



MARCH 1986

NO. 11

## IN MEMORY OF THE CHALLENGER SEVEN

Greg Jarvis

O! I have slipped the surly bonds  
of earth  
And danced the skies on laughter  
silvered wings;

Michael Smith

Sunward I've climbed, and joined  
the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds -- and done a  
hundred things

Dick Scobee

You have not dreamed of --  
wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hovering  
there,

Ron McNair

I've chased the shouting wind  
along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless  
halls of air.

Judy Resnik

Up, the long, delirious, burning  
blue

Ellison Onizuka

I've tapped the wind-swept  
heights with easy grace  
Where never lark, or even eagle  
flew --

Christa McAuliffe

And, while with silent lifting  
mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity  
of space,

January 28, 1986

Put out my hand and touched the  
face of God.

"High Flight"  
John Gillespie McGee

# Frontiers, Old and New

By William Murchison  
Associate Editor

**T**HE 150th birthday of Texas is at hand, and for the past week or so I have been reading Texas history with some diligence and attention.



Much of this history came floating vividly back to mind as television news showed the space shuttle Challenger exploding over the Atlantic Ocean, killing its seven-member crew.

What has Texas to do with Challenger? Quite a lot, I would suggest.

The Texas frontier, in the mid-19th century, was a place of wondrous dreams — of cities to be built, earth to be plowed, crops planted, life begun all over again.

**THE TEXAS** frontier was no place for ninnies. It was for the strong, the brave and the resolute.

The opportunities were enormous; likewise, to be sure, the dangers. Hostile Indians counterclaimed every acre staked out by the settlers. Every family that advanced beyond the line of the army and ranger posts knew the risks: war whoops in the nighttime, flaming arrows thudding in the door, tent poles adorned with blond scalps.

Nor were Indians the only danger. Doctors were few and far between; endless work sapped the strong and aged the

young; loneliness wore down the soul's defenses.

Still the settlers came, wave after wave of them. It was the way of the frontier. It was in truth the only way anything ever got done in the world — people putting one foot in front of the other one, even when tired and sick and frightened; moving on; moving ahead.

**SO THE** West was won. So the frontier of space will someday be won.

The space/frontier parallel has been mined often by commentators because of its aptness.

Everywhere skies, seas and land have yielded up their mysteries. The highest mountains have been climbed, the deepest jungles penetrated. Space, and space alone, is left. The astronauts are the new pioneers.

No one grabs them by the collar, forcing them into space shuttles, any more than, in 19th-century Texas, settlers had to be tied to their wagons and prodded west, toward the smoke signals.

The astronauts go because — well, I wonder if it does not reduce to the reason the settlers headed for Texas. They go because they want to see what is up ahead; because to hang back is misery and suffering, worse in its own way than death.

An Indian raid, an explosion in space — parallel perils, these: part of the warp and woof of frontier existence. It is terrible that such things happen, but happen they do. The remarkable thing about the space pioneers is that, in the face of such great

dangers, so few have died.

What dignifies all such calamities, in any case, giving them meaning and context, is the willingness of brave men — and women — to expose themselves to dangers they as well as anyone else can see. Danger and death are the high price of exploration, and thus of all real growth.

In the wake of the Challenger calamity many questions have been raised by and in the media: What is the effect on the space program? Will we build a new shuttle, staffing it with real live humans?

Only a society dedicated to the hermetic sealing off of human risks could ask such lunatic questions.

The replacement shuttle, whatever it costs, will be built; if not this year, the next one; if not the next one, five years hence.

**CREWS WILL** be found. "Found," did I say? Potential crew members, the best and the brightest, will beat down the doors, begging acceptance: knowing all about Christa McAuliffe, Francis Scobee, Michael Smith and the rest of the crew of Challenger; sensing the horror of their fate and the sorrow of their families, yet unable to help themselves, because there — up there, can you see it? — is the frontier, and someone must go among the stars to plot its contours.

War whoops at night, an explosion at midday: The heart grieves. Then it is time to move on — first one foot, then the other, to the far horizon.

# Challenger in Perspective

By Ann Melvin  
Editorial Staff Writer

**S**OME flawed philosophies have surfaced in our public grieving since Tuesday's tragic explosion of the Challenger spacecraft.



This is one of the problems with going live on national TV with our personal grief — and, surely, the searing sadness of the loss of those seven lives aboard Challenger hit most of us personally — for we hardly have time to collect our thoughts before a microphone is shoved in our face.

Of course, even as we clutch our chests and grab our crumpling faces, we are trying to make some sense of the tragedy that confronts us. It is our way. It is the way of a people long accustomed to burying its own on the long, empty stretches of wilderness West.

But, still, the new pressure of doing this on national television gives false credibility to whatever first thoughts surface, robs us of time — time to take our first reactions and shape and question and reconcile them with the truths we have striven to define through years of careful thought.

So now perhaps we should allow ourselves a moment to explore — and perhaps refute — some of the immediate reactions to Tuesday's tragedy:

"They shouldn't be up there

anyway." It seemed only minutes after the explosion that TV commentators were asking one another and whoever else was handy to interview, whether the Challenger explosion would have a permanent effect on manned space exploration. "Should man venture into space? Why not send machines?"

And thus ensues an entire dance around a philosophy that risk-taking is somehow inherently wrong.

If that were true, we would agree that we should all still be clinging, cold and hungry, to our Atlantic shore. Heck, that we should all still be back in England, Germany, Japan, Puerto Rico, China, working for the queen, the emperor, the landowner, the main man, whoever he happened to be, and not questing for freedom, for new frontiers. We should not, in other words, have accumulated this population of adventurers known as Americans.

Let machines do it? The machines would never have been invented without the spirit of man questing to explore the universe there to build them. Leave him at home, and the drive to build machines becomes less inspired.

"But, anyway, this was no place for a civilian and a woman." This is a very dangerous philosophy in two parts. First, it gives credibility to the idea that exploration should now be left only to the elite, the few, the federal. Does this mean that the rest of us should now, after centuries of an adventuresome

heritage, limit our personal horizons to 9-to-5? Should we tell our children that, in the interest of safety, there are no more frontiers? Should only machines and military seek the stars?

And what of women? Yes, now we come to that. It was easy to say, in those first awful hours, seeing the faces of her family, that Christa McAuliffe should not have gone, should not have put herself at risk and left her children. But women put themselves at risk every day — to drive car pools on freeways, to fly to new cities to build new homes, to decide to bear more babies. Who, then, should have the right to select the risks a woman takes? Only that woman. Christa McAuliffe took her risk and lives forever among the stars because of it.

But, then, they say, this awful tragedy will mark the children of the nation forever. Mark? Yes. Ruin? No. Children from the beginning of time have been formed in worse crucibles, and it is the ultimate tribute to man that he had the courage to grow from a child. It would be a grievous error for us to tell this generation of children they can't handle sorrow.

Carefully, carefully, then, the mind must winnow through the reactions flashed instantly upon the nation's TV screen and search for those that stand under closer scrutiny. I have found one. Former astronaut "Deke" Slayton talking: "Find what went wrong. Fix it. Fly again."

It is a sound philosophy; not just for spacecraft, but for a nation's spirit as well.

# CLONES

## And the Collapse of The Pre-Imperial State

Liz Sharpe

[The following is merely a collection of opinions. Where I have stated some debatable SW point as "fact" (as I'm sure I've done, though I tried not to), please feel free to take issue. This is only one of the infinite interpretations which may be made, and I do not pretend that it is more "right" than another. Nothing in the piece was intended to give offense, and I apologize in advance if I have inadvertently upset anyone.]

It is my impression, based on ANH, TESB and ROTJ, that three major events of "historical" significance have occurred in the recent past (approximately the last generation) of the STAR WARS characters' experience. These events are the Clone Wars, the "fall of the Jedi", and the collapse of the Old Republic. The three events had common roots; and the forces that brought them about continue to operate during the "present" which the movies portray.

My theory is this: The Clone Wars were the result of a technological breakthrough which presented a unique threat to the system of government then in power (the "Old Republic" or "OR"). That system, prior to the Clone Wars, had proven extremely stable, thanks to its adaptability and the support of the Jedi. It was the ideological repercussions of this sudden advance, more than its concrete manifestations, which threw the OR into an uproar, and, for the first time ever, paralyzed the entire Jedi order with indecision. That this disturbance spread so quickly, and soon metamorphosized into the violent pangalactic strife which came to be called the Clone Wars, was no accident. The same enemies of the OR and the Jedi who were instrumental in promoting the devastating upheavals became leaders under the new regime (the Empire).

Here's how the pieces of the puzzle fit together.

