First, there is his responsibility to explain to one of his friends why he must leave. He had more than likely reported to Leia many times before and it was only natural for him to do so at this time. Luke clearly states that he is a liability to those around him and to the mission. He must leave if he is to save anymore pain being inflicted on his friends because of him.

Luke also has a responsibility to tell Leia that she is far more important to the Alliance than she even knows. Though it will hurt her to know that Vader is her father, that knowledge will be tempered by her knowing that Luke is her brother and that she is Force sensitive. There is also Luke's responsibility as a Jedi to confront and go through with his destiny.

Alternate Actions: Luke could have merely fled into the woods and found a hole to crawl into and shielded himself from Vader. Luke could also have decided to stay with the group and take his chances that Vader wouldn't find him or that his friends could have defended him.

8. Luke turns himself over to Vader voluntarily, accepting the danger and responsibility that that action involves. Luke has his own personal responsibility to do what he can to turn his father back to the Lightside. He also has a responsibility to the Alliance and galaxy as the means to the end of Palpatine and Vader. Though we don't know if it is a conscious act, Luke is responsible for taking

the Emperor's attention away from the rebels.

Luke shows great courage and self confidence in his confrontation with Vader. He even goes so far as to turn his back on his enemy. Alternate actions: Luke could agree to go with Vader now in response to his invitation in TESB. Luke could go along with Vader and supposedly agree to be Vader's pawn in his game against the Emperor.

9. Luke confronts his ultimate responsibility in the throne room of the Emperor. He is the means to the demise of the Emperor and Vader. He has the responsibility to gain control so that he can in some way aid his friends on Endor once he realizes that the Emperor is aware of their plans. He also has his own feelings of responsibility to turn his father back to the good side. He has the responsibility to his Jedi training to confront the Dark Side and go past it. He has the responsibility to defend Leia once Vader has probed his mind and found out the truth.

Finally, Luke comes to his final decision and responsibility. He stands over his father realizing that he is within a hair's-breadth of slipping to the Dark Side. "To thine own self be true." Luke is true to himself and all other responsibilities fall into place. He chooses the Light Side and in that moment accepts all the responsibilities that go along with that decision. He may die, they may all die, but he is being true to himself, to his ultimate responsibility which is his immortal soul. Luke knows that he is more than just a physical man and has a responsibility to his immortal soul. He has chosen the good, and in doing so, that moment of decision has left him open for the Force to work its good through him, even though it is through his own suffering. Alternative actions: Luke could have killed his father and joined with the Emperor.

I have seen very few examples where Luke has refused to face his responsibilities and in what instances there may be, according to one's interpretation of the facts, he has always paid for his choices.

In most instances, I believe it was a case of choosing one responsibility over another. Many times he was caught between two conflicting responsibilities. Luke recognized his responsibilities and dealt with them in ways that were appropriate to who he was and what he had learned.

"Luke, you must what you feel is right." -- Obi Wan Kenobi



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An Interview With Dale Pollack

Transcribed by Linda Deneroff

(This was given to me by Bev Clark in 1984 to transcribe. Unfortunately, I've been very busy and only recently got around to it. The tape was made in California. I do not know who the interviewer was, or why there are breaks in the tape, except to speculate that these are where commercials were placed and were edited from the tape. The transcript is verbatim from the tape I received. Any notations in brackets [] are mine, and are added for clarity.) - Linda Deneroff

((Editor's note: I have edited this transcription for smoother reading.))

Recorded June 11, 1983
KPFK (Los Angeles)

Q: ...West Coast editor of VARIETY, and he is the author of SKYWALKING: THE LIFE AND FILMS OF GEORGE LUCAS, AN UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY. And "an unauthorized biography" generally means that you've

done it against the wishes of the person bi--
biographed-- biographed--

DP: Right.

Q: But unauthorized in this instance simply means that you got to do an honest job, and there's some things in the book which Lucas did not necessarily want to see but which are there anyway, in the interest of accuracy and honesty, right?

DP: That's true. Actually, my toughest job was getting George to go along with this. I wasn't going to write the book unless I got his cooperation, because I knew what a reclusive, private person he was, and I didn't see a way to do a book about him unless he cooperated. And yet, I did want to maintain the integrity of the book and have it possess some objective distance, and that's why it's unauthorized.

Q: How did you talk him into doing it?

DP: Well, after hearing everybody tell me that it was a hopeless task and I was wasting my time, I did know Steven Spielberg well, and I got Steven to persuade George to read a letter that I wrote, and in the letter I basically made two points. And the first one was that I knew how important USC Film School had been to Lucas; it was really the turning point in his career. It's where he realized what he was good at which was making movies. And I told him that the STAR WARS films and AMERICAN GRAFFITI had helped inspire thousands of other young people to go to film school, and there were really no contemporary role models for these people. The only directors they could read about were Orson Welles and John Huston and Rouben Mamoulian and people who had basically come of age in Hollywood in a completely different era. And I said to Lucas, "You have a responsibility to these people. And, if film school was so important to you, these people need a role model, and I think you're an excellent one." And the other (SMALL LAUGH) argument was a little more of an arm twisting. I said that if he didn't cooperate, I wasn't going to do it, but that Crown Publishers, who own Harmony Books, would do it, with or without me and with or without him. And I think he realized, based on my reputation and my work, that he was best off going with me.

Q: (LAUGH) Well, that was one of the questions. The other question that I have--one of the other questions that I have: George Lucas is how old now?

DP: Thirty nine. [This was as of 1983.]

Q: Thirty nine. Okay. Jack Benny's age. He has made -- Now, on the front cover of the book, you've got one, two, three, four movies--three of them are STAR WARS movies. He is all the things that you said he is; I mean, he's the role model and all those things. But he's only 39. He doesn't really have a lot of a track record-- Why do a biography of someone this young and make a thick book out of it too, which I'm amazed about.



DP: Well, I actually can think of no one who has had a greater influence on filmgoers around the world in the last 25 years than George Lucas. I believe more people have seen the STAR WARS films--
Q: What is it? Four of the ten best-selling movies --top ten--ever made--

DP: Yes.

Q: --were made by George Lucas. There's a reason.

DP: And of course, that doesn't include RETURN OF THE JEDI--

Q: Right. (INDISTINCT).

DP: (OVERLAPPING) --which has just been released and is making more money faster than any movie in history. So I felt, based on the impact--cultural and sociological--that he's had, he is a worthy subject. And I was a little concerned at first. The man has only directed three films: THX-1138, AMERICAN GRAFFITI, and the first STAR WARS movie. He has produced another four films: RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, RETURN OF THE JEDI and MORE AMERICAN GRAFFITI, so he does have a body of work that I think can be evaluated and judged. And that's one of the things I attempted to do. And I was also fortunate in that I was faced with the fact that he was 38 years old when I wrote the book and basically just beginning to reach middle age, and yet, because Lucas has relied so much on his childhood and his adolescence to give him the material that he has transformed into these films, I felt that by paying particular detailed attention to that childhood and adolescence, we would learn about Lucas and about his movies and about ourselves.

Q: So then, will there be in another ten or fifteen years, volume two?

DP: Well, he said if he does another one, he's going to write it himself.

Q: Oh, he is?! Is he capable of doing that, do you think? I mean--has he got the writing ability and the ability to stand back from himself and--and be . . .

DP: I think he was saying it more in jest than anything, and more that--in response to the fact that SKYWALKING is not exactly the way he remembers his life, which is exactly what I wanted. I don't think, as we look back on our past, that we see things all that objectively. We see things the way we remember them.

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: And one of the things I tried to do in this book, by interviewing 85 between 85 and 100 other individuals, was to try to synthesize those memories and come up with a more accurate picture of what happened; as close to the quote, unquote "truth" as you can get in a biography of a living person.

Q: When you went into the project, did you have some pre-conceptions about Lucas which were either confirmed or shattered as you did research, talked to him and to those other 85 people?

DP: I did. I must say, I was not a particular STAR WARS fan; although I had enjoyed the first film, I actually preferred EMPIRE a little more because I thought it had a little more depth and a little more content. I was surprised by two things as I did my research. First of all, I really think AMERICAN GRAFFITI is a seminal film, and, as historians look back, they will realize that that was one of the most important American films made to date, because it's an anthropologist's treasure trove. You can look at that film and you can tell so much about how an entire generation of young people grew up. And I think it's really--something that I was really not--I had seen GRAFFITI when it

first came out and had enjoyed it as a teenager, but I hadn't really thought about it since then. And--reevaluating GRAFFITI taught me a lot.

Q: Also, you make quite a point in the book of the fact that AMERICAN GRAFFITI was very autobiographical, about Lucas.

DP: Extremely so. What he basically did was take his personality and split it into his major characters.

Q: (OVERLAPPING) --major characters, yeah.

DP: Right. With the exception, of course, of the girls, which is a problem he's always had in his--his films; he can't write good women.

Q: Is there biography in the STAR WARS trilogy?

DP: I think so. I think what Lucas did in his original conception for STAR WARS, he sort of regurgitated the childhood he spent reading comic books, watching television--and Modesto, which is where he grew up, in the 1950s had only one television station available to it.

Q: Yeah.

DP: It was KR-- KRON-TV in San Francisco.

Q: In San Francisco, yeah.