Once upon a time, there was a galaxy-sized political entity which is referred to in the SW trilogy as the "Old Republic." If it was truly a republic, the government was, in some form, representative. That is, there was a sizeable percentage of its population which constituted a "citizenship"; these people appointed (by some means) individuals who represented their views before a central government body; and that body's decisions in turn were presumably decided by some sort of voting (consent) process. Traditionally, a republic lacks a hereditary monarch figure, and has liberal tendencies in that it caters to the interests of the governed, rather than the interests of the governors. By connotation, a republic rules by consent of its members, and not by force. The republican form of government commonly occurs where societies with democratic inclinations are forced to come up with a working compromise in the face of the logistical inefficiencies of "pure" democratic (one voice =

one vote on every issue touching the common interest) government.

The chief weakness of a republic tends to be how the process of representation functions. The primary debates focus on who is to be represented; how those people make their desire known; and the manner in which the government implements its citizens' directives.

As mentioned above, it is generally assumed that a republic maintains order by keeping the majority of its citizens relatively contented, rather than by the exercise of brute force. The larger and more diverse the political entity, the harder it must work to achieve a functional consensus. In the case of the OR, the typical problem of communications between the populace and the central government was rendered particularly acute by the OR's vast (interstellar) size.<sup>1</sup> The tremendous distances involved must have rendered physical repression of recalcitrant systems logistically infeasible, as well as philosophically repugnant. In addition to the problems of sheer size, there was the matter of an extremely disparate population: the OR appears to have encompassed a variety of species,<sup>2</sup> as well as worlds. Anyone who has followed the antics of our 20th Century United Nations will appreciate the difficulties of getting just one planet and one species to agree on a given point. The OR was faced with an extremely challenging task in trying to keep the volume of its vox populi down to a manageable level.

In fact, it would hardly have been surprising if the sheer logistics of the situation had not rendered any form of interstellar government impossible; but the OR had the Jedi to help keep its cumbersome machinery working.

We have it on fairly good (though not irreproachable)<sup>3</sup> authority that "for over a thousand generations the Jedi were guardians of peace and justice" under the OR.

Apart from this rather sweeping statement (and the fact that the OR did, apparently, continue in power for an otherwise improbably long time, with sufficient success that a large part of its citizenship had subsequently taken up arms on its behalf in an effort to restore it as the primary form of government in the SW universe), we have very little evidence as to what, precisely, the Jedi did. The known Jedi we see in the movies appear to be highly trained warriors with special powers (which make them virtually indestructable in combat), who are also well-versed in moral and ethical issues (though they do not all make the same use of their knowledge).

The Jedi may, in fact, have seldom resorted to direct action ("a Jedi uses the Force for knowledge and defense, never for attack"); but even if their effect was largely that of a placebo,<sup>4</sup> the important thing was that, with the Jedi in circulation,

the average citizen's faith in the workability of the OR was maintained. And as long as the average citizen was satisfied that the existing system was providing what he expected (civil order, fair representation, redress for wrongs received, and a reasonable degree of prosperity), the system did in fact thrive. Whatever it was that the Jedi did, they seem to have been remarkably effective in keeping the day-to-day existence of the OR running smoothly.

Despite its longevity, however, and the benign influence of the Jedi, the OR was a potentially fragile institution.

Having the Jedi did not cause the problems of a diverse population spread over vast distances to simply disappear; the Jedi simply made it possible for the republic to work despite those problems. It is very likely that the OR was one enormous patchwork of delicate compromises. The OR's great antiquity indicates both that the compromises worked--and that there was a large number of them.

It is important to keep in mind that even when a compromise is successful, its very existence implies that there are those whose expectations have not been met. The more compromises, the more unhappy people. Doubtless the OR had its fair share of enemies, scattered throughout its farflung structure.

So, inevitably, did the Jedi, both as imposers of OR policy, and perhaps simply as individuals who did not fit into the common mold.

As enforcers of the "law" (or at least, its spirit) the Jedi were doubtless viewed with special consternation by many, just as an average, harmless American may view police officers with a touch of irrational disquiet. Then, too, unimpeachable moral integrity is not always the most endearing trait in the world. There would always be the danger that the Jedi next door might stop being your fishing buddy one day when you get embroiled in a sticky situation, and turn into an impersonal judging machine. Likewise, the Force itself is an unsettling concept. "Normal" people often show discomfort in associating with people with "special powers." Finally, it is quite possible that the average Jedi was perfectly "human"--which is to say, made some mistakes and was not necessarily a complete angel in temperament.<sup>5</sup> This could in turn have been exacerbated by the fact that it is not uncommon for those of special abilities and training to withdraw to a degree from general society a self-imposed isolation which can be amplified by perceived hostility from the members of general society.

If the average citizen viewed the Jedi somewhat askance, those who had material reasons for dreading the servants of law and order probably had rather more intense feelings on the matter. The Jedi would have been especially resented, not only by common criminals, but by the politically, socially, and/or economically ambitious who felt that the system the Jedi stood for needed considerable improvement. But there stood the Jedi, calmly, immovably, and (to all intents and purposes) invincibly in the way, champions of the frustrating OR system.

Despite the apparent permanence of the situation, society's malcontents probably devoted considerable thought to the prospect of getting even with the Jedi.

In short, a group of people hostile to the OR and the Jedi did not spring into existence overnight; a certain amount of dissention was inherent in the structure of the OR. Nevertheless, while the politics and the compromises become ever more

elaborate, and the malcontents more entrenched and less satisfied, the OR continued placidly on its way, with the aid of the Jedi, generation after generation.

The villain that did finally succeed in toppling the OR was not a new arrival on the historical stage; in fact, it was one of the most venerable social disruptors the passage of time has produced: progress. The scientists of the OR developed a process which, simply by existing, threatened the fundamental tenets on which the OR was based.

Scientific discoveries have a nasty habit of causing widespread disruption to established society; yet, inconvenient and distressing as they are, they can not simply be wished out of existence. An advance may be as elaborate as the atom bomb, or as seemingly innocuous as the concept of mass production. Yet the world is irrevocably changed; and even minor changes, if broad-reaching, can have a traumatic cumulative impact on daily life.

The particular nemesis of the OR was the invention of a process by means of which physically mature, mentally functional "clones" could be produced.

I have heard a great deal of argument on this point, some of it by very well-informed people. Nevertheless, I will sweep these perfectly reasonable objections aside on the grounds that the SW universe is not, apparently, the same as ours. It contains many things theoretically impossible in this universe, such as faster-than-light drive, Jedi knights, and artificial gravity. And two other pertinent items: machinery capable of interacting with human beings in a manner virtually indistinguishable from the organic (Luke's "bionic" hand); and ambulatory, apparently autonomous artificial intelligences (the droids). These last items would seem to indicate that research in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and bio-engineering is very far advanced in the SW continuum.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps someone, on the frontiers of genetic research, managed to devise from these building blocks, a process for the production of physically mature, "programmed" clones.

Artificially-manufactured beings indistinguishable from "normal citizens" pose an immeasurable threat to a society based on representative principles. This is particularly true if the subject of the "natural rights" (in the Rousseau-ian sense) for "unnatural beings" has already been under discussion for quite some time, as may have been the case.<sup>7</sup> If the rights of droids had been hotly debated prior to the arrival of the clone issue, then the average citizen was already fully equipped with a vocabulary of potentially frightening concepts to apply to the subject of created organic intelligence.

But droids were much less disturbing than the possibility of clones. Droids are machines, however sophisticated, and do possess significant, quantifiable physical differences from organic beings. In the final analysis, one can always tell a machine, if only by looking at its insides.<sup>8</sup> Possibly the average citizen had accepted the comfortable rationalization that droids are compensated for their lack of "civil rights" by the fact that they are virtually immortal. Unlike a biological unit, a droid can be rebuilt, and "death" is a concept far removed from the organic analog. Perhaps the issue of droids' rights had been relegated to left-wing cranks and strategic party filibusters in the Senate.

But the average citizen could no longer afford such complacency when the very concept of (human)

identity was at stake.

The prospect of clones held multiple rational and visceral terrors for the average member of OR society. On the political level, there was the concept of mass production to fear: the existence of artificially created beings virtually indistinguishable from their originals would impose an imperative need for the OR to redefine what constituted its franchised citizenship. The concept of property, too, might require reexamination. The issue of "immortality" (what if a corporate executive, for instance, wills his company to his own clone, for endless incarnations?) would arise. A criminal could have the perfect alibi: s/he might virtually be in two places at once. The military implications are obvious: even with the differences normal to natural twins, imagine the uncanny teamwork specially-bred units of skilled commandos could develop. A head of state or other important person might be assassinated and replaced with a genetic twin, and no one would know the difference. New class distinctions might arise: those who could afford "new parts," and those who could not. The religious implications could be frightful: disagreements concerning the existence of souls seldom remain calm--or brief.

And of course, clones would constitute a bountiful source of identity and ego bogies. Who is really me? Which is really her? What are our obligations to each other? Who takes primacy?

These are powerful issues, quite likely to grip the popular attention whether or not the threat of mass-cloning is actually immediate.

People began to feel uneasy in a big way, in a big hurry. Nevertheless, it is possible that a gradual adjustment might have been managed (who knows what other bridges the OR had crossed in its long history?)--but the enemies of the OR and the Jedi grasped the potential of the issue at once, and acted, promptly and ruthlessly. Perhaps the foes of the OR even masterminded the research which made cloning possible.

The malcontents began to stir up public alarm with all the resources at their disposal.<sup>9</sup> Not that overwhelming effort would necessarily have been required: as mentioned above, the general public was already familiar with the basic issues, and the question of clones struck to the heart of the OR. It would have been all too easy to set off the first wave of mass hysteria.

And this time the OR was left without its chief protectors, for the Jedi, too, being people as well as lawkeepers, were divided on the topic, and unwilling to take concerted action till their own debates were resolved.

From a historian's view, there may have been one other factor at work: the Jedi, though by no means helpless, may have lacked a key leader, a person of vision who could have given them the direction they needed, quickly. It is highly probable, on the other hand, that this focused, centralized organization was precisely what the enemies of the OR did possess.

The effects of the anti-republican group's efforts were dramatic. It is, after all, much easier to create a disturbance than to quell one.<sup>10</sup> Massive civil unrest began to spread. Laboratories were vandalized; people who came under suspicion were lynched; twins hidden by their terrified parents.<sup>11</sup> What action the Jedi tried to take was too little, too late, and poorly-orchestrated, because of the order's collective uncertainty as to where justice lay in the clones/no clones battle.

Chaos spread.

This system came up in favor of clones or clones' rights. That system was against. Another system was so torn with internal strife that vital shipments of precious drugs come to a halt. Widespread economic repercussions follow. Religious fanatics seize power elsewhere and declare holy war against the soulless demons and their makers. In the midst of the growing disarray of the OR's complex system of checks and balances, System A eyes System B greedily, realizing B's weakened condition; A decides to risk a move despite possible Jedi reprisals. A's success (the Jedi are still caucusing in an attempt to resolve the debate to their own satisfaction: "do clones have rights we should protect?") encourages other systems to prey on their neighbors. System A used "clones" as an excuse for its actions, and as a battle cry.

The Clone Wars had arrived. The beginning of the end had come for the Old Republic.

Now for the "fall" of the Jedi.

The Jedi were the linchpin to the OR's wheel: a small but vital part which enabled the whole mechanism to work. Individually, the Jedi did not break down; and the order as a whole, though seized by indecision, did not falter in its basic beliefs and practices. The Jedi did not necessarily succumb to "corruption": it was more a question of the wheel disintegrating around them--the linchpin has no place in the order of things without a hub to anchor. The Jedi lost their cohesiveness as a group, as individual members of the order became impatient or desperate at the prolonged indecision that seemed to have gripped them all. As individuals, they were still remarkably effective in action, but the chaos was out of control. The Jedi went down in the general madness that, stoked by a malicious few, was consuming the entire galaxy.

There is a general feeling that the Jedi were "corrupt" (drawn from the novelization of ANH, rather than the movies, I believe). Whether or not their ethical character was at fault, no doubt it appeared to the survivors of the Clone Wars, still smarting from disaster, that those weird Jedi always infallible in the past--had let them down. It would have been surprising if there had been no bitterness and confusion concerning the role of the Jedi in the Clone Wars.

The final blow to the Jedi was the turning of Darth Vader, though the collapse had begun earlier. It may be that Vader/Skywalker was so frustrated and angered by what he perceived as the deliberate abstention from action of his brethren that he succumbed, in his impatience, to the blandishments of the proto-Imperial element. Perhaps he saw himself as the bringer of a new order to a crippled galaxy; executing the betrayers of the old order. Perhaps, also, when news of Darth Vader's depredations against the "useless" Jedi spread, the populace initially welcomed him as a champion.

So the Jedi fell, piecemeal.

Finally, news came to the proponents of the Empire that the last known Jedi had fallen. The galaxy was desperately war-torn, hungry for peace, security, and a semblance of order once more. The Clone Wars were ebbing at last, leaving horrible devastation and an exhausted, dazed population in their wake. And the pro-imperial faction offered the survivors of the terrible wars a strong, guiding hand, in a bleak, lawless galaxy where even the strange, unaccountable Jedi no longer spun their dreams of justice.

By whatever ceremony the Empire was initiated,

the death knell of the Old Republic was rung. In the wake of the Clone Wars, the SW universe was left with certain "mementos." The two strongest legacies were the forbidding shadow that lay over the memory of the Jedi; and a strong underlying current of anti-clone feeling.

There are clues to the surviving hostility towards clones and their ilk throughout the SW movies. One indicator is the treatment accorded to droids. Outright hostility towards droids is not unknown: droids are clearly subject to human control; and droids are plainly designed to look like machines, not people—even the vaguely anthropomorphic ones like C3PO. Clones are obviously still a bogey to be conjured with: the stormtroopers' identical, faceless uniforms must have a strong psychological impact on the average citizen of the Empire.

And there are other hints. Neither Luke nor Darth Vader have been "repaired" with biological parts—though if cloning technology exists, it must have been possible. Possibly, this indicates a strong aversion to cloning techniques—or a conspicuous absence of the necessary skills. It has been suggested that Vader sustained damage of a nature which precluded transplant surgery; but for what practical (non-allegorical) reasons should Luke's hand be replaced with a mechanical substitute?

The Clone Wars may not be over yet.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. The SW universe appears to have some sort of "instantaneous" data transmission capability (cf. Vader's conference with the Emperor during TESB), but no form of physical transportation faster than starships.

2. Else why are the Mon Calimari fighting alongside humans to restore the Old Republic?

3. I'll give Kenobi the benefit of the doubt on this one.

4. Placebos are important: the "placebo effect" accounts for approximately 40% of the relief attributed to most over-the-counter painkillers.

5. Kenobi is many things. Humble is not one of them. And Yoda takes a positively perverse delight in tormenting Luke, even if it is for his own good.

6. "Bacta" also seemed related to this general line of development; the stuff appears to produce forced rejuvenation of specialized tissues (like skin).

7. Interestingly enough, this same issue has been cropping up in the pages of SE with increasing frequency over the past few quarters, with people taking strong positions on both sides of the debate. I'm not sure where I stand myself...

8. Of course, there may be "cyborgs" (organic/mechanical composites) in the SW universe: C3PO introduces himself as a specialist in "human/cyborg relations." I will continue to duck this creepy issue on the grounds that there isn't enough material in the movies to support further discussion.

9. Surely, just for starters, the SW universe possesses the equivalent of the NATIONAL ENQUIRER?

10. Imagine the uproar if we had a female Vice President in office, and someone hit the media with a story that she'd once been pregnant out of wedlock and had an abortion—and covered it up. Even if the story was pure invention, some of the dirt would stick, and meanwhile, we'd had a truly intense national dustup.

11. If Luke and Leia are (fraternal) twins, they were probably born during the end of the bad times, according to this scenario. What a wonderful excuse (twins are being summarily killed by ignorant, frenzied mobs) to separate the two of them.



Everyone's been making slighty off-color suggestions about the possibilities of the title of my little articles. here--so I decided to take up the gauntlet and have a little fun! Now, here is the real...

## The Private Life of the Jedi

As told by Jeanine Hennig, who darn well knows what she's talking about! So there!

Are all of you still believing that old rumor about Jedi being celibate?

Read on. Are you in for a surprise!

First, the most obvious. The lightsaber. (What do you mean "which one", you dirty-minded people!?) This is the working tool of a Jedi Knight, and is something very close to him/her. This is a very fraternal closeness. There is no truth whatsoever to the rumors that Jedi "do it" with their lightsabers (seems a bit painful to me!), but there is a bit of truth that Jedi "do it" with their lightsabers on. I told you, the Jedi is very close to his/her saber. That much is obvious. How many fan stories have Jedi caressing their respective lightsabers?

Much has been speculated upon as to why the working Jedi uniform is black. There have been various reasonings, but all of them are wrong. You see, it is a fact that the Jedi women have a saying: "All my men wear black, or they wear nothing at all." Thusly, the Jedi men, in self-defense, adopted the black uniforms we see today. It was either that, or go about in little black undies with silver J's on them. (Actually, physically active Jedi men don't wear undies. They wear little black jock straps. Gotta have some support when keeping the peace and halting oppression, you know.) Of course, not all Jedi men wore black undies at first. Some even wore white. (These were the Alderaani Jedi.) But soon, once started, the fashion became galaxy-wide. And, of course, in all equality, this led to the Jedi men saying: "All my women were black, or they wear nothing at all." This led the women to wear white suits and got the Jedi men into even more trouble than they started with. Now true, there are some Jedi who wear brown robes. This is a sociological signal that says: "This person is very tired, so lay off!" But these tired Jedi wear black undies, just in case.