DP: And they had a show that was on every day, called ADVENTURE THEATER, which consisted of old movie serials. So, when Lucas says he watched the serials, people think he's much older, but he watched them on television--

Q: (LAUGHING) Yeah.

DP: --not in the movies, not with popcorn on his lap, and not--no Saturday morning matinees.

Q: In SKYWALKING, you set out Lucas' blueprint as it was originally for the whole nine films, the triple trilogy. He has made the second leg of the trilogy; the first and third have yet to be done. Do you think he'll make them?

DP: I think right now his inclination is not to, because he's basically sick and tired of STAR WARS. This project has consumed his life--

Q: Okay, let me

DP: --for a--for a decade, for ten years--

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

DP: --since he really first started working on the screenplay in 1973. And he's also told me that because the cost has steadily escalated--the first film cost \$11-1/2 million; THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK--if you include everything--cost \$36 million; and JEDI cost a little over \$40 million.

Q: Wow!

DP: Even though Lucasfilm won't confirm those figures, they're accurate. He told me that if he starts the next trilogy, it's possible that one film could end up costing \$80 million.

Q: Lord!

DP: So he said that above all means it's time to stop and rethink his approach and hopefully wait for some of the technology to catch up with him. He has this computer company working on ways to reduce the cost of the special effects, and I would say even if he wants to do more films, he won't do them until he can bring the cost back down to a manageable level.

Q: How much is THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, the new Indiana Jones film, do you know how much that cost is projected?

DP: That'll cost--Indiana Jones [RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK] cost about \$26 million, I think, and I think this one will probably be about 30. The films--although they're shot on distant locations--do not involve the expensive special effects processes that are required for a STAR WARS movie.

Q: True enough. You talk about Lucas' childhood. Geor-- I keep wanting to call him George; I've been

calling him George for so long.

DP: Call him George.

Q: Does everybody call him George? Who-- what do they call him? I mean, what--I mean, people who just work for him, what do they call him?

DP: George.

Q: They call him George?

DP: I've never heard anybody refer to him as Mr. Lucas--

Q: Except his wife, of course. No! That's-- I just made that up. We cou-- you say AMERICAN GRAFFITI is a seminal film. I always forget the difference between seminal and germinal, but okay. Can you see a thread running through--from--AMERICAN GRAFFITI--well, I guess THX was the first movie--from THX to AMERICAN GRAFFITI through the STAR WARS films? Can you see something in common, of all those movies that says "George Lucas" to you?

DP: Oh, absolutely, and I think there's--there's really two threads. One is the more general theme of escape, and of course in THX this is very clear: he escapes from the underground civilization to a point where, as the film ends, he steps above ground.

Q: Right.

DP: In AMERICAN GRAFFITI, the four friends are graduating high school and they each have to decide what they want to do with their lives, and one of them escapes the small town where they live. Of course, in STAR WARS, the whole film is a chase, an escape film, with people either chasing people, and other people trying to escape from people.

Q: Would the primary escape be Luke's escape from Tatooine the first time?

DP: Luke's escape, and also the escape from Darth Vader, the escape from the Death Star, and finally the destruction of the Death Star.

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: But I think there's another thing, too, that was a little more subtle, and this is something Lucas believes in very strongly because he felt it was a lesson he learned in his life, which is that in all situations, ultimately, you eventually have to face up to your problems and take some action to resolve them.

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: And that's of course the evolution of Luke's character in all three STAR WARS films, from a farm boy to a Jedi Knight. It's very clear in that one, but I think it's also clear in GRAFFITI and THX, that basically you are responsible for what happens to you; you do have some control over your actions if you step up and take a chance and are willing to accept the consequences of what you do.

Q: Which is something that he's done with his own life.

DP: Absolutely.

Q: But there's another thing involved too, another escape, and that is his escape from the Hollywood system. He and Spielberg and Milius and a few others essentially dismantled the studio system. I mean, it was on its way out before, but they just finally kicked the last bodies over.

DP: I think they did, although I would disagree. I think Spielberg and Milius are very much still part of the studio system, although it's impossible to make a film and not have one of the major studios release it.

Q: Yeah.

DP: Lucas is the first filmmaker that I'm aware of who has really financed his own films and therefore kept the profits for himself. Although Spielberg made a great deal of money off of E.T., Universal

Pictures made a great deal more. Lucas will make more money than 20th-Century Fox from the STAR WARS films.

Q: And Lucas got screwed by the industry twice, in the first two films, didn't he: in THX-1138, when it became a feature rather than his student film, and what was the one he worked with Spielberg--er, not--not Spielberg, Coppola? Oh Lord, uh--

DP: GRAFFITI is--?

Q: Yeah. Was that it? The one where Coppola took him on as an assistant--

DP: Oh, FINIAN'S RAINBOW. Right.

Q: Yes. Yes.

DP: Lucas really didn't feel screwed there so--I mean, he has still abiding resentment for the fact that his first two films--both THX and GRAFFITI--were taken away from him--

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

DP: --by the studios that financed them. And this is something that he considers abhorrent and against every creative person's right, and he has never forgiven both the individuals and the corporate structure for those actions.

Q: Give that that's true, and we talked about this earlier and you mentioned it somewhat in your book, and I hear people talk about it all the time, can you-- Okay, it's high school. Compare and contrast George Lucas and Walt Disney.

DP: Well, I think, you know, the similarities are very obvious: they both make films that have a very wide appeal to children in particular; they're both mass entertainment films that are not unduly violent or sexual in content; and they seem to have made their fortunes by satisfying an escapist need in a mass audience. In my mind, Disneyland is a mechanical film.

Q: Ah, yes.

DP: It's perpetually playing, but it's mechanized. Lucas, I think, had-- Disney was basically out for a very simple, a superficial sense of pleasure, although films like Snow White and Pinocchio obviously have intense psychological content. Lucas was much more aware of than Disney. What he was doing with STAR WARS, he researched fairy tales and mythology.

Q: I was going to ask you about that, too. We'll get to that.

DP: When he was doing THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, he consulted with the noted child psychologist Bruno Bettelheim.

Q: Oh, he did!

DP: --about the implications of Darth Vader cutting off Luke's hand, which is sort of a castration.

Q: Uh-hmmm.

DP: --move. He was very aware of this, so I think that he was much more--had very specific things in mind more than Disney did. And Lucas really rejects the label because he thinks it makes him sound too goody goody, and he thinks he has a rather kinky imagination. And if you see THX, which has a lot of nudity, including some intense sexual scenes, it is hard to imagine Walt Disney ever doing a film like that.

Q: Yeah.

DP: He was a very prudish man. And the third and I think the most telling difference is, although Disney was a wonderful administrator and obviously a genius at seeing an overview of how a film should be put together and how it would appeal to an audience, he really had very little creative talent himself in terms of hands on. He couldn't really draw Mickey Mouse, he couldn't write a screenplay. Lucas, I think, combines Disney's generalist quali-

ties with the very specific talents of a filmmaker. He can direct, he can shoot, he can edit, he can mix sound. And I think this gives him a perspective on how a movie is put together that a David O. Selznick or a Walt Disney didn't really possess.

Q: Didn't really have. However, I think--perhaps you'll even agree--that the thing--as far as the general public, people outside the industry goes--the similarity between George Lucas and Walt Disney is they're two of the names and maybe two of the only names in Hollywood, ever, that were like brand names. I mean, you don't go to see a Warner Bros. movie; you don't go to see a 20th-Century Fox movie; you don't go see an M-G-M movie. But you would go to see a Disney film; you would go to see the latest George Lucas film; and maybe Spielberg has a name like that.

DP: Of course, I think that's-- back in the 1930s and '40s, you did used to go see an M-G-M film.

Q: Oh, you did! Really?!

DP: Yes. Oh, yes. Or a Warner Bros. film, sure.

Q: Yeah.

DP: And what's interesting is that Lucas, and, to a degree, Spielberg, and certainly Disney, is one of the few people who still does carry that sort of identity, and audiences know what to expect. And he delivers on that, and he takes pride in that.

Q: But he's not going to deliver on that forever. The movies that he--

DP: He may never deliver on it again, from what he says.

Q: The real movies that he wants to make are very different from the STAR WARS movies.

DP: The films he's discussing making right now are almost a regression back to his student movies. They're very personal, short films that are non-linear, non story, non-dialogue. He told me once he wants to see how far he can take an audience before it gets totally lost.

Q: Do you think they will let him make those films

DP: The audience will let him?

Q: --and I use that specifically because, as you have said, Lucas is now a brand name, a generic name. You go into a Lucas film expecting certain things, and you get them, whether it's GRAFFITI or RETURN OF THE JEDI. If he starts making films like Antonioni or Bergman or whatever--

DP: Or Lucas.

Q: No, no. -- Or if he starts doing that, aren't people going to walk out in droves?

DP: Well, for one thing, he doesn't plan these films to be shown to a mass audience. They're personal films, and he's going to do them and then decide who he wants to see them.

Q: Uh-huh.

DP: And secondly, Lucas, I think, is fascinating because he rejects the expectations people put on him. In his mind, people have no right to expect anything from him. He has satisfied them; he has given them three films. One of the reasons he finished the trilogy was a sense of responsibility he felt to the audience. Now he says, "Okay, I'm done. I've given my--"

Q: Oh, there won't be the other six movies?