You may wonder why I mention the women as the active aggressors of Jedi. Well, there is more than adequate proof in this galaxy that women have things for short blonde men in tight black pants, let alone in that galaxy.

The Jedi mating customs are slightly different than ours...

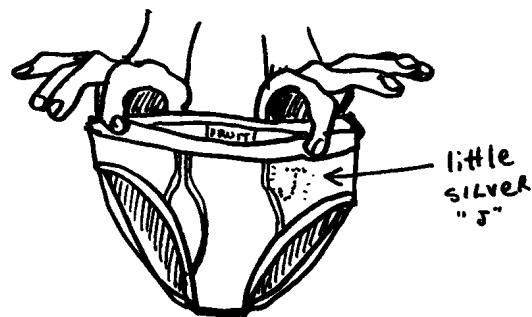
Oh, dear! I saw all those ears perk up! Mention one word about sex...

At any rate, Jedi mating customs are not as biased as ours here on Sol 3. Jedi men and women and beings (depending on what race one is) are very cool, calm and collected when away from the Enclave.

They want to put a good face toward the galaxy. They wait until they get home to have their "private life." Another Jedi saying is that "there is a time and place for everything." As a result, many people visiting the Enclaves are quite shocked at these supposedly staid peoples' attitudes about times and places. Well, there is a reason for all this libido. "Preservation of the race", and all that stuff.

Speaking of "preservation of the race", let's get to the Jedi. Luke Skywalker. There have been many theories about what Luke is going to do to keep his race going. Many writers have him hopping from one bed to another, impregnating every female that he can lay his lightsaber--uh, hands on. Well, this just isn't so. Haven't I made that perfectly clear? Jedi aren't like normal people! Is that all you people ever think about--bodies writhing in beds, or on floors, or on washing machines, or whatever? Look. You're wrong. Jedi simply don't do it that way!

You see, Jedi do it Forcefully!  
So there.



Jedi  
undies



# An Interview With Tom Voegeli by Pat Gonzales

[Tom Voegeli is Vice President of Minnesota Public Radio Productions, which did the STAR WARS and EMPIRE STRIKES BACK radio productions.]

Transcribed by Linda Deneroff. Printed with permission of Pat Gonzales. Edited by Cheree Cargill.

PG: The first thing I want to ask you--and this is kind of a question that's been in my mind since a girlfriend brought this up to me--on the tapes, when you were mixing and doing everything, did you speed Darth Vader's breathing up every time he gets near Princess Leia? Is that a secret, or--

TV: I don't think that's conscious. Maybe I did that--

PG: 'Cause a girlfriend pointed it out to me. She said, "Do you notice every time Vader's near Leia, his breathing starts going double and triple time. He gets really excited." (Indistinct)

TV: Well, there's one scene. The scene where he tortures Princess Leia in the radio series, which in the film is not really depicted. You see him about to torture her and then an air door slams down, and then it's--back to the next scene. Boy, I'm amazed I know that that well. Yes, I'm a fan, too!

PG: You haven't seen it 5,000 times?

TV: Well, I've seen it enough. I've seen it enough. Certainly I've seen STAR WARS maybe four or five times, you know, to do this, and certainly heard the soundtrack quite a bit. But, in the radio series, where inevitably things take longer because you're stretching the film out, in that case, into 13 half-hour episodes, or in the case of EMPIRE STRIKES BACK we'll be taking the film and really turning it into ten episodes--it's not going to be as many episodes. Plus, possibly an additional episode, so it may--with the two films--may break down into 24 total episodes so far, but there were 13 for STAR WARS. And because of that, obviously things get made longer or scenes that were not in the film in their entirety perhaps appear in the radio series. So that's one scene that's in there. And it's pretty--

PG: But it was not a little conscious effort on your part.

TV: No, not really, except that, obviously, as Vader gets more angered or more excited, he breathes more, and perhaps-- I think it's true that probably around Princess Leia he's-- I certainly didn't perceive it as any sort of sexual thing, I must say. But those tend to be the scenes-- I mean, he's blowing up Alderaan or he's torturing her, or those are the scenes where it so happens that he's probably most angry so his breathing probably gets fastest at those points. And so it was--it's just an inevitable, I think, result of the fact that those are the scenes that he's most upset in. After all, he is blowing up an entire world, you know, and stuff like that.

PG: My girlfriend particularly pointed that out.

Well, you know, again, in the various places, and I said, "Gee, no, I didn't." So I listened to it again real good. Now that I've got that out of the way, can I get a little bit of sort of biographical type of information about you. What is your official title with Minnesota Public Radio?

TV: I'm a Vice President of Minnesota Public Radio Productions, it's called. And it's basically an audio production house, which happens to be located at Minnesota Public Radio. And we do production mostly for outside clients; sometimes for Minnesota Public Radio, but mostly for outside clients, and it's a profit-making little division of Minnesota Public Radio. And we also run two very sophisticated multi-track recording studios that are in our department. They're studios that we run, we rent out, and then we use them for our own creative work. So STAR WARS was done in that context for public radio, in fact. The record album based on RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, which was also done here, was done directly for Lucasfilm, and EMPIRE STRIKES BACK likewise, so that's pretty much, you know, the structure of how those things have been done. I have a fair amount of experience in both music recording and in radio drama. There was a project in public broadcasting for a number of years called EARPLAY, and EARPLAY got to the point of, after a number of years, of trying to contribute to the art of contemporary stereophonic radio drama with original plays that were written for radio by Edward Albee and Archibald MacLeish, Arthur Kopet (?), David Mamet (?)--you know, the major playwrights of this country. And at its peak, was a production that I worked on, directed. I did all of the production and all of the sound work on it, and it was directed also by the fellow who directed STAR WARS for radio, John Madden, a production of a play called "Wings" for EARPLAY won the most coveted International Broadcasting Award, which is called the Italia Prix. And so that was kind of the peak of it. The EARPLAY basically doesn't exist anymore, but that was a project that I helped create and then ran for about five or six years. And I think because of that project, I'd grown up around radio and around recording studios and around music recording. But I became very interested in furthering dramatic ideas with sound and with scripts. And developed a certain amount. EARPLAY sort of specialized some of those productions--especially "Wings" and other productions that we did--specialized in using very high technology. Lots of labor-intensive, meticulous kinds of sound work that radio drama, really, in this country, has not been known for; it's kind of known for fairly simple, very straight-forward, very routine sound effects, very simple monophonic productions. And these were, in many cases, very sophisticated productions that used the high art of multi-track recording techniques. And so I began to sort of become a little bit of an "expert," and I put that word in quotes, but just because I had the opportunity and the in-

terest to use the kind of technology that's available in a really good recording studio, but instead of applying it to a rock 'n roll record or to music recording, applying the same black boxes and the same sophisticated equipment to radio plays, primarily. And STAR WARS is an outgrowth of that in the sense that it needed all that high technology because it's a very complicated kind of production. And it's the kind of production where you can't cheat. I mean, all of the fans, you know, anybody who knows the world of STAR WARS expects the radio productions to sound the same; you know, they have to be as good, certainly, as the film soundtrack in terms of using the same conventions. As you indicated, your friend picked up on Darth Vader's breathing. There are people who, as you know more than I, who really know the ins and outs of STAR WARS very, very well, including its soundtrack. So the radio production is in stereo, which makes it fairly complicated. The characters in the film move on the screen, but their voices don't move in the audio track. They stay in the way that most film sound works; the dialogue stays stationary. In a radio production, the dialogue has to move. Darth Vader moves from off left--just as in stage--blocking--to on-right and that kind of thing. So there were even some things, I think, that made the radio productions-- had some additional complexities. The soundtrack of the film has its own complexities which, you know, are different than radio. They're two entirely different media, but the fun of it was taking a very, a terrific sound world created by Ben Burtt, who's now won yet another Academy Award for RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK.

PG: That's right.

TV: And RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK won the Academy Award for the Best Film Sound, and as you know, EMPIRE STRIKES BACK won the Academy Award for Best Film Sound, and although Ben Burtt isn't named, it's a funny thing the way the Academy Awards work-- just as an aside. Because of the tradition of film, the Best Sound award goes to the production dialogue recordist, the guy who's actually on the set, recording what Mark Hamill says during all of the shooting. And the film mixers, the people who actually--when film is all set to be put together, the soundtrack--all of Artoo's motors have been edited and all of the explosions that are there, all the dialogue has been recorded, all the music has been edited, you know--a year's worth of incredible work has gone in for 30 or 40 or 50 people, then the three guys who mix it get the award for the best sound. And it's quite a bit antiquated in the way that Lucasfilm approaches films, where there is a single sound designer, Ben Burtt, who is the reason-- I mean, I'm not saying that those films weren't mixed beautifully, but they would be, you know, if you don't have incredible wonderful stuff to mix, it's nothing.