DP: He's not sure. I have a feeling that there might be, but he's not sure. But whatever the case, he doesn't feel that he owes anybody six more movies.

Q: The other six movies. I see.

DP: No, he--I agree with him. He doesn't.

Q: Right.

DP: He said, "If people have expectations, that's

their problem. It's not my problem, and I don't really care what people think of the films I'm going to make, because I'm not making them for a mass audience." In a way, he's been consistent because he's always made films for himself. If he likes the film, he'll go ahead and make it. He has never tried to anticipate what an audience wants and try to deliver that. He makes films that he himself enjoys.

Q: Not even with STAR WARS initially.

DP: Never. Never. People told him he was crazy. There was no-- I mean, science fiction films were disasters.

Q: That's true.

DP: SILENT RUNNING had been a real colossal failure, and his friends and his wife and everybody told him that he was nuts to be trying to do STAR WARS. But he didn't care, because he was doing it for himself. Now, in some ways, this is very egotistical viewpoint, but in another way, it's also the thing that nurtured his creative vision and got him through the three films.

Q: Hm-hmm. You have said in articles in the Times and I'll get back to some other things, but you have said in articles that you have written what I assume are other parts of interviews and things that you've taken, how unhappy George is at being a millionaire and how tough it is, and there were some letters, I don't know if you saw them, saying, "Gee, if George finds it that tough to be a millionaire, he can send some millions this way." Is that a sincere attitude, and, if it is, I just--I'm croggled [sic] by the whole idea of being an unhappy millionaire.

DP: Yeah. Well. Look, let's face it, it's very difficult to feel sorry for George Lucas. (LAUGH)

Q: It really is. Yes. It really is difficult to feel sorry for him.

DP: But he's very sincere and I would say that, you know, whatever the case, extreme wealth does change your perspective on life. And things that were formerly important--which was accumulating money and material things and getting his movies made up to the standard that he wanted them made now no longer seem very important, and what instead is important to him are his family, his friends, his daughter. He--they want to adopt more children; he wants to spend time with people; he wants to relax; he wants to read; he wants to write in a diary--these are things that, really, for the last ten years have been denied him because every morning when he woke up he had one aspect or another of STAR WARS to deal with. And I think people who can leave their jobs on a weekend or leave at 5 o'clock--they punch out and that's it--can't--have trouble comprehending how totally consuming something like this is.

Q: How long do you think George Lucas can stay on vacation?

DP: He says two years; I give him a year.

Q: Yeah? And then he'll go back to making these un-

DP: Well--

Q: --I don't want to call them underground films--

DP: Yeah.

Q: --but that sort of thing.

DP: I think that's one of the things he's-- You know, I-- Lucasfilm is a large company; Industrial Light and Magic will continue doing special effects, so I imagine he'll be remotely involved in that. He has a computer company which will be making video games for Atari, and Lucas is very interested in the concept of interactive video games, that challenge--

Q: Is that his game? The STAR WARS/JEDI Arena?

DP: Well, yeah, that's one of the early ones. But I think there's a RAIDERS game now, that-- where-- where--

Q: Oh.

DP: --if you're playing it, you have choices on, like, which door to go through. And this is the start of what will eventually be these games. And, finally, he's got Skywalker Ranch--

Q: Yes.

DP: --which is in the process of being completed, and where he will be moving his offices, and that's something he's looking forward to, so I don't think he's gonna-- it's not going to be hard for him to find things to do.

Q: I want to ask you about Skywalker Ranch. It seems to me like that's sort of going to become what American Zoetrope was hoping to be: a community of filmmakers out of Hollywood, definitely, specifically not in range of the studios, where filmmakers can come, make their films, and go about their business. Is this what he is trying to do?

DP: I think you're right, but it's Lucas' version of American Zoetrope as opposed to what was Francis Coppola's version.

Q: Yeah.

DP: And the difference is that Lucas doesn't want to make movies at Skywalker Ranch. There will be no production up there. There will be no sound stages. What's going to happen there--

Q: --is sort of a filmic think tank?

DP: A think tank, and there will be facilities to work on films, once they're completed: dubbing stages and editing rooms and that sort of thing, but there. It is not a studio. And Francis really had in mind a sort of anti-hero studio for Zoetrope, and Lucas never liked that idea, and still doesn't like it, and he's going the opposite direction.

Q: I gather they don't get along too much, Coppola and Lucas.

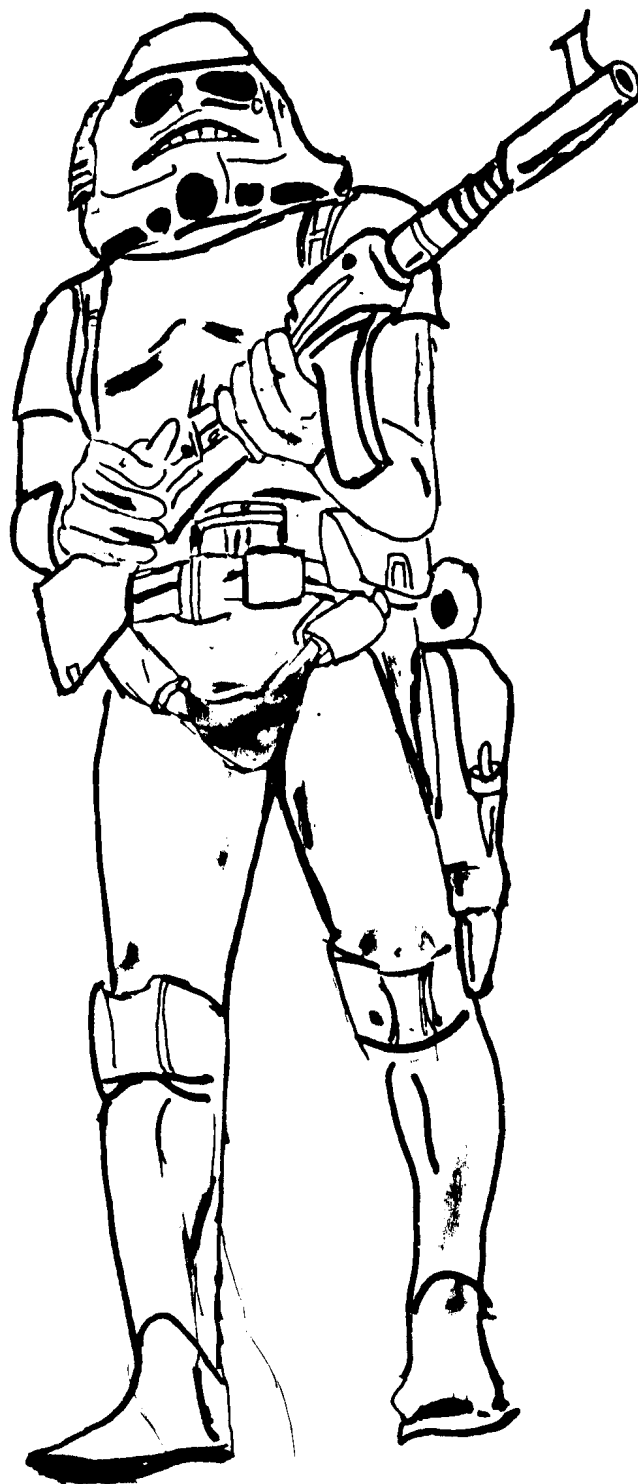
DP: Well, I-- you know, the friendship endure. I mean, Francis was at the cast and crew screening of JEDI, and they embraced there, and yet, clearly, there's been a great deal of resentment and bitterness between the two of them, Lucas feeling that Coppola tried to exploit him, and Coppola feeling that when he was really down and needed a helping hand, Lucas didn't offer him one. So both of them sort of realize, well, this is the kind of person the other one is. Francis realizes that George is just not the kind of person who extends help; in some ways he has to be asked. And George realizes that you can't help Francis once; you have to keep helping him, and in some ways it's a bottomless pit. Given their comprehension of the parameters of their relationship, I would say they still are friendly, but in a very remote sense.

Q: What about the other member of the triumvirate, Spielberg?

DP: Spielberg was really never that close to Francis, and unlike both George and Francis, he never really went to film school; he created his own program at Cal State Long Beach. George and Steven are very close, and I think that's a very interesting relationship, 'cause usually when you put two egos that size inside the same room, you have an explosion. And that hasn't occurred yet between these two men, which I think is remarkable.

Q: They respect each other's talents.

DP: Tremendously, and George feels very lucky to have Steven to go out and shoot the RAIDERS movies and deal with all the things that George hates to deal with, like actors, scripts, plots, scenery,



and Steven feels that he has the best editor in the world behind him and--

Q: Hmmm.

DP: --and a producer who knows more about making movies than he does.

Q: Are you talking about Marcia Lucas?

DP: No, I'm talking about George Lucas.

Q: His wife is apparently a hell of an editor.

DP: Ah, she's brilliant. She's just brilliant. I saw her recut a sequence, and it almost took my breath away.

Q: Really? How she changed it and made it better?

DP: Yes. Absolutely. And it's a very intuitive sense, and she just seems to have it. And that was actually the link that got them together. They were editing together, and Lucas realized in some way she was a better editor than he was. They had different styles. She's terrific for him because she has emphasized content and emotion, and he's nervous about those things in film.