PG: Not going to help you any.

TV: So, really I guess the point I'm making there is when EMPIRE STRIKES BACK wins the award for Best Film Sound, and RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK wins the award for Best Film Sound, it's really an award that I think Ben Burtt deserves more than-- I mean, you know, I'm not taking it away from the other people, but I think--

PG: --that he was the mastermind behind it.

TV: --the first person they thank when they get up there, of course, is Ben Burtt, because they know that they've mixed a lot of films that year, but the reason they won for this one is because of the incredible inventiveness of the material. And

that's not really hype for you or for the fan magazine. It's really true. And the way I--I guess I would underline that is you can imagine STAR WARS for radio took about eight months to prepare after everything was recorded, after the actors were recorded and all of the material was sitting around here, and EMPIRE STRIKES BACK will take a little bit longer to do, but you know, nine to ten to eleven months worth of work on these things, and that's all I do, you know, day-to-day, and you can imagine that when you're working that long and that hard on a project, you might conceivably get a little tired of doing the same thing over and over again. Because it is quite meticulous, the work. You know, Artoo Detoo has to be done, now for a new episode. And you have to work-- Well, you know, somehow the material is so good, the sound material is so good and the music material is so good that it's exhausting, but it really is a terrific credit that it holds up, you know; that it really is very, very inventive. And-- if STAR WARS works on radio for people, it's primarily because the original idea is so clever and so creative. For the same reason, why was the film the greatest film hit of all time? I think because it really says something about fantasy and really hits people where they live in some way. And that obviously that transfers into the radio medium because it's a dramatic idea, and dramatic ideas transfer between media. But the second reason that it works is not so much to my credit or anybody else's credit. It's the fact that the original material that I have to create it, to put it together is so excellent. So I guess that, if I make any point in an interview with you, it's that. You know, it's really Ben's work. Without Ben's amazingly excellent work, it just wouldn't come off. The material that he creates is always top-rate. He's the best in that business; there's no question about it. I don't know if that answered the question you asked, or not--

PG: That's fine.

TV: --but it probably leapt ahead to make some other points, too, there.

PG: Oh, yeah.

TV: Okay.

PG: First of all, do you know how National Public Radio got involved with all of this in the first place, way back, three years ago? Two years ago?

TV: Three or four years ago, yeah. The last productions were finished two years ago. To be real honest with you, I don't know a great deal about that.

PG: You weren't involved at the time.

TV: The real reason was a relationship. George Lucas is a graduate of USC, and I think in an effort to give a major gift--I don't know if I'm saying this in the right political words or not--but he is a fairly generous fellow, and I think in an effort to give a gift to USC and its public radio station, which is called KUSC in Los Angeles, he gave the rights to turn STAR WARS into a radio production to KUSC, essentially free--which is obviously a fairly major gift because, you know--

PG: Yes.

TV: --worth quite a bit of money, presumably.

PG: Yes it is.

TV: So that's really where it began. It began as a gift from George Lucas to Public Radio, but specifically to radio station KUSC, associated with his alma mater. And that's where it began, and I think that's where it continues. I think his gift of EMPIRE STRIKES BACK is the same thing. I don't think he would be giving EMPIRE STRIKES BACK if he

wasn't presumably happy with what was done to STAR WARS. I mean STAR WARS could have been botched, and in that case, presumably we wouldn't be going on and doing EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, and I certainly hope that if they're happy with EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, we'll go on and do REVENGE OF THE JEDI. I don't know what the story will be, but I can tell you one thing for sure: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK doesn't have a real end, as we all know; it's a film that is leading clearly to the third film--meaning that when we finish with EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, we will have 24 episodes that don't come to a final conclusion the way STAR WARS does. So clearly it would be terrific to go on and in maybe a year from now or whenever, do REVENGE OF THE JEDI, you know. And it seems to be fairly clear knowledge that REVENGE OF THE JEDI will come to an end--probably a victorious end.

PG: Okay. Now, from this, is Minnesota Public Radio's production company, is that how you and NPR got involved with the thing, or was that a whole 'nother--

PG: I think because of my work in public broadcasting, I was known-- I say these things modestly, but I certainly had a reputation for my work, and so I was brought in to realize the finished product by public radio. I think now that I'm real pleased that that Lucasfilm has learned that I work hard and am trustworthy and somewhat--you know, try and do a good job for them, so that they turned to me on their own to do the RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK album, and hopefully I can work with them again in the future, too. So I got involved in STAR WARS through public radio and through my work in public radio.

PG: We want to do a bit on the technical aspects of putting something like the STAR WARS radio serial (indistinct) together. What do you have to work with?

TV: Okay. Well, right now--

PG: Two hundred million little itty-bitty bits of tape.

TV: Yeah. About that many. I'll talk you through EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. Sitting in front of us here are the preliminary drafts of THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK radio scripts. And those scripts-- this is a little different than the way STAR WARS was done, but this is the way it ought to be done. So I'll describe that.

PG: Okay. With STAR WARS, yeah. Did you kind of get it after they'd taped everything?

TV: No. Just after the final scripts were all finished and approved by Lucasfilm. The scripts were written by Brian Daley, who's written a lot of the Han Solo books and so was a well-known author to Lucasfilm. He wrote them, and I was brought in, as was the director, John Madden, who actually-- when we're talking about directing, now, is the guy who directs the actors. Really, what happens--and the credits for EMPIRE will be a little different-- John directs the acting and I direct all the rest of it, okay? So he gets to work for two weeks, and I go on and work for ten months, you know, but John and I pretty much came in when the finished scripts were done. This time, I think in an effort to be involved more in what happens in the scripts, we have both been involved in writing the original treatments: how is EMPIRE STRIKES BACK going to be turned into a radio serial; how many episodes are there; where do the episodes break; and, you know, how are we going to outline the series? At that point, Brian has written preliminary drafts which are really excellent, and John, who is an excellent,

excellent script editor and director, is right now finishing the final editing, with Brian, of the scripts. And at that point, we'll be ready to record--which is two weeks from now, we start recording EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. So, the first step is developing the scripts, and the scripts have to work; they have to be worked for Lucasfilm; they have to tell the story in the right way, you know; they have to work on radio in terms that radio is not a visual medium so there are obviously differences that the story has to be adapted for radio; and then finally--and that's primarily John's job--is to make sure that they work as scripts; they work dramatically-- John and Brian; they work dramatically; they're good scripts. They will work on radio. Then, finally, they have to work in a very technical sense; in other words, how is it possible to realize them, to make them work? Do the sound components, that they think exist, exist? How do

PG: That's kind of where you come in.

TV: Right. How do the conventions work, and how do I know--knowing the Lucasfilm sound world very, very well--and what works, what doesn't work, what Ben would like to hear and what Ben would not like to hear. Then maybe there are some final changes which are made in the scripts. Basically, that's the first step is developing the scripts. The second step is then recording the actors, and that will happen in New York between June 1st and June 15th, just as the cast finishes filming REVENGE OF THE JEDI, you know; then come do a radio series based on EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. And that is a recording where we just simply record the actors. There's no sound, there's no music; it's a matter of recording each scene with the actors, and again, John takes care of the direction of the actors and the interpretation of the script, and I take care of really keeping an eye on technically how is going to work. For example, See-Threepio and Darth Vader have processed voices. Those are not totally human voices. They start as human voices, so they can't be recorded in the same studio with the regular actors. The regular actors actually move around a stereo microphone in stereo, but Darth Vader and See-Threepio, stormtroopers and other droids-- so the whole has to have a technical plane; you just can't assemble in the studio and hang a microphone in the center of the studio and say, "Everybody, you know, shout your line in." So it's an interpretative problem which John takes care of, and then it's a technical problem: where in stereo are they? How do they get there? How do they move? And then, technically, how are you going to record it all? So that's the second stage, and that takes approximately two weeks to do, which, you know, a film would typically take six months to shoot; we'll do the original production shoot, if you will, of the cast in two weeks for the radio series. And then the final step is, after the actors have been recorded, then obviously that gets edited and cleaned up, and the right takes selected. We get the music score in here. I surround myself with a shelf full of all of the sound effects and sound material. And then the final step, which is the longest stage, which takes about ten months, will be putting the actual material together; composing it, if you will, in a recording studio. So that's kind of technically the way it's accomplished.