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: --often to his detriment, I think. He wants to get on to the next scene, and she makes him linger a little bit. Sometimes I wish she'd make him linger a little longer.

Q: Hah! I have a question, getting back to Skywalker Ranch and the whole, sort of, Skywalker/-George Lucas--dare I say--milieu, which is a wonderful French word.

DP: Better than--Milius' milieu.

Q: Better than Milius' milieu, which isn't going to work at all. What is the danger, then, of George Lucas becoming his own studio system, becoming part of the system, becoming just--not an extension of Hollywood, but an alternative that may be just as bad to a filmmaker who will come up in, say, another twenty years?

DP: Well, that's hard to say to right now. Lucas says he doesn't want to be in the film business by himself. He doesn't want to start a distribution company; that's not his interest. What he is very interested in is regional filmmaking: the idea that you don't have to be in Hollywood to make movies. That's what he's trying to prove in San Francisco, and he's hoping that with the example he provides and the example of more and more films being made in New York and in Chicago and in other major cities, in Texas, that people will realize that you don't need Hollywood. You need the--

Q: But--

DP: --you need the studios to distribute films, and if some of the plans come through about satellite distribution, that string'll whole [sic] may be broken. And then he seems to feel filmmakers will be really liberated. I think he's a little utopian in that, and I don't think a system that has survived as many changes as Hollywood has in the last hundred years, really, is going to be toppled that easily. But he has shown that you don't have to be down here to make more money than the studios make, and he's shown that you can work out a deal that can be to your benefit and not the benefit of the conglomerate.

Q: But will there come a point--I guess the question that I'm asking is will there come a point where--I'm thinking of somebody who is, perhaps, 11 or 12 right now, seeing the STAR WARS movies, being terribly moved, and torn apart and put back together and all those wonderful things that movies are supposed to do, and in another fifteen or twenty years, instead of wanting to go to Hollywood, he will go to George Lucas, and George will make him a deal of some kind, and he will use this kid, and this kid

will become disenchanted and go to Omaha.

DP: Right.

Q: You know. Can you see that happening?

DP: No, because Lucas isn't interested in meeting this kid.

Q: No?

DP: The ranch is for his friends--

Q: Oh!

DP: --and for people that he has worked with and for San Francisco Bay area filmmakers, and that's it.

Q: But if the kid is really good--I guess what I'm trying to do is push you into a corner.

DP: If the kid is really good--I know what you're trying to do, and the corner doesn't exist--

Q: No.

DP: --because if the kid is really good, Lucas'll say, "Go to film school and start making your films and try to turn one of your student films into a feature."

Q: Yeah. He'll tell him to go off and do his own thing.

DP: Which is--to do what George did, which was he went on--he was lucky enough to meet Coppola, and who knows who the next generation will be lucky enough to meet. I think the danger in what Lucas is doing now, and one of--it was Carroll Ballard who refers to Skywalker Ranch as Xanadu--

Q: Oh?

DP: --and he says that the worry is that Lucas will become Charles Foster Kane, and will be holed up inside this enclave, really surrounded by his friends and and there's a danger there, in that you basically hear what you want to hear--

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: --and nobody really disagrees with you, and

Q: Is he--but he's not that type of person. I mean, people will disagree with him, won't they? It's that--virtually nobody says no to a millionaire.

DP: No. I must tell you that--

Q: You know, it's real tough.

DP: --I went through a period when George was reviewing the manuscript of the book, which was a courtesy I extended him, and there were several things in the book that he did not want in there, and he said, "Could you take this out?" and I said, "No." And he gave me such an incredulous look that it struck me it had been a long time--

Q: Ah.

DP: --since someone said no to George Lucas and he was really powerless to change their mind.

Q: Hm hmmm.

DP: I'm not saying that I'm such a strong person; it's just the position we were in as regards to the book--

Q: A legal position.

DP: That was our agreement, and he lived by it. But I saw how difficult it was for him. He's a very controlling person, which is why he stopped directing movies; he realized he could no longer control everything that was going on.

Q: I see.

DP: And when he couldn't do that, he didn't want to do it anymore.

Q: And you think that there's a possibility that that point now has come--He is at that point in regard to films.

DP: Right.

Q: He doesn't have to make them anymore, and he may not; and if he can't make them the way he wants to make them--for him, for his friends--Kodak won't sell him--won't have to sell him any [film] stock.

DP: That's right. Which is, I think, why it's good that he's taking these two years, to sort of try and get a perspective on himself and-- He's going to be 40 next year, and I think it's sort of the right time for him to kick back and figure out what he wants to do now that he's grown up.

Q: Are you hoping that people will say no to him the next two years?

DP: I mean, I think it would be tragic if he didn't make movies for a mass audience. He's such a talented man--

Q: Yeah.

DP: --and he has such an instinctive feel for what touches people and moves them and excites them and thrills them that I think it would be a tremendous waste of this talent if he were never to make another mass appeal film.

Q: Maybe Steven will convince him.

DP: I hope so. I hope somebody does.

Q: But does he feel that-- well, you said earlier that he makes his movies for himself--

DP: Right.

Q: --AMERICAN GRAFFITI, STAR WARS, the whole thing. He makes them for him. Does he feel that he has had to compromise that vision or those visions in order to make those films? Does he sort of hold himself in contempt for doing it, or--?

DP: I wouldn't say he holds himself in contempt. He was very frustrated, in particular on the first STAR WARS film--

Q: Yeah, he achieved what? 40%?

DP: Yeah. Or even less than that. I think. He achieved so little of what he wanted to achieve, in terms of the special effects, the look of the film --almost every aspect of it. He told me that JEDI looks like how he wanted the first STAR WARS film to look.

Q: Hmmm.

DP: It's taken him three films to get it to that point.

Q: Was it a matter of money or experience or--?

DP: It was a matter of everything.

Q: Everything.

DP: Yeah. Of all the factors: money, time, expertise. I think he feels he compromised. The film is never--and I think this is true of any director: the film never looks like on screen what it looked like in your mind.

Q: Yeah. Hm-hmmm.

DP: And in his mind, he's always failed in the transition between the screenplay and the finished film.

Q: So then, if he is as driven as he seems to be, he's got to keep working, because he's got to try to make those two visions mesh. He will eventually make a movie that's 100%. Eventually.

DP: Right.

Q: --I think he has to keep trying to do that. He may never succeed, because--

DP: I think JEDI came close to his expectations. He says it's his favorite film of the three.

Q: He's producing THE TEMPLE OF DEATH [sic], isn't he?

DP: Producing from a sort of--he's not line producing; he's not out on the set every day. He says he goes to the set mostly to keep Steven company.

Q: How does Lucas relax?

DP: It's been hard for him for a number of years to relax, because all of his activity, whether leisure time or work time, usually had to do with the films. He does--he's a news glutton. He reads a lot of--

all the weekly news magazines, NEW YORK TIMES, LOS ANGELES TIMES--

Q: Whether they have his picture on the cover or not.

DP: --San Francisco papers. He watches Dan Rather religiously, and he's starting to read books now, at his wife's urging, and starting to sit by the pool a little bit, although he hates to sit in the sun. He just came back from three weeks in Hawaii. He's trying. I'll give him that; he's making an effort.

Q: You were talking about books; I wanted to get back to this, something about books. There's been a lot of talk that the STAR WARS movies and that the first one in particular had a lot to do with HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES by Joseph Campbell, and how he very carefully went through that. How much truth is there in that, first; and second, how closely does the stuff that he found in Campbell's book match his own view of the universe?

DP: Well, first of all, I don't think that HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES played that much more of a role than the hundreds of other research books he used. Actually, THE GOLDEN BOUGH, by Sir James Frazer was ver--

Q: Ah.

DP: --was very important to him, and the concept of the Force, interesting enough, came almost directly from Carlos Castaneda's books on Don Juan, the Yaqui Indian priest. And that's where he really managed to find the concept of the Force that he had been seeking.

Q: Ah!

DP: In terms of how this relates to his personal life, I think it's very strong in that the pivotal event, and it's the incident that leads off SKYWALKING, the book, is a car crash he was in a few days before he graduated high school. For all intents and purposes, he should have died in that crash. He was wearing a racing seating belt that or, a racing seat belt that was anchored to the floor, his car was completely totalled, and miraculously he was tossed upward through the open roof and survived, although his lungs were slightly crushed and he lost a lot of blood. He felt he had been spared for a purpose.

Q: So, is he a religious person, George?

DP: Religious in a non denominational sense.

Q: Ah.

DP: But very religious in that sense, in that he really felt he'd been spared for a purpose and he had to begin to marshal his energies

Q: Hm hmmm.

DP: --his intellect, and whatever talents he could discover into trying to find out what that purpose was and fulfilling it. He realized he found it at USC Film School, and he has spent the rest of his career trying to fulfill it. Now, that, I think, is a very personal version of his own "Force".

Q: Ah, yes.

DP: And I think that's very important to him on that level.

Q: Hm hmmm, hm hmmm. So the book was not as important as I had been led to believe.

DP: No. I think it was one of many--I mean, he really did his homework on this.

Q: Yeah.

DP: He did two years' worth of research into--

Q: Research on myths and Jungian psychology--?

DP: Well, not so much. Just reading an endless number of fairy tales and looking for the common elements.

Q: Ahh.