PG: You sit there at your master bank of tapes, and like re-record or record over all the little bits and pieces that you want on a master; or is it--

TV: Yeah, I work alone because I have to work alone. In film, it's possible to divide up the tasks a

little bit more because of the way film which uses multiple units of sound-- I mean, obviously there are lots of components from a laser gun to a laser gun explosion to a laser impact to a--you know, of See-Threepio's voice, See-Threepio's motors; you know, all of those things are separate elements in a film soundtrack. Because of the way film is done, those can be separated a little bit because they're actually done on separate machines which are then all interlocked to run together. We use recording studio technology, which means it all takes place on one tape, and that tape is able to store all of those components separately. And it is pretty much my job, knowing all of the pieces, to start at the beginning, and it's just a matter of digging in, Pat; you know, you just go. And starting with the opening theme, and I know what the first scene is, and--

PG: Go from there.

TV: --and go from there. And I have equipment which allows me to build and layer each scene, so I may start by working music against the dialogue scene, you know, without my sound effects. And then I may start adding sound effects to it. I may start, you know, playing with what I'm going to do until I finally get the scene worked out. But it's really as simple as or as laborious as sitting in a room with a big multi-track machine that allows me to work on all these little elements at separate times, okay, by storing them separately, and a big automated mixing console and tape machines around me, and lots of tapes. And knowing the tapes. I mean the key to it was having a sensitivity to the scripts and knowing the film sound score and then knowing the sound world very well, and sort of knowing what to grab to make it work.

PG: How does your work differ in doing the record, the RAIDERS album?

TV: The RAIDERS record?

PG: Yeah. All of those things are recorded all together, aren't they? I mean, when you're out on location, you have a lot of the things that are already there that are on one tape. I'm probably not making much sense.

TV: No, really, the only difference in doing the RAIDERS record--and again, for RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, we didn't go back to the finished mixed film score. We went back to all the original pieces.

PG: Okay, okay.

TV: Dialogue alone, without any sound or music. Music. And then all of the sound effects from the original tapes, where-- okay, whip cracks, you know; the whip, Indy's whip. I came back from Lucasfilm with say 30 different versions of Indy's whip, not Indy's whip placed precisely in the scene, but all of the rough components to compose it for the record album. Now, the only real difference is that for the record album, an adaptation was made, but it was an adaptation that had to use the original film dialogue, so this isn't totally true, but essentially--no new dialogue could appear. So, in the record, you have very visual scenes--I mean, you know, obviously, as in STAR WARS, it's a movie with lots of visual elements, and in the record, in some cases obviously, it's impossible to describe those because you can't have a character give you additional words or additional clues as to what's going on. And Lucasfilm did not want to use a narrator. They assumed that the people who were going to listen to the record had seen the film and that they wanted to be propelled through the story, and it wasn't important that the record tell the entire story in all of its details to somebody who's never

seen the film. So that the only real difference is instead of coming back from New York or coming back from Los Angeles with brand new dialogue recordings, we worked with the dialogue actually from the film. Okay? Now in the case of STAR WARS, I mean, this may be hard for people who read this publication to understand, but there are quite a few people who have never seen STAR WARS and EMPIRE, and it's interesting-- One of the interesting things that certainly one audience for STAR WARS are people who love STAR WARS and know a great deal about the film, who could tell us the entire story of both films in detail. There is a surprising audience that--a surprisingly large audience--that never saw STAR WARS and knows STAR WARS more as a radio series that they really got hooked on. Well, for that to happen, obviously STAR WARS has to tell the story, you know, what a lightsaber is and what it kind of looks like has to be told in the radio story in words a little bit. In other words, you obviously can't rely on-- you have to describe the Death Star in some words to help the listener understand the enormity of this, and the power of the prime weapon or whatever. And so the radio series is designed to stand on its own, whether you've seen the film or not. And hopefully be pleasing, very pleasing to people who have seen the film--because it's very accurate.

PG: Okay, I think you've answered all my questions, the ones I was going to ask you about EMPIRE STRIKES BACK.

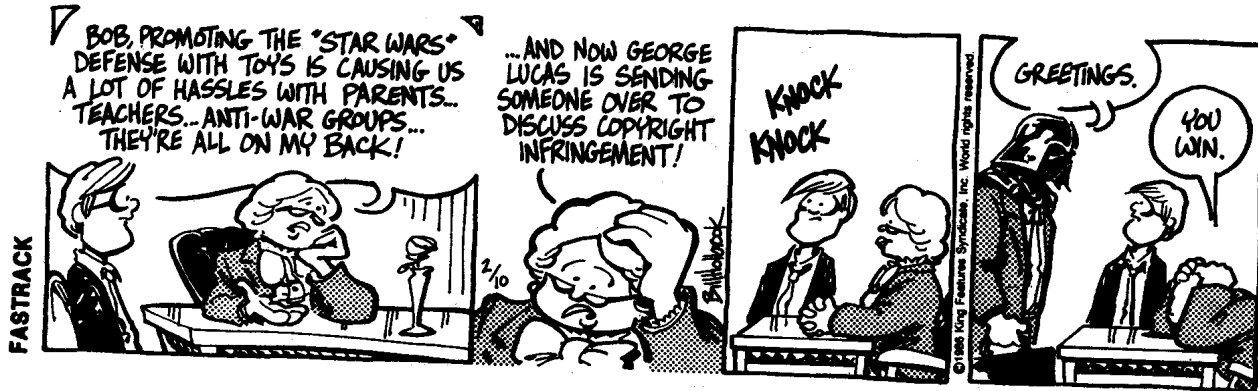
TV: Yeah, I think it will sound very much the same. But, for me personally, it's a little different because I'm working more on it now.

PG: Did have problems with the first one in that being you as you were brought in kind of--not after the fact, but, you know, coming in with maybe things that didn't work or, you know, other few bits and pieces that maybe couldn't work that were in the script? You know, did you have any problems working with it, or finding things that couldn't work on radio?

TV: I would say there were no major problems. If there was a major problem there may have been a few in the scripts as we received them, and then, you know, sort of the night before they got recorded--because it was behind schedule--we would certainly iron those out and maybe change the script a little bit to make sure we weren't going to face some which just simply couldn't work. I guess, you know, not to say I'm incredibly proud of STAR WARS, but I think that EMPIRE will probably be better only in that--I don't think Brian would mind my saying that he's learned a heck of a lot about radio writing one set of scripts, and I just think that we've had more. The process of having a little more involvement by the people who have to put it together--in this case, by the person who has to put it a great deal of it together--just means that things can be a little smoother in some ways. And, no, there were no major problems with STAR WARS. I think whatever minimal wrinkles there were, you know, in working it out, we're hoping to avoid at least some of them. There'll still be some, but I think when you start planning the next year of your life to do another batch of STAR WARS episodes, you know--and these will be, as the film is called, these will also be called STAR WARS: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK--I'm looking forward to trying to do even a better job. I mean, that's the nature of the creative task is to, you know, the way you get excited about doing it again is to try and improve on what you did last time. And I certainly hope that we do

that. You know, I'm very proud of the first ones, but still--just as the sound for the film is better the second time around; not that the sound for the first film isn't excellent, but I think Ben would you know, there's a new generation of material which is available for EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. And so, just like a composer who, you know, a couple of years later is approaching his sixth symphony as opposed to his fifth, I mean, I suppose maybe this

isn't directly transferable, but, you're trying to improve on what you've learned as as composer. And --et cetera, you know. And for anybody who's doing something that's creative. And so I hope that EMPIRE STRIKES BACK even works better. You know, it doesn't just stand still and isn't just as good, but is even better. And more exciting than STAR WARS.



(left) Mary Keever and friend



(right) seen in Denver by Barb Brayton

# Reviews

FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW. Carolyn Cooper, P.O. Box 66244, Houston, Texas 77266. \$9.50 first class, 92 pp.

Reviewed by Sandra Necchi

Stressing the upbeat and the humorous, FACPOV offers an easy evening of light reading and some rather striking interior colors and cover art. The best of the long fiction is Susan Sizemore's "Wedding Bell Blues" and Carolyn Cooper's two connecting pieces, "One Small Thing" and "Just a Little Something I Picked Up." Sizemore's story is told in a deliciously sardonic tone. The main character has to be one of my favorite fan-created personalities--Leia's Aunt Aliin, a terribly officious and wry woman who decides that Leia must get married to a rather cumbersome, unattractive prince from a race that refers to women as "things". Much to Leia's rage, Aunt Aliin decides this is the best way to save her rebel niece's life from the Emperor's clutches. Having absolutely no pretensions about itself, this story was thoroughly enjoyable for its freshness and sense of humor.

Cooper's two pieces introduce us to a child character (whose special relevance to the Big Three I shall not divulge). Cooper grabs you immediately with a strong introduction and a fine ability to establish a setting. The idea is certainly not original, being a highly overused source of cutesy fan fiction: a lost, starving waif whose special lineage is suddenly discovered and complicates the lives of our main characters. Nothing here surprises. Nevertheless, it is an engaging alternative. (Han fans take note: he is the most prominent.) A complaint, however: I would hope that at the very least fan fiction set after ROTJ would take into account that film's "humanizing" of Leia. Leia in Cooper's stories is utterly bereft of any warmth or humanity--only Han has that. The old one-dimensional cliché about a single-minded devotion to a cause is piled on ad infinitum. Would the same young woman who sensitively befriended Wicket not show any compassion whatsoever at the sight of a ragged, starving, frightened orphan? (And why would Leia be upset at the idea of Han having been previously married?) My own personal

prejudices are operating here, admittedly, but it seems to me that many fans make fantastic leaps in speculation about Leia that have no basis on screen. In the wake of ROTJ, especially, Cooper's characterization seems particularly primitive.

Yet another Marcia Brin vignette appears here, called "Not Everyone," which closes out the zine. This one offers a great little argument between the Big Three about that nagging question, "Does everyone have the Force?" Han adamantly says no--but watch for that clever ending.

Dani Lane's powerful spree of images which accompany Lynda Vandiver's evocative poem "Ben's Lament" (about his failure with Anakin) is probably the most striking in the zine. Lane's work seems at once so complex yet simple. Lane's intro illo to "Wedding Bell Blues" is not only lovely in its detail and breadth, but also captures the story's wry humor. It is Lane's ability to capture the mood and feel of the works she illustrates that strikes me the most. Also remarkable in its scope and detail is her intro piece to the "Artist's Gallery" section--an impressive effort of portraits of all the major characters, and a few extras thrown in. The color covers of Han and Luke are a visual delight, although a bit stiff in their rendering. Carolyn tells me that half the copies have Han on the front, while the other half have Luke. You specify which one you want--that is, if you care.

There are a few technical problems--typos, too little space between text and between columns (I think it is better to have no line between columns; not every space should be filled) and a little faded repro. Borders are overly thick and the columns are much too wide. FACPOV's interior colors are certainly pretty, but they are also far too random. It gives the zine a "messier" look. But it may be a worthy experiment on Carolyn's part. I hope she uses it in a more structured way next time. I do have mixed feelings on the merit of interior colors. On the one hand, I do enjoy looking at them. They provide an added spice to the content. But on the other hand, they can be a distraction, and a bit glaring.

First issues are usually hard to recommend, but I can't un-recommend this one either. Up to you.

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# Profiles

# Editor's Desk

Mary Keever  
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I'm 24 years old, married and "mother" to 2 cats and a dog. I just recently started working at the Texas Medical Center Library as a circulation assistant. Prior to that I worked 5 years at a public library. I love STAR WARS, reading, movie going, letter writing and music. I'm a self-confessed zine-aholic! For anyone who doesn't know, Luke is my favorite character, next is Darth, then Han! I only became involved in fandom a few years ago, after the relase of ROTJ. My favorite author is Stephen King. Things I dislike are: spinach, scrubbing the toilet, and driving on the freeway (this one is hard to avoid since I live in the Houston area). I enjoy meeting new people so, if any of you are in the Houston area, look me up!

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What an emotionally shattering year this has started off to be. How is it possible to express what we felt when we first heard that Challenger was gone? Those who are old enough to remember President Kennedy's assassination probably felt the same emotions--disbelief, astonishment, like they'd been kicked in the stomach. Then the grief and horror. A local newscaster said it best, I think: "There will be many words...because there are no words." We all struggle to pin down that which we cannot express--the wrenching sorrow that gripped us each time we watched the lift-off or saw a flag at half-mast.

And yet, at the same time, we rebounded with a fierce pride and determination that epitomized the American spirit--that we were willing to accept the fact that lives will be lost in the exploration of space, just as they were in the colonization of America or the opening of the West or the voyages of exploration into the Arctic and Antarctica and the sea. We will pause and remember them, then we will go on, stronger and more resolute than before, determined that they shall not have died in vain.

I found great hope, too, in the fact that this was a mixed crew--two women, a black man, a man of Oriental descent, as well as the stereotypical white male astronauts--and hardly anyone thought the make up of the crew unusual. Space has proved to be the great equalizer, demanding the best from the best, and making no distinction between skin color or eye shape or sex.

The Challenger crew was among our best and we will miss them. But we will never forget them.

\* \* \*

A fund has been set up for the benefit of the children of the astronauts. If you would like to contribute, the address is:

Space Shuttle Children's Fund  
c/o American Security Bank  
P. O. Box 0150  
Washington, D.C. 20055

On to other news, Pat Nussman tells me that the newest LOCUS lists Eluki bes Shahar's story "Hell-flower" (run in AMAZING last March) as being on the preliminary Nebula ballot. This is, Pat believes, the first time a SW fan has been nominated. Eluki tells Pat, by the way, that the sequel has been accepted by AMAZING. Congratulations, Eluki!

I would also like to say a hearty thank you to Judith Low whose new mastheads grace the front page and the ad section! Judy surprised me with these and I love them! I'm trying to persuade her to do mastheads for the other sections of the zine as well! Thanks, Judy!

!!!!!!! HOT FLASH !!!!!!!

On February 24, 1986, Lucasfilm laid off the entire SW Fan Club division, according to Linda Deneroff. Don't know what this means, but it sounds ominous!

## Turning Point

# George Lucas Moves To Produce TV Shows, Movies in Volume

After Taking 2 Years to Build New Studio, Film Maker Seeks Renewed Success

Another 'Star Wars' Chapter?

By MICHAEL CIEPLY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

SKYWALKER RANCH, Calif. — Once upon a time, there was a bustling village here.

A big brick winery at its center thrived in the 1870s but was later abandoned. Eastern immigrants then built a cluster of cottages reminiscent of their native New England.

Still later, some Hollywood types turned the winery into an *art moderne* palace, with rooms modeled on sets from "Citizen Kane." Film maker George Lucas finally discovered this hamlet, tucked among the hills 30 miles north of San Francisco, and turned the refurbished buildings into his secret movie factory.

Such is the legend of Skywalker Ranch. The place is real, right down to its "Citizen Kane" rooms and ancient cultivating equipment left rusting in a field. Yet its history belongs only to the restless imagination of the 41-year-old Mr. Lucas, who concocted the elaborate fable to shape his latest, and perhaps grandest, creation.

The project's near completion brings Mr. Lucas to a turning point in his phenomenally successful career. The ranch—lavish by any standards—partially opened last fall both as headquarters for Lucasfilm Ltd., Mr. Lucas's private company, and as a highly advanced ministudio for the use of Hollywood's best and brightest. Mr. Lucas puts its cost at about \$50 million. Some associates privately say the complex cost twice as much and has consumed virtually the entire fortune Mr. Lucas built on movie blockbusters such as "Star Wars," "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Return of the Jedi" and "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom."



George Lucas

### Extraordinary Activity

After two years away from the public eye—time devoted mainly to building his private domain—the film maker is suddenly moving to become a volume producer of movies and television programs. Douglas Norby, Lucasfilm's new president and a veteran of Silicon Valley, is said to be streamlining the company, principally by stripping away operations that have consumed time and money without yielding profit. Meanwhile, Mr. Lucas is gearing up to deliver as many as five feature films and four hours of television each year—extraordinary activity for a man who has produced or directed only 10 movies in a 14-year career.

"There is definitely a surge," says Sidney Ganis, Lucasfilm's senior vice president and a longtime associate of Mr. Lucas, who declined to be interviewed for this story.

Mr. Lucas's heavy work schedule, to be financed largely by television networks and Hollywood studios, may provide the huge amount of cash needed to sustain the ranch. Success is far from ensured, however. The appeal of Mr. Lucas's principal stock in trade, the "Star Wars" saga, appears to be waning. And to tap such creative wealth anew presents a challenge worthy of a Jedi knight.

The Lucas touch has been less than golden in recent months. "Mishima" and "Latino," a pair of feature films Mr. Lucas helped launch but didn't formally produce, received mixed reviews and made little impression at the box office last year. Perhaps more seriously, the company's initial forays into network television have faltered. "Ewoks" and "Droids," two Saturday-morning cartoon series introduced on ABC last fall, have been drubbed consistently by the competing "Smurfs." In 1984, an ABC television movie based on the Ewoks (Teddy bear-like creatures introduced in "Jedi") drew impressive ratings. Yet the audience dropped by 20% when a second Ewoks movie aired last November, and many critics were cool to both shows.