DP: --that seem to affect people, especially children

Q: Hm-hmmm.
 DP: --and I think you see those common elements in--
 Q: Oh yeah; you sure do.
 DP: --in the STAR WARS films, and in mythology. He said he really realized the link between fairy tales and mythology, in doing the research. And I think that's why STAR WARS has mythic proportions also.
 Q: Hah! Hah! Now, in the first STAR WARS book, in the novelization, they speak some of a thing called "The Journal of the Whills", which as far as I know has never been mentioned in a movie.
 DP: No.
 Q: And--
 DP: Of course, there were several elements in those early--
 Q: Yeah.
 DP: --screenplay drafts that never showed up in the final film.
 Q: Well, but this was in the novelization though.
 DP: Right. Because Alan Dean Foster actually used an earlier version of the script as the basis for the novelization.
 Q: Oh, I see.
 DP: The novelization came out at the same time the movie did, so obviously it was done well in advance.
 Q: Yeah.
 DP: The Journal of the Whills: Lucas originally conceived of the entire STAR WARS saga as sort of an oral history that was being committed to pen and paper--or in this case, film--for the first time, and therefore, it was told by a scribe, who was a Whill, and therefore this was the journal of the Whills, which is what the tribe of scribes was called.
 Q: A tribe of scribes, uh-huh.
 DP: That's like the pestle in the--
 Q: The pestle in the vessel, yeah. Uh huh, uh-huh, uh-huh.
 DP: So, actually, I thought--I mean, I found that one of the most fascinating parts of my research was going through all of his early drafts, and there were about 15 of them that he went through before he finally settled on the three screenplays. And it's fascinating to see how elements appear and disappear, and the Ewoks, in effect are Wookiees because the way he described the Wookiee society in the first screenplay is the Ewok society. They lived--
 Q: Huh!
 DP: --in huts and trees and they were very primitive, and they had rituals, and they worshipped a gold robot. But--
 Q: Oh, was that-- See, now I always thought that--
 DP: Yeah.
 Q: --I thought that didn't make any sense. If I was going to be an Ewok, I'd worship Chewbacca, 'cause he's obviously a big version of myself.
 DP: No. No, it's a gold robot, which of course was a very prevalent myth. When the Conquistadores came to--
 Q: Ah!
 DP: --North and South America--
 Q: Hm-hmmm. Hm-hmmm.
 DP: --they looked like gold gods in their armor.
 Q: Yes.
 DP: So that's where Lucas got that idea. And that was in the very first version of the script.
 Q: Oh, I see.
 DP: But he felt he'd introduced Wookiees, and he didn't want to cloud that, so he chopped them in half, as he puts it, and made them pint-sized and called them Ewoks, which if you think about it is an anagram of Wookiee.

Q: Oh, my goodness! And they never mentioned the name in the movie.
 DP: No, never.
 Q: So you have to know--
 DP: Right. --from the outside.
 Q: If they don't mention it in the movie, how do we know they're called Ewoks, aside from the press kit?
 DP: I would say this is the genius of the Lucasfilm merchandising and publicity effort. It has become almost subconscious. And I think that's a very telling point. We don't know--and this is true of other things in the first two films--they are not mentioned in the films.
 Q: What are not, for instance?
 DP: Oh, I'm trying to think. It's some of the aliens' names. And yet, I have a six-year-old son who knows every alien.
 Q: Really?!!
 DP: And that's through the toys.
 Q: Huh! Yeah.
 DP: And I think that at this point, after six years of this, it has really become a subliminal message.
 Q: One more question and then we'll go to the phones. You interviewed 85 people. Of those people, how many did you find who didn't like Lucas?
 DP: It was tough. It was one of the things that concerned me, because I didn't want him to come off as a saint in this book, and I didn't feel it was my position, really, to pass judgment on him about things that happened in the past. And I did find people who--both current and former employees of him--who were kind enough to really speak candidly with me, and Anthony Daniels, who I think has exhibited and displayed the greatest frustration on a personal level with George. He says that basically George wishes that C-3PO really was a robot--
 Q: Oh.
 DP: --and not an actor inside the costume so he wouldn't have to deal with him.
 Q: Huh! 'Cause when I interviewed Tony Daniels, when he was here in L.A. a couple of months ago, or whenever the hell it was--he sounded like the vice president of the fan club; he sounded like Maureen Garrett's stand-in almost; he was marvelous.
 DP: Well, I think he reaches his--his--
 Q: He's a pro.
 DP: And he reaches his limit of frustration while the movie is being made. You can imagine. Here's a very talented actor and a particularly talented mime who is confined in an uncomfortable, hot costume that restricts his movements. He told me his greatest frustration was doing the scene in JEDI where he mimes the story of the three films, and he couldn't move his arms and legs the way he wanted to. He was so constricted by the costume that he was very unsatisfied with how the scene came out.
 Q: Even though it's a terrific scene. It's certainly one of my favorites.
 DP: It's a terrific scene, and unfortunately it's also truncated in the finished film. It was longer--
 Q: Oh yeah?
 DP: --in the original version.
 Q: All right. Let's go to the phones. If you have a comment or a question for our guest, his name is Dale Pollack, you've read his stuff in the L.A. TIMES, and you can now read it in SKYWALKING: THE LIFE AND FILMS OF GEORGE LUCAS--
 DP: --in your bookstores now. In your bookstores. Fourteen-ninety-five. (INDISTINCT) no extras.
 Q: All right. Okay. You're on the air. Go ahead.
 MAN: I have a couple of questions. I read the SKYWALKING book, and it's a terrific book, I must

say.

DP: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

MAN: Very, very well done. And one question that I had in the book and tonight you've mentioned that Lucas [is] moving into the area of videotapes and interactive video games. And in the book you go on to mention him going into educational videos, educational television and the new technology he's trying to pull together at the Skywalker ranch--new editing techniques and so on. Could you elaborate on both of those a bit?

DP: Sure. The video games, I think, is fascinating. Lucas is very aware of how bored he was, particularly in high school. He was a "D" student and he felt completely alienated from the teaching methods, and he remembers that the only time he came alive in the classroom was when they showed a film. And he feels now, with the pervasiveness of video games, that they're not going to go away and that the best thing to do with them is to turn them to better purposes. And he thinks that rather than simply have a passive game where the player competes against the game, that you should have a more active game, where the player can, in effect, program the game, challenge the game, and in the process challenge himself and expand his mental powers.

Q: Hmm.

DP: And this is all very rudimentary to him, and yet, as I think his career demonstrates, when he has a strong belief about something, he usually achieves it. And I think you're going to see that Lucas, among other people, is going to push video games into new and more challenging areas. I don't think he's exactly sure what form those are going to take, but he does have the idea of trying to do very elaborate stories with numerous possibilities contained within each story. And he says the computerization and microchip technology makes this possible today, to have these very complex, self-directed programs. And I think you're going to start to see them come out. And, I'm sorry, what was the other part of the question.

MAN: The technologies coming up, with new editing techniques and that sort of thing.

DP: Right. Well, he's doing a lot with digital technology in particular both digital editing and digital sound mixing which he feels will reduce a lot of the grunt and grind work that goes along with filmmaking, the work he always hated as an editor and a sound mixer. And it was amazing, when I was up at his computer company, they showed me two screens, two television screens, and one was a shot from the ice location in THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, the ice planet Hoth, which was filmed in Norway, and the other one was the computer recreation of that same landscape, and I could not tell the difference.

Q: Oh.

DP: Now, they're beginning to try to work out how you matte figures in, onto these computer images effectively.

Q: There was some of that in JEDI, wasn't there?

DP: Yes. A little--a tiny little bit with the sail barge.

Q: Yes. With the sail barge.

DP: Sail barge scenes. And for the first time, the lightsabers are not animated, as they were in the first two films; they're now computer animation.

Q: Oh, that's why they look different.

DP: Yes. They do look different. And so

Q: Yeah.

DP: --very. You know, he was beginning to introduce these things. Digital editing is a complex process

to describe--I won't even try, 'cause I barely understood it--but basically what it means is that you could sit down with a small record-player-sized device and plug in every different version of the film that you've cut and press a button, and all the versions would be merged into one.

Q: Good heavens. So maybe we'll see not just video games but movies that will do this sort of thing.

DP: I think so. And of course, he's very interested in the whole concept of satellites and satellite distribution to bypass the studios--

Q: Ah, the George Lucas satellite. Can you believe that?! Someday maybe, huh?

DP: Someday. We'll see.

MAN: Is he doing anything, then, that would be--end up being, say, cablecast or broadcast?

DP: Not at this moment. He's been approached by a lot of people.

MAN: On the Ewoks, in the credits, they are mentioned as, I think, either aliens or small aliens, and then they're all listed, all 30 of them or how many.

DP: Right.

MAN: But the only clue for the name Ewok is in the credits for the languages, and one of them says, "Ewokese by" someone; I don't remember.

DP: Ben Burt--

Q: Yeah.

DP: --who created all the languages for the films.

Q: He didn't get credit for the other one, for the Jabba the Hutt language. Somebody else got the credit for that.

DP: I think it was--I think it was a pseudonym for Ben Burt.

Q: Oh, maybe so.

DP: Yes.

Q: Maybe so.

MAN: But even that, the only mention, in all the credits, is Ewokese.

Q: Hmm.

DP: That's an interesting point; I hadn't really been aware of that. Lucas likes to play these little games. I think in part to give the fans something to chew on. He knows that they're gonna pick apart every detail anyway, so I think he likes throwing little blinds and games in their way.

Q: I want to know how Darth Vader got injured, and I want to know who Luke's mother is. These are two things that I want to know.

DP: That's one of the questions that I think Lucas has been asked by everyone, and he has an explanation: the mother was killed, you know, shortly after the twins were born, but that's his only explanation, and he says that a fuller explanation of that part of the story will come in the first trilogy.

Q: If he ever makes it.

DP: If he ever makes it.

Q: Maybe if he doesn't make it, he can get somebody to do novelizations of movies that don't exist. Wouldn't that be interesting.

DP: Well, he does have six detailed story outlines for the remaining films.

Q: Hm-hmm.

DP: --and it wouldn't be impossible for him to turn those over to somebody like--

Q: To franchise them?

DP: --to Alan Dean Foster, you know, for--

Q: Yeah.

DP: --for--

Q: Because he--

DP: SPLINTER'S EYE and some of the other ones.

Q: Oh, were those original Lucas ideas?

DP: Yeah. They basically-- I think the first three books other than the STAR WARS novelization that came out, all took the original concepts of STAR WARS as a launching point and went off in their own directions--

Q: Oh, I see.

DP: --but they all started on ideas that Lucas had on his original concept.

Q: Huh!

DP: Okay.

Q: Okay. Thank you for calling. Hour 25, you're on the radio.

WOMAN: I would like to know if it would be feasible if Spielberg and Lucas would get together on a STAR WARS film, and if so, would it be better than the previous three?

DP: Well, I really don't think Steven has an interest in doing a STAR WARS film.

Q: Okay. Thank you for calling. Hour 25, you're on the radio.

MAN: Hi. I have--what I think--a rather elementary question, but still I don't know how to get the answer to this: I went to see STAR WARS when it was replayed about two or three months ago, and one of the things I was very disappointed in was they had cut out a number of scenes. Is there anyway that I could have determined that from the advertisement, that they had, you know, shortened it or whatever?

DP: I think you must be confused because, to my knowledge, and I would be very surprised, knowing Lucas, I-- I-- was this STAR WARS you saw in the theatres?

MAN: Yeah.

DP: 'Cause the film hasn't been released in theatres for, I think, at least nine months. They pulled it out of all the theatres before they sold it to pay and cable television. And I--knowing Lucas, I can't imagine he would ever countenance anybody cutting STAR WARS.

Q: Does he have control, though? I thought--

DP: Oh yeah.

Q: --20th-Century Fox had control of STAR WARS.

DP: Well, 20th-Century Fox--there's been very complicated negotiations. Basically, although 20th Century Fox owns the television owns certain rights to STAR WARS, Lucas owns STAR WARS; he owns all three films, in terms of the basic movie itself.

Q: I see.

DP: Fox has other rights that they don't have. They don't own television rights on EMPIRE or JEDI.

MAN: Okay, now I don't I really as far as the time when I actually saw it, I am not real sure [There was a cut in the tape, here] --if anybody's seen the radio show, they might've heard the radio show, they might've --

DP: Pardon me.

Q: The Clone Wars.

DP: Oh, the Clone Wars. That was, again, a very general concept Lucas started out with in his early screenplay, when he was filling in the history of the Empire, and the Clone Wars was part of that. But there was never any more detail on it, on any of the drafts that I saw. Now, I don't know what he has in his mind about that, but it was part of the background that led up to the formation of the Empire, which is really a fascinating story and was very influenced at the time by Richard Nixon, who became the model for the Emperor.

Q: Oh! (LAUGHING)

DP: Remember that Lucas was writing this during Watergate.

Q: Yes. Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much.

When you wrote the book, did you have any idea it was going to get to be as much of a project as it was? I mean, I wasn't expecting a simple gloss job, but when you started with the first thing you write about is that accident he had as a--

DP: Right.

Q: --teenager in Modesto, as a high school kid, and, I mean, it just goes on and on, and he seems to be a very driven--you should pardon the expression--a very driven man. He lives on the edge; he's one of those people who's looking-- He's-- How can I put this? He wants to make a mistake; he knows he will, he challenges himself, he puts himself on the line, and then when he doesn't fall off the edge, he sort of berates himself for not being out far enough. Is that a fair summation or--?

DP: Yeah, I think that is, and it's also, in some ways, a definition of a truly creative person, which is this ability to push yourself beyond what you might usually be capable. I think--I'm sorry--repeat the first part of the question.

Q: Never mind the first part of the question.

DP: Okay. (LAUGHTER)

Q: Well, okay, next question. Films are a committee--are made by committee.

DP: Right.

Q: How did he get all of these people to share his vision? That is a one man film; regardless of the hundreds and thousands of names, that is a one man film. And that just blows me away.

DP: Yeah, it--

Q: How does he do that?

DP: It's amazing. One of the things I was really struck by, that this is really a shy, a diffident, a reclusive man who is awkward in social situations and does not feel comfortable talking to people in public, even people who work for him or who've worked for him for a number of years, and yet the loyalty he engenders is simply astonishing. I think that's because of a basic quality he imparts to his commitment to his work is so sincere that there's no other way to react to it, other than to believe him. Now, during the making of STAR WARS, he encountered exactly that problem: the British crew, in particular, thought he didn't know what the hell he was doing.

Q: Right, right.

DP: And they were contemptuous of him, they were recalcitrant; they virtually went on strike at one point over his treatment of the cameraman, and he it was the thing that depressed him so much, that's one of the reasons he stopped directing films, because he realized that-- "Nobody knows what I'm trying to do. I do, but nobody else seems to believe me." Now, as Marcia was one of the few people that always stuck by him, even when he showed the films to his friends, and Brian DePalma, in particular, was extremely sarcastic about the editing.

Q: You mention that.

DP: And, I mean, it was done in almost a friendly, constructive sense, but DePalma's just a very sarcastic individual.

Q: Has DePalma--has Brian been invited back to see subsequent movies?

DP: Well, again, Lucas relies on his friends to give him that kind of feedback. He I don't know can't say he wanted to hear that, but he knew in part what DePalma was saying was true, and in fact it was DePalma's idea--and DePalma wrote--the opening crawl.

Q: Oh, he did?!

DP: Absolutely. And Lucas tinkered with it a little bit, but basically DePalma and Jay Cocks, who at

that time was a TIME magazine film reviewer, basically wrote the crawl. And Lucas, of course, is-- was extremely appreciative of that. But I think he relies on his friends for that kind of feedback, and I don't think it bothers him.

Q: What about reviewers or critics? Do they bother him at all? Or does he just spit in their eye and go on and laugh all the way to the bank?

DP: He says it doesn't bother him; he says it doesn't. But clearly it does. I know it irks him that, for instance, Coppola--to take a salient example--is considered a Film Artist, which is a capital-A and a capital-F, and Lucas is considered like a sort of toy-maker, a pap purveyor, and a guy who's just going out for the money. And he says that doesn't bother him, but I can tell it does.

Q: Maybe that's one of the reasons why he wants to make these art films.

DP: I don't think so. I think, again, that comes back purely to his individual desires. I think what calms him is his absolute conviction that he will be vindicated in time; that when people look back--

Q: Also in NEWSWEEK.

DP: (LAUGHING) --that when people look back on these movies ten, twenty, thirty years from now, they will see how rich they were, both in psychological symbolism and how effective an example they were of how films can affect an audience. And I think they're really splendid examples of that.

Q: A lot of what people say about Lucas and Spielberg, as a duo in particular, is that--speaking of symbolism and richness--is that their symbolism and their richness comes from other movies rather than from life. And a lot of people think that this is a defect. Do either of them see it as a defect? Do you see it as a defect? Is that a problem? Is it true?

DP: I think it's definitely a defect, but I don't think it's particularly one of Lucas', because, although Lucas certainly watched these TV shows when he was a child, he was by no means a movie freak. He didn't. I think he told me [that] by the time he graduated high school, he could count the number of films he had seen on both hands.

Q: Hmmm.

DP: And that included his childhood. And he just wasn't that interested in movies. As he went to college, he became more interested in movies. But what Lucas has done is to cannibalize his own life rather than other people's films. He's gone back. And the question that remains is: can he make an adult film? He's made a childhood film, which I think is STAR WARS; he has made an adolescent film, which is AMERICAN GRAFFITI; he's made a college film, which I see as THX--

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: --in terms of paranoia and this whole thing was very much influenced by the Vietnam war. The one film that he has not dealt with is George Lucas the adult, about contemporary people in their 30s--20s, 30, and 40s, who are living their lives, having children, trying to make it, and he's ignored that. Spielberg has dealt with that. I think that was one of the reasons E.T. was so popular, because it dealt in a very contemporary world of the single parent and kids, very realistic kids. He [Lucas] seems almost afraid to face up to that part of his life. Maybe after these two years, he'll be more prepared to deal with that.

Q: Hm-hmmm.

DP: But that's, I think, is the thing that's been lacking.

Q: I see. Okay. We are out of time, and I am sorry, because there's a lot more we could ask and a lot more questions--

DP: Yes.