### A Phenomenon Fades

Those disappointments have been compounded by a sharp drop in sales of "Star Wars" merchandise, despite Mr. Lucas's hope that characters such as Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker would ultimately prove as durable as Mickey Mouse. Both Mr. Norby and a spokesman for Kenner Parker Toys Inc., the sole U.S. licensee for "Star Wars" toys, decline to discuss merchandise sales. But Thomas Kully, a toy analyst with Chicago-based William Blair & Co., says of the "Star Wars" merchandising phenomenon: "It's gone." Mr. Kully estimates that Kenner's "Star Wars" shipments, from which Mr. Lucas receives a licensing fee believed to be about 7%, were less than \$35 million in 1985, down from \$150 million two years ago.

If Mr. Lucas's genius has been little in evidence lately, that is partly by design. Following the release of "Jedi" in 1983, Mr. Lucas said he was "burned out" and began a two-year hiatus from the movie business. Soon afterward, he was divorced from his wife, Marcia, a top Hollywood

film editor with whom he shares joint custody of a four-year-old daughter. He dabbled briefly with tap-dancing lessons and automobile racing, a forgotten teen-age passion. For the most part, he poured himself into the ranch.

Last summer, Mr. Lucas quietly doubled his Skywalker holdings to 4,759 acres by purchasing three neighboring ranches, two of them bought in the name of Richard Tong, a San Francisco accountant. Mr. Tong initially claimed the purchases were unrelated to the film maker. Mr. Norby, however, later conceded that Mr. Lucas used the accountant's name to ensure his privacy, a near obsession with Mr. Lucas; two years ago, the film maker irritated neighbors by obtaining county permission to surround much of his property with a high-voltage deer fence that keeps both two- and four-legged intruders at bay.

The fence hasn't been the only sore point with neighbors. Local critics complain that Mr. Lucas beguiled county planners into letting him establish an "industrial beachhead," complete with heavy power lines and increased traffic, among the tightly protected farmlands and redwood groves of western Marin County. Mr. Lucas's partisans counter that the ranch, 75% of which is leased as pasture, has blocked more noxious developers.

Still, some residents bitterly resent what they see as favoritism based on Mr. Lucas's Hollywood connections. "Would (county planners) have made an exception for Union Carbide?" asks Ronald Marinoff, a neighbor of Mr. Lucas and an officer of a 'local homeowners' association.

Such comparisons were unimaginable seven years ago, when the ranch was conceived as a creative retreat where Mr. Lucas and his colleagues, in the words of a 1979 plan filed with Marin County, could "meet, study, collaborate, write, edit, and experiment with new film-making ideas." The concept quickly blossomed into 14 structures.

Concealed inside the mock winery—complete with a weathered brick front de-

signed by architects Backen Aalborg & Ross to conform with the ranch's imaginary history—is a state-of-the-art sound and film-editing facility unequalled in Hollywood. One of its sound rooms, scheduled for completion this year, will be large enough to let Mr. Lucas or visiting directors record the San Francisco symphony orchestra in comfort.

The main office building is a rambling, 50,000-square-foot Victorian mansion, so designed because Mr. Lucas is accustomed to working at home. The house is hung with Norman Rockwell paintings—said to be a principal investment of Mr. Lucas's private pension fund—and decorated with stained glass.

Much of the luxury is attributed to Marcia Lucas, whose divorce settlement didn't include any stake in Lucasfilm. Avidly interested in antiques, Mrs. Lucas helped stock a warehouse from which Lucasfilm executives chose office furnishings "worth more than their annual salaries," according to one former top officer.



## Seeking Excellence

"Very simply, our mission is to seek excellence," says Mr. Norby, who believes the ranch will foster the kind of artistic freedom Mr. Lucas, Francis Ford Coppola and other fiercely independent young film makers sought when they fled Hollywood for San Francisco in the early 1970s.

However, several Lucas intimates, who decline to be quoted by name, counter that Mr. Lucas's dream has been increasingly undermined by a cult of personality that threatens to stifle creativity and excellence. In fact, Mr. Norby—a 50-year-old former Syntex Corp. chief financial officer who joined Lucasfilm nine months ago after two previous presidents resigned in quick succession—is said to be hacking vigorously at what some see as the uncreative "deadwood" that has accumulated around the film maker. Mr. Norby bluntly denies that he has engaged in layoffs, which would seem to violate the family ethic Mr. Lucas has cultivated at his company. But some Lucasfilm employees say the company's 450-member staff has been trimmed in recent months to reduce overhead, which is estimated at more than \$20 million annually.

Mr. Norby does concede that he and Mr. Lucas are particularly interested in divorcing the company from its growing electronics divisions—operations that began as a pet project of Mr. Lucas, and, associates say, have yielded little return on an investment of at least \$10 million over the last several years.

Hollywood's studios are clearly hungry for a stake in the expected output of Mr. Lucas's renewed focus on movies. MCA Inc.'s Universal City Studios unit expects to distribute "Howard the Duck," a current Lucasfilm production, while Tri-Star Pictures will distribute "Labyrinth," which Mr. Lucas is co-producing with Muppets creator Jim Henson. Mr. Lucas is also expected to deliver a third "Indiana Jones" movie, to be directed by Steven Spielberg, for distribution by Gulf & Western Industries Inc.'s Paramount Pictures studio in 1988.

## Chapter Four?

The future of the "Star Wars" mythos is less clear. Messrs. Norby and Ganis say the fourth movie in what Mr. Lucas in the past said would be a nine-film "Star Wars" cycle is still possible, though none is in the works. For the moment, Lucasfilm's Industrial Light & Magic special-effects division is designing a "Star Wars" attraction for Disneyland and might weave its peculiar brand of space fantasy into a complete remodeling of the park's Tomorrowland.

Mr. Lucas occasionally seems to have made a near religion of his mythlike creations. In a rare public address, he recently explained "Star Wars" as an attempt "to come up with a perspective on God." In the two years since "Jedi," moreover, Mr. Lucas has cultivated a deep personal and intellectual relationship with Joseph Campbell, an 81-year-old mythologist whom the film maker openly describes as his "Yoda," a reference to the pointy-eared guru of the "Star Wars" saga.

Such mythic delvings may be calculated to waken Mr. Lucas's celebrated creative "Force"—a power that has apparently been dormant of late. Some Lucas intimates describe exactly such soul-searching. "I can tell you something is happening in (Mr. Lucas's) mind. It has something to do with transforming his relationship with the popular audience," says an associate who worked closely with the film maker last year.

A Lucasfilm employee adds: "As people got tired of 'Star Wars,' 'Indiana Jones' was there to fill the gap. As that runs down, I think George will search his instincts for something new. He has great instincts, and I wouldn't bet that he doesn't find it."

## Charles Maguire Joins Lucasfilm As Veepee

**Hollywood** — With George Lucas' San Francisco-based Lucasfilm newly embarked on a program of four to five in-house features a year, the company has lured Charles M. Maguire from Paramount to join Lucasfilm as the first v.p.-production since Lucas formed the company.

Until now, Lucasfilm has contented itself turning out one feature a year, using individual producers.

Only two months ago, Maguire was promoted to senior veepee and executive production manager at Paramount.

Before being moved up to those posts, Maguire was v.p.-executive production manager. His tenure with Paramount's management department covered the past five years. Maguire is a 35-year industry veteran.

## Lucas Buys More Land Near His Marin Ranch

By Erik Ingram

Film maker George Lucas, one of Marin County's largest landowners, has purchased 2159 acres adjacent to his movie headquarters at Skywalker Ranch near Nicasio.

The new purchases, totaling about \$3 million, increase Lucas' holdings in Nicasio Valley to 4759 acres. He and his film company have other holdings in San Rafael, Novato and San Anselmo.

News of the purchases prompted speculation by some area residents that the publicity-shy producer may want to build housing for his 300 employees at Skywalker Ranch.

Some county officials said that Lucas may be setting the stage to enlarge his workforce at Skywalker Ranch by "trading off" the new purchase as open space. A year ago, Lucas won county approval to double his workforce by donating land for open space.

Lucas purchased the properties

under the name of his San Francisco accountant, Richard Tong.

A spokesman for Lucasfilm, Lucas' primary corporation, said that his boss "has no plans" to develop the land or engage in a deal to increase his workforce.

County records show that the lands purchased by Lucas had already been approved for 171 townhouses and single-family homes.

Besides the three ranches just purchased, county records show that Lucasfilm has reacquired the 1117 Big Rock Ranch. That ranch had been held by Lucas' former wife, Marcia, since their divorce.

In a related matter, Lucas is challenging the assessment methods used by the county to put a \$42.3 million value on Skywalker Ranch.

Lucas argues that figure is \$31 million too high, and has filed an appeal, which will be heard early next year.

**NOTICE:**

Nancy Stasulis would like people to address mail to her work address:

Woodward-Clyde Consultants  
1300 Piccard Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850

It seems the Gaithersburg post office doesn't believe she exists and keeps either holding or returning her mail.

**ART CREDITS:**

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