Q: --I'm sure the audience would have, but--Dale, thank you very much for being on the show and for-- Thank you also for writing SKYWALKING. What a nice book that is. I'm amazed that he's not yet forty and you've got all this material and it's all relevant and it's all interesting, and I'm also glad it's an inspiring book. I notice I know you're not Katherine Kuhlman, but I'm moved to say that. I think I'll put it on my shelf, next to William Goldman's book. It's encouraging.

DP: Well, thank you very much. For the opportunity to be here and to talk to you, and I appreciate your comments on the book.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE by Lynda Vandiver

Solution on page 69

STAR WARS - MILLENNIUM FALCON

WORDS

D E E P S T H G I L K
A C F R E I G H T E R
L A U A O H V V A A N
C P O F S L B C G C U
O S H G D T C A T Y R
T R O Z R A I J O P L
V E Z S B A T T L E E
A P B W E N C J I Q S
G Y E S D R W F P E S
N H Y P E R D R I V E
C M D O L O S N A H K

BATTLE
CARGO
CHEWBACCA
FAST
FREIGHTER
HAN SOLO
HOLD
HYPERDRIVE
HYPERSPACE
KESSEL RUN
LIGHT SPEED
PILOT

Question Authority

by Jeanine Hennig, Samia Martz, and Mary Urhausen

Lucasfilm doesn't give a damn for its fans.

Now that we've made this sweeping statement, one that has been stated many times before, let's clarify it and make clear the reasons why we've once more brought it forth.

It is Labor Day weekend, at the Lone Star Con and alternate Worldcon in Austin, Texas. The panel is entitled "Whose Fandom Is It, Anyway?" On the panel are Maureen Garrett, Carolyn Cooper, Samia Martz and Jeanine Hennig.

(Before we go any further, the situation needs to be clarified, in all fairness. There were some wires crossed in what the panel was supposed to be about. Maureen thought that it was a Media vs. Tru-fans panel; the others thought it was a panel questioning Lucasfilm's method in dealing with its fans. Jeanine was doing programming and takes full responsibility for the mix-up. But mix-up or no, we still don't feel that this excuses the antagonism that was displayed towards us. No, Virginia, Lucasfilm's representatives still haven't learned manners.)

As you might have guessed, we're angry. So, we're going to toss the glove in earnest. Lucasfilm does a lot of pretending. They say that they're the only organization that gives a flying flip for their fans. True, on the surface. They have organized a fan club, they allow (?!!) fanzines to be published, they do nifty slide presentations and, from all we've heard, are glad to give the fans a tour if they happen to find the workshop and show up on the doorstep. All of this looks nice, and is nice. But we're not talking about appearances - we're talking about attitude.

And that word hits the nail right on the head. Like we said earlier, the organization does a lot of pretending. They offer the meat to the dog, then slap him when he gets too close. As zine editors and fans, we've seen signs of this before. It just seemed to hit home to see the attitudes expressed up close, on a panel and to hear some of the members of the audience AGREE!

Item One: "I hope they'll grow out of it." Fanzines are viewed by Lucasfilm's representatives as a childhood toy. The zines are a stepping stone, nothing more, and should be abandoned after one gets good enough to go "pro". That isn't fair. There are some zine folk who don't WANT to go pro-- does that make their work any less? And what of those who are working to go pro, or have done so,

yet still like to read and write for zines?

Item Two: "Imitation is not the sincerest form of flattery; it can be grounds for a legal suit." This subject has been done to death, and we don't want to get into it, really. But it does come up with every involvement with Lucasfilm. Marian Zimmer Bradley once said that she was ecstatic that others wanted to play in her world. What a wonderful attitude to have! What are these people afraid of? George Lucas has created a marvelous world. We do not deny that, nor can we take that accomplishment away from him--even if we wanted to. But, obviously, someone thinks that we want to. Well, if you don't listen, you don't hear...

Item Three: "My way is the Only Right and True Way." That doesn't work in life, much less in fantasy. This is very similar to Item Two, really an offshoot. And it disturbs us that Lucasfilm's representatives have such an outlook from an organization that used to work to PROMOTE creativity...

Item Four: "When you milk the cow for three years without breeding her again, the milk gets pretty thin." There is a firmly shut door on future adventures of SW, except for children's shows. Lucas may or may not get around to writing other movies for SW. Adult fandom is dying, and they don't seem to give a damn. No books are going to be released. Outside of zine fandom which is kept alive by STORIES and FUTURE ADVENTURES--the thing is bleeding slowly, with no hope for transfusion. You might ask why we care. Sometimes we wonder ourselves--you can only be beaten down so many times. But it is hard to see something that you loved die without anyone trying to save it. Books saved Trek fandom...

Item Five: "We have no money." When we asked about future rereleases, the reply was that there was no money to subsidize such a venture. The final showings of JEDI didn't make money. We're not surprised, as few people knew they were even OUT last time they showed. Call us childish, but this "no money" thing is just a BIT hard to swallow.

Item Six: "We are here, high on our success. We don't need you anymore." Hey, didn't fans put them there? We can take 'em down...

Item Seven: "Question Authority." Yes, that's what we were told at the end of the panel. Speaking of biting one's nose off to spite one's face...

Come on, guys! Question authority? I thought that's what we were doing!

Reviews

IN A FARAWAY GALAXY. A Literary Approach to a Film Series: Gracia Ray Ellwood, Doris Robin, Lee Vibber. 149 pp, softback; 1984, Extequer Press, P.O. Box 60193, Pasadena, CA 91106. \$6.95. Sase for availability.

Reviewed by Maggie Nowakowska

This collection of essays on the SW universe may be the most refreshing piece of SW literature available in a month of Mondays. Working strictly within the universe as Lucas has presented it, the authors tackle examinations of the characters, of the role of Romanticism in the Saga, and of the similarities/differences between Lucas' Force and the concept of chi/ki. And they do it all without bearing any ax to grind, without a hidden smoking gun of prejudice, and without the glaring if blind certainty of correctness that mars so many discussions of the same material in fannish literature.

One may find oneself disagreeing with the authors' interpretations and conclusions, but the reader never feels as if she has been forced on the defensive by the authors' tone.

I don't imagine this accomplishment was easy, either. Although this is a professional Small Press publication, the three women are all fans. Lee Vibber has been co-editor of ON THE MARK, Mark Hamill's fancub publication, and will take over the club this year. Doris Robin is a self-acknowledged, dyed-in-the-blaster Hanfan (and a member of the LA Filkharmonics, performers of killer SW filksongs). Like Doris, Gracia Ray Ellwood has been active in the Mythopoeic Society; more, her activity in Tolkien fandom led to a book about THE LORD OF THE RINGS. These are not people to come to SW cold-eyed. The only bias I could find, in fact, was one seldom encountered in professional accounts: a respect for the SW saga, and an enthusiasm for the material presented in it.

The longest segment of IAFG covers the characters of SW. Luke, Leia and Han are given equal treatment; next follow Obi Wan and Anakin/Vader. Lando's pages are half as long, while Chewbacca, Yoda, and the droids are covered under the heading of non humans in the final 14 pages of this section. I can honestly say that I found at least one observation per character that I had never thought of before, and often many more which opened up a new way of looking at these now old friends.

Here are some glimpses into these character essays:

Luke: The authors tackle a full assessment of Skywalker's virtues and faults, drawing on the duality of Luke's background, personality and basic nature. They explore what they feel is Luke's misinterpretation of the Force through a discussion of his Dark Side potential and his journey to the positive ending of the trilogy.

Leia: The most refreshing aspect of this essay is the author's treatment of Organa as a person first and last, rather than as a "romantic inter-

est". They discuss her relationship with Han as a reflection of her/his life experiences and personalities, and explore the ways in which Leia resembles both her brother and her biological father.

Han: The strongest theme here is friendship and how Solo's definition of the same affects his judgment, world view, and personal relationships. I found the similarities the authors found between Han and Luke fascinating since the two are so often put at opposite sides of the picture.

Lando: Calrissian is compared to Leia quite successfully. The discussion of his position on Bespin once Vader arrives (and his misjudgement of the Dark Lord) is neither accusatory nor does it gloss over Lando's actions. Telling points are made on the similarities/differences between him and Han.

Obi-Wan: Perhaps the best measure of such a book is how it treats your favorite character. Mine is Kenobi and I was amused to find myself thinking the authors too easy on the old Jedi. Still, I found much to appreciate in the discussion of OWK as a warrior, as a man with his own interpretations of the Force, and as someone deeply involved with his feelings toward his erstwhile friend, Anakin.

Anakin/Vader: Contradictions of personality are the basis of this discussion, and a fine one it is, neither in awe of the Dark Lord nor overly enamored of the notion, "aw, it's Luke's daddy". Anakin/Vader's obsession with power (and the weaknesses of such) is contrasted with Kenobi's perception of the Force as something to merge with, leading to the question: is Vader truly as competent as he thinks he is?

Chewie: Why does a 200-year-old being act so juvenile so often? I found the authors' suggestions quite appropos and interesting.

Yoda: I also found the contention that Yoda was the wrong teacher for Luke fascinating. Finding himself boxed in (by Kenobi), an impossible situation (to Yoda) seems a reasonable cause for the irascibility and contrariness we saw in the ol' swamprunner.

Moving on to Gracia's essay on Romanticism, we find that Ellwood has brought her life-long love (and study) of myth and story-telling to fore. Romance here means Adventure, and Gracia traces many stories similar to SW through humankind's long history of tale telling. Topics include The Shape of Romance, The Characters, Plots, Significant Images. What I appreciated most here is the broad range of Gracia's view. She does not limit herself to traditional Western European tales, but travels over the world for examples.

Also, she does not give into the popular, easy "hidden meaning" explanations for, say, the loss of Luke's hand. Although she acknowledges the possible sexual interpretations of such happenings, Gracia demonstrates that there are other ways, richer and less glib, to view the Saga. In her discussion of Odin, Ellwood says, "Power provides a better key to...maimings than does the sexual motif...the story

of Odin does not deal with threats or conflicts. Power is sought--the power of supernatural knowing--and a sacrifice is made to get it. It is his eye he loses because he wishes to gain another kind of insight...[a hand as with Luke/Anakin] is a means to action, whether it be to caress, to write, to point, to wield a weapon, or a scepter."

A further fascinating aside in Gracia's discussion of the hero/heroine is an exploration of the story of Dumizi (Mesopotamian)/Tammuz (Biblical), and how it can be applied to fans as well as to beloved characters.

Finally, we come to Ellwood's exploration of the Force. This essay, "Flowing Freely: Chi and the Force", develops out of Gracia's long study of mysticism and the occult. A bare bones, beginner's look at the principal of chi/ki, it is still a worthy overview. Gracia discusses the light and the dark sides of the Force as presented in the Saga, then explores, mostly through martial arts applications with an emphasis on Aikido, how the Force is similar and dissimilar to Chi/Ki.

I recommend this book highly. It's a cheap zine for the price and a treasure trove of discussion ideas.

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TIME WARP 6/7, Edited by Anne Elizabeth Zeek, Poison Pen Press, 627 E. 8th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11218. \$20.75 bk. sp. hd.; \$19 bk. SASE for availability.

Reviewed by Sandra Necchi

More and more fan editors are producing zines that are difficult to review in coherent, complete form. This year's Fan Q winner poses enormous problems. Fortunately, I've found what is perhaps a despicable but convenient solution (for this instance at least). Zines like TW 6/7 deserve at least two part reviews, preferably by two different people. The immense variety jam-packed in them offers too many voices and visions on which one lowly soul can sensibly opine. Therefore, this time, I sought help.

In SCOUNDREL #6, Bill Vandewater published a lovely review humbly entitled "Not a Review" where he posed TW's "unreviewability" (I hope Edwin Newman, guardian of the language, is not watching) and then set upon a "guide" for any brave soul who would attempt one. On the way, he offered some very fine critical comments on just a few pieces of this 400 page monster which I will let stand, even though I did not agree with all of them. Why repeat a good commentary? That allows me to mention some of the other pieces, and the art (which Bill did not touch on). If that is cheating, so be it.

Bonnie Reitz' "Legacy" is an imaginative ST story with a nice science fiction idea (the physical relocation of an entire planet) and great bits of character interplay. Set in a parallel universe similar, but not identical to, the one in "Mirror, Mirror", this Kirk is more civilized and Spock and Uhura have an ongoing banter that is at once testy yet mutually admiring. Susan Crites' "Of Righteousness and Other Youthful Follies" has a cumbersome title but is perhaps one of the best explorations into Han Solo I've seen. Han is haunted by a tragic memory told in flashback from the days when he was a law upholding Imperial officer.

Original, tender and engrossing, Crites' story of a timid, kept woman trying to free herself from her dominating crimelord husband also delves into the stupidity of being too conforming to the law. Karen Osman's "Loyalties" is about just that--the wavering loyalty of her recurring character, the clone Raan, one of Vader's most trusted troopers. Subjected to constant bigotry by non-clones, yet curious about the world of the "Others" (the humans), especially the women, Raan is tempted to leave his lord's service when he falls in love with a non-clone female human. Osman's imperial fiction is always fascinating and this is no exception, but I thought it would have been better had the woman Raan becomes involved with been less prosaic and silly.

"The Homecoming" (one of the longest stories) is a re-telling of ROTJ by Fern Marder and Carol Walske, positing a Dark order of Force-users called the Cadar of which Han and his family are ancient members. It is up to Han, the Cadar, and Luke and Leia, the Jedi, to destroy the Emperor together with a little help from the unreformed Vader. The author's interpretation of these two types of Force users:

"It was nigh impossible for Jedi to battle a Cadar. One of the major tenets of the Jedi Way was interlinked dependence in the Force. A Cadar, trained to the highest pitch of controlled selfhood, was usually able to prey on a Jedi's intrinsic openness."

Such an interpretation manages to posit a Han as Force wielder while still maintaining his innate independence and individuality, something I missed in ROTJ. But the story ultimately fails to touch the senses or move the reader. There are too many "floods of emotion" ("joy and wonder, shame and recrimination, hope and love") where characters and the reader are so overloaded that all those emotions in one sentence (repeatedly) never become more than words on a page. Triteness, and stiff, flowery language also mar the piece. Simple, effective wording is foregone in favor of words like "surcease" and "ululation". I also object to Chewie being referred to as "the beast" in the narration.

A collection of shorter pieces are probably the best reading experience in the zine. "The Commander's Bed is Never Cold" by Phyllis Johnpoll and Geraldine Stout and "Initiation Rights" by Pat Nussman are in the same delicious vein wherein Han's reputation as a galactic stud and Luke's as an innocent virgin are challenged. "The Pawn" by Michelle Malkin offers raw power in its impact of a Darkside Luke and Marcia Brin's "For Auld Lang Syne" adds a refreshingly new and tender dimension to her favorite theme. In order to posit a special, significant interest in Han by Vader, Brin humanizes the Dark Lord by giving both men a tantalizing past. Deborah Laymon's "Come the Revolution" is an excellent foray into the "revolution betrayed" tradition, set after the Alliance victory, with the victors beset by internal dogmatists executing the very heroes who made the defeat of the Empire possible. The best short pieces are easily the collection of three tragic vignettes on the Luke and Leia incest theme, by Carol Walske, Jacqueline Taero and Pat Nussman. My own favorite is Nussman's "For Dogs to Tear" which is so quiet and subtle.

Uneven, and a bit forced, is Carol Walske's "Winner Takes All", an explanation of why Han decided to stay in the Alliance. Strong on characterization, it gets bogged down in unsubtle emotional reactions. Fern Marder's "Pass on What You

Have Learned" is intriguing in its concept (Luke returns to claim his inherited estate as a Sith heir, and finds some of his father's young Jedi apprentices, all Darkside, challenging his power). Marder's interpretations of the Force are quite creative, and as her first solo piece, the story offers some satisfying moments of interplay between Luke, the self-assured Jedi, and the young woman Vader left in charge.

"Deep in the Gathering Gloom" by Patricia Munson-Siter lacks most of the story elements needed to keep the reader interested. Perhaps it is because this is my first exposure to her Black Jedi series, but since a major character is introduced in this piece, one would expect that more would be done to focus on him. The characters are flat and the action is presented hastily and superficially. You need not have fleshed out characters to have a good story. In absence of that, what you do need is a well-developed idea, a strong concept. There is a fine but unused idea here: a guerilla war waged by the Sandpeople against the human homesteaders who are defended by Imperial mercenaries. That could be a whole novel.

Liz Sharpe's poetry is among the best, with two, "Vale of Tears" and the subtle poignancy of "Father and Son" (Luke and Vader) easily grabbing the reader's senses. Sarah Liebold's "The Gods Grieve" is a lovely eulogy (sort of) for Alderaan. And Jacqueline Taero's "Footnote for Forgotten Heroes" is a clever, all too likely scenario wherein the rebels "gave a war and nobody came."

Two pieces mentioned by Vandewater deserve repetition: Kate Santovani's "With a Little Help From My Friends" (a wonderful, tightly plotted,

tender PROFESSIONALS story) and Sara Campbell's incredible "Two Faces." Even if you are not a BLADERUNNER fan, you must read it. This piece stayed with me for days. Fandom has lost an incredible talent.

Carol Walske's bold, dramatic faces grace the zine throughout, some a bit flat, but others quite affecting. My own favorite of hers are the Han front cover and the Ewok chief of Joyce Yasner's "Heart of Darkness" (which, by the way, is the first attempt I know of at delving into the Ewok culture, and an original, memorable one). Susan Armstrong's fantasy "Bestiary" has a dramatic effect on the eyes. Her dotted style makes it appear as if the creatures are almost alive, except for her unicorn, whose legs look a bit awkward. Kate Nurenberg's illos of Bodie and Doyle are strong in motion as well as emotion. One artist that I've missed appears twice in TW—Hans Dietrich, whose hilarious, detailed illos for Barbara Wenk's play add a nice difference to all the serious (in content) art. Dietrich's style is refreshingly distinct, and always tells a story. Bonnie Reitz' illos to her "Legacy" are very strong and full. The one of Kirk with his Imperial uniform, muscles and determined stare, is particularly memorable.

The zine has a lot, lot more, but much of the material is uneven fluff and disappointing. For a zine this thick and expensive, I found myself leafing through its pages and doing a lot of shrugging in indifference. Whether or not it deserved the Fan Q is of course up to each individual fan to decide, but I felt that too much of the material was mediocre, and that the finer work was in the decided minority. I leave this one up to the buyer.

